



# Healthwatch MK CIO Report on Brook Milton Keynes

**March 2017**

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## Introduction

This report contains feedback from young people about services provided by Brook Milton Keynes obtained from two sources. The first is an outreach session the Healthwatch Officer - Children and Young People, undertook at Stantonbury Campus on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2016. These comments are mostly from service users. The second was an inspection visit undertaken by the Young People's Healthwatch Milton Keynes (YPHMK) group on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2017 which was attended by 4 young people. This visit was followed up by a meeting of the group on 23<sup>rd</sup> February during which the inspection visit was discussed and feedback about the website obtained.

## Method

Stantonbury Campus - during the outreach to Stantonbury Campus, students in the sixth form were asked if they would be happy to make a comment about services provided by Brook; if they had used the services of Brook they were asked if they were willing to give more detailed feedback. During the outreach, 44 young people were spoken to, all of whom had heard of Brook. 30 pieces of more detailed feedback were given. These covered: the service; the staff; and accessibility.

Inspection Visit - the YPHMK group regularly have visitors to their meetings so that they can find out more about the services that are provided for young people locally. An Education and Wellbeing Specialist from Brook was invited to attend the meeting in January to talk about services provided by Brook. At this meeting the group asked if they could go on an inspection visit. The Healthwatch Officer then arranged a visit with Brook which took place at 6pm in the evening when the service was closed to users. During the visit the young people commented on: the waiting area; the consultation rooms; the literature and leaflets available; the staff; and privacy and confidentiality. After the visit the group was asked to find certain pieces of information on the web about Brook Milton Keynes. Comments on the website from this work are included in this report.

## Background information about the service provided by Brook

The young people asked that their visit should start with a short introduction so that they could find out more about services offered by Brook Milton Keynes. The information included here outlines the main points from this introduction.

Brook Milton Keynes provides services for under 25's on a drop-in basis. The service opens at 12pm on weekdays and waits can be long (up to 2 hours) as young people are seen on a first-come-first-served basis. Mainly young people go to Brook for advice about contraceptives but some go there for counselling.

On their first visit, young people are asked to fill in a form with basic information. They are given a sheet about confidentiality and asked to fill in a questionnaire about their use of alcohol. Everyone is offered chlamydia testing on their first

visit. They are given a coloured card with a number so that when it is their turn their colour and number is called out; this helps with confidentiality.

The staff try to have as little conversation at the reception desk as possible and can use another area if they need to speak confidentially with anyone. Other people waiting for the reception staff are encouraged to stand back to increase confidentiality. The chairs in the waiting room are arranged so many have their back to the window which is largely obscured with information posters at head height.

While the service sees more females than males there is a male worker if one is requested. The service is trying to encourage more males to use it and it aims to reach out more to the LGBT community. While friends and partners are encouraged to come to support the young person, Brook staff always see the client alone on their first visit to enable them to talk openly.

Brook is committed to its education programme because it recognises that through this method young people get to know about the service.

Brook Milton Keynes tries to gather feedback from service users. Young people are given a feedback form but the service recognises that young people, after their appointment, generally want to leave so are not minded to spend time filling in a feedback form.

## **Findings**

### **Attitudes to the service**

Young people value having the services that Brook offers, even if they don't use them themselves. During the outreach, the Healthwatch Officer received comments such as, "I like the idea of it being there. If something happened I would know where to go," and, "it is the most important service provided for teenagers. It gives them the information they need and if they want to talk about anything they can go there."

**Points for improvement:** none recommended. The service is valued by young people and should be maintained.

### **The reception area/ waiting room and registration**

The young people were asked to rate services on a scale of 1 to 4 where 1 was good and 4 was poor. The YPHMK group rated the reception area highly; one rated it as 2 out of 4 and the rest as 1. Comments made included, "really neat, seems inviting, comfortable," "it's really good and very neat and comfortable," and, "I like that there were some groups of chairs and others that weren't."

One of the service users made comments about the registration process. They said that, "while the service is helpful I feel that they expect you to say what you want rather than asking you what you want. They should reach out more."

### **Points for improvement:**

- One young person felt, “some areas could probably do with painting.”
- One young person suggested, “a box to put the ‘how did we do’ sheets would be good, maybe on the reception desk.”
- Think about how reception staff phrase their request for young people to provide information on the registration form so that it feels more like asking them what they want.

### **The consulting rooms**

The YPHMK group only saw one consulting room. Three young people rated it 1 out of 4 and one rated it 2 out of 4. Two comments were about the privacy of the rooms: “you [wouldn’t be able to] hear anything outside that your consultant is talking to you about,” and, “I like it because people will be able to share private issues without anyone interrupting or interfering.” One young person felt the room was, “very welcoming and private looking,” and that, “the counselling rooms have good comfy chairs.”

