

Educator Guide

Young People Accessing Health Services



A DVD about Accessing Health Services
For Secondary Students



family
planning
victoria
Sexual & Reproductive Health
Care, Education, Advocacy.



Education
and Training



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Young People Accessing Sexual Health Services

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Background

The Secondary School Nursing Program SWVR identified a gap in resources that clearly explain to young people their rights when accessing a sexual health service. No resources were found that specifically cover a sexual health visit for young people under the age of 16. Anecdotally, school nurses noted that young people held incorrect information about their rights to access and use these services.

This DVD has been developed to highlight how to access a sexual health service, what occurs during consultation and the rights a young person has when accessing health care.

The School Nursing Program worked in partnership with Family Planning Victoria (FPV) with funding from the School Focussed Youth Service (SFYS) to produce the DVD and educator guide.

Relevance to the Victorian Curriculum Health and Physical Education domain

The themes explored in the DVD and Educator Guide relate to the Victorian Curriculum, Health and Physical Education, Relationships and Sexuality - Level 8 - 10 -:

Being healthy safe and active- Identify and critique the accessibility and effectiveness of support services based in the community that impact on the ability to make healthy and safe choices. (VCAA, 2015)

Topics covered in the DVD and educator guide are:

- Confidentiality
- Rights to treatment
- Consent to treatment
- Medical competency
- When can young people access services independently
- Obtaining a Medicare card
- Making an appointment and possible costs
- Accessing local services

Using the DVD and educator guide



This DVD and educator guide can be used to complement sexuality health education linked to the Victorian Curriculum Health and Physical Education domain at Years 8 – 10.

It is not intended to be used as a stand-alone resource. For example, this DVD would complement various lessons within the “Catching on Later” resource, Level 9&10, Learning Sequence 4, pages 260 – 326. “Catching on Later “ can be found in FUSE Learning Resource ID - 5QSZG4

Educator Guide

Young People Accessing Sexual Health Services

Introducing the DVD



This DVD looks at services available to young people relating to their sexual health and considers concerns young people may have accessing these services.

Before viewing the DVD please inform students

The story you will see was written and performed by a group of young people. Please remember that they are telling a story made up of a combination of ideas from young people involved in focus groups from various schools in the Western suburbs of Melbourne.

You might recognise some of the young people in the story, but remember that they are just acting and representing the characters in the stories. It is not their own personal story, they are only acting.

After viewing the DVD

Possible discussion points -

- **Why would the doctor see Bella and Chad separately?**

Visits to a health care provider should be confidential. The nurse or doctor would want to ensure the relationship was consensual and allow the young person to be able to speak freely about present and past relationships.

- **Bella was hoping to go on the pill, the doctor prescribed Implanon for her. Why would that be?**

After getting a general and sexual health history from Bella, the doctor gave Bella information on all her contraceptive options. Bella was then able to make an informed decision on the most suitable method of contraception for her. A LARC (Long Acting Reversible Contraceptive) method is defined as one that requires administration less than once per month. In Australia LARCs include hormonal or copper-bearing IUDs, the hormonal contraceptive implant (Implanon) and the hormonal contraceptive injection (Depo). LARCs are more effective in preventing unintended pregnancy and have higher continuation rates than the oral contraceptive pill.

Sourced from:

<http://www.fpv.org.au/assets/FPAA-LARC-Position-Statement-FINAL-October-2014.pdf>

Information on the all the contraceptive options including Implanon can be found at the Family Planning Victoria website:

<http://www.fpv.org.au/sexual-health-info/contraception/>

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○ **At the beginning what concerns did Bella have when talking to her friend?**

- Pregnancy
- Parents finding out
- Accessing doctors without a Medicare card
- Catching a sexually transmitted infection (STI)
- Finding a youth friendly service and going on her own.

○ **Should both partners go to the doctors?**

Chad's decision to go with Bella was a healthy and responsible choice for himself and his relationship with Bella.

