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## Karen Storey

# New College Swindon: The Confide Clinic

I started work at New College, Swindon in September 2005 and previously worked as a Health Visitor and a Sexual Health Outreach Worker. As a Sexual Health Nurse I have worked in a number of settings including Confide clinics. I am also aware that young people are the group least likely to access health advice and treatment in traditional clinical settings.

At New College, large numbers of 16 - 19 year olds attend on a daily basis from all over Swindon. It was apparent that attention was given to many aspects of the young person's health but not to their sexual health.

It was also apparent that Sex and Relationships Education teaching stops when students leave secondary school. This is at a time when they would like to be able to access information at a convenient time and place. Therefore, in response to community trends and pressures, sexual health advice lessons were planned and delivered to a range of students from Pre-16 to Level 3 students. The lessons were linked to the Confide clinic and sexual health outreach nurses were accessed to enable us to work on a joint initiative. We have also been involved in delivering 'in house' training sessions to tutors, giving them the skills to address sexual health and education with their tutees.

### Peer Mentors

It was also suggested that peer mentors be included as well. The decision to use peer mentors was an idea in collaboration with the Youth Services and the Colleges own Student Services. There was also a need, for the students following GCE

Applied Health and Social Care, to become aware of working within multidisciplinary teams in a care setting.

### College Confide Clinic

After much discussion and preparation the College Confide clinic started in September 2006. Some of the aims include reducing teenage pregnancies in a nearby Swindon 'Hot spot' and reducing the prevalence of teenage STIs in the Swindon area.

The clinic is based within the Health and Social Care section and has the use of a large room for meeting and greeting and a smaller more confidential room for seeing clients. Every day at lunchtime the clinic is managed by a health professional. A peer mentor has been appointed for each day covers the 'Drop in' on a voluntary basis. It has become evident that the peer mentors are vital in the management of the lunch hour - as they are a constant- whereas health professionals have on occasion been called away.

Students attending this service have agreed that it has been nicer to see a health professional in a familiar setting. One student commented that, *'it's nice not having to go and sit in a waiting room with people who are older than you and look at you as if you have done something wrong!'* Other students have said that it is easily accessible and, *'you don't have to worry about how or when you are going to get to the other clinics in town'*. Many students have agreed it's a good service to have in College, *'because when you are already worried about exams and course work and then have to worry about seeking advice at a clinic, where you don't know anyone or where it is - it just adds to the stress - knowing I can just come to College takes a lot of that stress away'*.