○ **At the doctors what concerns did Bella have?**

Confidentiality when filling out the form.

As stated in the DVD, your information is confidential and your parents cannot contact the health service for details about your visit.

To inform the students of their rights to confidentiality please refer to information provided by Family Planning Victoria overleaf titled 'Confidentiality and consent to treatment'

Confidentiality and consent to treatment

What is confidentiality?

Confidentiality means that the information you give to a doctor, nurse and counsellor is private and usually cannot be given to anyone else. It is the law that your information is kept confidential. Doctors, nurses and counsellors must keep this law. This means you can talk about personal things like feelings, sexuality, sex, smoking, drugs and relationships in private.

Will my doctor or nurse ever share my information?

There are times when doctors, nurses and counsellors may share your health information. This may be to convey your health information to other health professionals in order to provide care. If you are under the age of 17 they are also required by law to report any reasonable belief that you are at risk of hurting yourself or others, or if you are at risk of harm from someone and are not being protected. This is called mandatory reporting.

If your doctor, nurse or counsellor thinks they might not be able to keep your confidentiality they will talk to you about it. They want to do what is best for you and would only make a decision to share your information after a lot of thought. If they make this decision, they will only tell the people who have to know – this is usually a very small number of professional people.

What if I want or need some medical treatment?

Everybody has the right to confidential medical treatment. All medical treatments that aren't emergencies need consent (agreement) before they can happen. In Australia there is no minimum age to consent to treatment. The health professional will base this on your ability to understand the advice or treatment.

It can be helpful to have the support of a trusted adult or parent when considering your health and making decisions. Because of this, your doctor, nurse or counsellor may ask you if there's anybody you can talk to like a parent, carer or an adult who you trust. If there isn't anybody who you can talk to, you can still give consent.

Medicare

Some health services are covered by Medicare, so they are free or low cost. If you are an Australian citizen or permanent resident, you can be enrolled in Medicare. You are able to apply for your own Medicare card from the age of 15. When you have your own card, Medicare keeps your confidentiality.

Many young people have 'family Medicare cards' which means your name is on the same card as your parent/carer/siblings. For privacy reasons, a parent or guardian cannot access Medicare claims history information for people listed on their card from the age of 14 and over without the young person's permission.

For more information, see www.medicare.gov.au

Confidentiality and consent to treatment

What if I'm concerned about my confidentiality?

Your confidentiality is protected by law. If you are concerned about this or need it explained more, please talk to your doctor, nurse or counsellor. They will treat your concerns seriously.

If you would like to address the concern further, you can tell the Health Services Commissioner. You can do this by phone or by filling out a complaint form on their website.

Health Services Commissioner

Complaints and Information

30th Floor

570 Bourke Street

Melbourne. 3000

Phone: 03 8601 5200 or 1800 136 066 (Free call)

Fax: 03 8601 5219

Website: www.health.vic.gov.au/hsc/downloads/compform.pdf

Sourced from Family Planning Victoria

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Young people's right to medical treatment

Statement – Everybody has the right to medical treatment. All medical treatments that aren't emergencies need consent (agreement) before they can happen. In Australia, the law says you can give your consent to medical treatment when you turn 18 years old (unless you have an intellectual disability or another serious health issue that affects your ability to make decisions about your health). If you're under 18 years, you can also give your consent to medical advice or treatment without your parent's or carer's permission, if the doctor or nurse thinks you understand the advice or treatment.

Sourced from:

http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/sites/www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/files/vla-resource-am-i-old-enough_0.pdf

A minor (person under the age of 18 years) is capable of giving informed consent when they achieve a sufficient understanding and intelligence to enable them to understand fully what is proposed. This test comes from the English case of Gillick v West Norfolk AHA (1986) 1 AC 150 which has been applied for many years when providing health services to minors.

Sourced from:

<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/hsc/infosheets/minors.pdf>

Discussion –

However, it can be really helpful if young people seek the support of a trusted adult or parent with regards to their sexual health whenever possible.

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Finding your own local GP or sexual health clinic



- Ask students to search for two of the closest clinics in or nearby their suburb. Does the service bulk bill?

<http://www.nhsd.com.au/>

- Brainstorm with students some other youth friendly health services nearby – eg: Headspace, Community Health Centres and Family Planning Victoria.

Below are some useful links below to search for health services and doctors in South Western Victoria -

<http://hobsonsbayyouthdirectory.com>

<http://youth.wyndham.vic.gov.au/ysd>

<http://maribyrnongyouthdirectory.com.au/>

<http://meltonyouthdirectory.com.au/>

<http://brimbankyouthdirectory.com/>

Similar youth directories can be found in other Victorian Local Government Areas.

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Making a doctors appointment

- Invite students to visit the Rosie respect website and find the 'going to the doctor' page.
<http://rosierespect.org.au/body-and-mind/going-to-the-doctor-on-your-own/>
- Read the information with the class from the website. *The information is also provided at end of this guide.*
- Have two students role play ringing up to book an appointment with a doctor.

The Rosie Respect website is a space where young women can connect with the best web resources out there helping them to navigate life's tricky situations.

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Applying for a Medicare card

Open the link filling out this form and go through the Medicare application form with the students 'Getting your own Medicare Card'.

To Bulk Bill your doctor's appointment, you need to provide your Medicare number. If you want to be able to do this without your parents or guardian knowing, you have 2 options:

1. At 15 years of age, you can get your own Medicare card by filling out a form (see Medicare link below) and heading to your nearest Department of Health and Human Services Centre (you might know this as 'Centrelink').
It may be helpful to apply for your card before going to the doctors.
2. Or when at the doctors you can ask the receptionist to obtain your Medicare number through the confidential Medicare Hotline. To do this you will need to provide your full name and date of birth.

Things to remember -

- Everything you say to your doctor is confidential unless they are concerned for yours or others safety
- You can request a female or male doctor
- It's important to feel safe and comfortable with your doctor
- It is possible to see a doctor without a Medicare card in some clinics, although there may be a fee to do so.
- It is really important to take charge of your health and seek professional advice

Relevant Links:

[Medicare – Get your own Medicare Card at age 15](#) Click on 'Young people becoming independent' and click on 'Medicare copy/transfer application form'

[DHS Centre – Centrelink Locations](#)

[Yellow Pages](#)

[Youth Beyond Blue – Your local doctor](#)

Adapted from:

<http://rosierespect.org.au/body-and-mind/going-to-the-doctor-on-your-own/>

Briefly review the students' knowledge of age of consent regarding sex –

The law in Victoria sets clear age limits for when you can legally have sex. This is called 'age of consent'. A person can be charged with a sexual offence if they perform a sexual act that breaks these age limits even if the younger person agrees to it. The 'age of consent' is the same for all sexual relationships, regardless of sex or gender,

The age of consent to sex is 16 years in Victoria.

Under 12 years old

If you are under 12 years old, a person can't have sex with you or touch you sexually or perform a sexual act in front of you, even if you agree. (This includes showing you sexual images or porn)

12 to 15 years old

If you are 12 to 15, a person can't have sex with you, touch you sexually or perform a sexual act in front of you if they are more than 24 months older than you, even if you agree.

16 to 18 years old

A person can't have sex with you or touch you sexually or perform a sexual act in front of you if they are caring for you or supervising you. For example, a teacher, a coach or manager at work.

<https://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au/find-legal-answers/sex-and-law/age-of-consent>

Discussion:

A young person between the ages of 12 – 16 years can talk to a health professional in privacy about having sex. The health professional is not mandated to report sex under the age of consent provided it is consensual and safe.

Statement – Statistics from the 5th National Survey of Australian Secondary Students and Sexual Health 2013, show that only 23% of Year 10 and 50% of Year 12 students have had sexual intercourse.

Mitchell A, Patrick K, Heywood W, Blackman P, Pitts M. 2014. 5th National Survey of Australian Secondary Students and Sexual Health 2013, (ARCSHS Monograph Series No. 97), Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia.

http://www.latrobe.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/576661/ARCSHS-SSASH-2013.pdf

Discussion:

Many young people over estimate the percentage of young people who have been sexually active by the time they leave school. Why do young people have this misconception?



Student

evaluation / assessment

Questions to assess students' comprehension of key issues covered -

- 1.** At what age can you visit the doctor alone?
- 2.** At what age can you get your own Medicare card?
- 3.** Once you have your own Medicare card, is all your information confidential?
- 4.** Name two ways you can find your closest youth friendly health service.
- 5.** What is age of consent to sex in Victoria?

Going to the Doctors

Looking after your health and wellbeing doesn't have to be overwhelming. It's completely understandable that as you get older, you want more privacy – especially when it comes to your sexual health.

Here are some basic tips to help you take charge.

Ask yourself: What kind of doctor do I need?

There are lots of different kinds of doctors who specialize in different areas of health. A GP (general practitioner) is your best place to start. They can assess the situation, order tests, prescribe medication, including contraception or refer you onto more specific doctors if necessary. Before making an appointment you may want to consider whether you want to continue seeing your family GP (if you have one) or find one of your own.

There are lots of doctors out there, so if you're not sure about the one you have, seek out another. It's important to find a doctor you like and you feel comfortable talking to.

Something to think about:

Once you have found one you like, try to stick with them. That way, it's easier to track changes or improvements in your health and your doctor can better understand your health needs. Remember, conversations between you and your doctor are confidential, that means that they will not discuss your health or anything else you have talked about with your parents or your school.

Paying for your Appointment

Many clinics do charge for appointments. The government, under the Medicare scheme will refund some of the cost. If your doctor charges a fee on top of this, you may need to pay extra out of your own pocket. If the doctor 'bulk-bills', it means they charge only at the Medicare rebate rate so you don't have to pay anything.

If you don't have an income or you're on a health care card, most doctors will 'bulk-bill' you. It's worth asking at the clinic if this can apply to you.

If the doctor does bulk-bill, then they need your Medicare number, which is usually on your family's card. From the age of 15, you can apply for your own card. The doctor's receptionist can tell you how to do this. If you don't have a Medicare card, don't worry, you can still have an appointment.

If this is the case, the doctor may ask for your date of birth and full name so they can ring the Medicare hotline and obtain your number. Your visits to the doctor will still be kept confidential.

Adapted from:

<http://rosierespect.org.au/body-and-mind/going-to-the-doctor-on-your-own/>

Making an appointment



If you would prefer a new doctor, instead of your existing family doctor (if you have one), a good place to start is online at the Health Direct Australia Service Finder <http://www.healthdirect.gov.au/australian-health-services>. On this site you'll find a complete listing of doctors in your area. You could also visit [Sexual and reproductive health care, education and advocacy - Family Planning Victoria](#) where they will be able to help you find a GP in your area.

A Possible conversation to book an appointment with a GP via the telephone -

1. My name is _____ and I would like to make an appointment. Are you accepting new patients?

Some clinics only accept new patients at certain times of the year and others might be completely full. If your chosen clinic isn't accepting new patients, don't worry, just try the next one on your list.

2. Could I please see a [female or male] GP?

Remember, it is your right to request a female or male doctor and it is completely normal to make this request. If your preferred doctor isn't available straight away and your problem isn't urgent, you may want to wait a little while longer to see the GP you want.

3. Provide your details if this is your first appointment with this clinic, you will need to tell the receptionist your first name and surname, as well as your telephone number.

If you are having trouble making an appointment, there are bulk billing clinics which have a drop in service (this means you just walk in, and patients are seen in order of arrival). This method can take some time, so be prepared to wait.

Adapted from:

<http://rosierespect.org.au/body-and-mind/going-to-the-doctor-on-your-own/>