### **Points for improvement:**

- One young person felt some of the posters on the walls needed updating. She noted one that was about an event held in 2015.

### **Literature and leaflets**

All four young people rated these highly and gave them 1 out of 4. Comments included, “there are lots of leaflets that cover a lot of issues to do with our wellbeing not just to do with sex,” there is, “lots of information if needed,” and a “big variety of leaflets.” One young person described the leaflets using four words; these were, “variety, informative, simple, easy to read”.

### **Points for improvement:**

- None suggested. Continue to supply high quality leaflets on a variety of useful topics.

### **Staff**

The YPHMK group only met the Education and Wellbeing Specialist. Three young people rated her 1 out of 4 and one as 2 out of four. Their comments included, “they seem to be so welcoming and want to help,” and, “friendly, confident and knows what she’s talking about.”

During outreach at Stantonbury the Healthwatch Officer had asked specific questions about young people’s experiences with staff. These comments were overwhelmingly positive. Words used to describe them included, “approachable”, “friendly,” “not intimidating,” “helpful,” “welcoming,” and, “understanding.” One young person summed things up by saying, “The staff are easy to talk to. It is a good environment to talk openly.”

### **Points for improvement:**

- None suggested. Young people clearly value the staff who are working at Brook Milton Keynes

### **Privacy and confidentiality**

This is a matter of huge concern to young people. Three of the YPHMK group rated privacy and confidentiality as 1 out of 4 while one rated it as 3 out of 4. Those who thought highly made the following comments: “this is taken very seriously which is important,” “everything seems very confidential. If I came to Brook I would be confident my information would be kept private,” and, “top notch. Really secure. Makes the patient feel comfortable.”

The young person who rated privacy and confidentiality as 3 noted that while the service has, “high privacy and confidentiality .... sometimes when they need to share when a young person is not safe they have to share it within their staff.”

During the outreach to Stantonbury eight young people spoke about confidentiality. Of these, six felt that the service was good. They noted that, “It is private and confidential.” However, two young people had different opinions. One felt, “The front desk is not confidential. You have to say what you want in front of a waiting room full of people.” The other young person was worried if the service is really confidential. They were concerned about the amount of personal details that are collected. They were, “worried that they may send you a letter and then your parents would find out you’d been. If they didn’t have your address, then they couldn’t.”

### **Points for improvement:**

Maintaining privacy and confidentiality at all times is very important to young people. However, Brook must operate a safe service and for this reason information will need to be collected about the young person and on occasions this may need to be shared. Brook has a clear policy about the use of and sharing of personal information. This is included in the ‘Confidentiality at Brook’ sheet which is given to all young people on registration. The sheet explains that the staff will not share information about anyone outside the organisation, “unless you give us your permission, or we believe that you or another young person is in danger - and we would always talk to you before telling anyone else.” The sheet also explains that, “To make sure that we provide you with the best care members of staff have to share information about you with other members of the Brook team.”

The sheet goes on to explain that Brook will not, “contact you at home unless you have given us your permission and that’s why we always ask if we can write to you at home.”

It should also be noted that Brook’s approach to confidentiality is very clearly and prominently displayed on its website.

For these reasons this report offers no suggestions for improvement.

## Accessibility

Students at Stantonbury were asked if they knew where to go if they wanted to access the service and if the opening times were convenient. Several the students mentioned the drop-in service at school. Comments about accessibility included, “I know the location of the CMK service,” “there is a service in school and in CMK. I wouldn’t use the school service because there may be people there you know - unless it was urgent. I would go to CMK instead,” and, “There is a service on a Monday and there’s one at Sainsbury’s. That’s good because other schools don’t have a service at school. It’s good there is a service at school so you can go without going out of your way. If you don’t want your parents to know it’s easier if there’s a service at school.”

Another student commented that the service is, “very accessible. The opening times are convenient - it opens late so you can go after school.”

Only one student would not have known where to go. They commented, “I don’t know where the service is located. If I needed to use it, I would Google it.”

Points for improvement:

- None suggested. The students knew where to go or were confident that they would be able to find out the information they needed by searching for it on the web.

## Website

Members of the Young People’s Group were asked to go on the Brook website and offer comments on its overall layout and ease of use. Specifically they were asked to comment on how easy it was to find out the location of the service, its opening times and what services were offered. All members rated the website 1 out of 4.

Map/location - all the young people easily found a map and location details. One noted that the site gave them the ability to use their phone’s GPS to give them a route which they thought might be helpful if they were in an unfamiliar area.

Opening times - all the young people found the opening times without a problem. One noted that the times were given on a 24 hour clock and thought it might be easier for young people if times were given using am and pm.

Services available - all the young people felt the relevant information was there.

General comments: “I was really impressed by the website; I liked the colours and it seems well thought through and properly structured,” “I like it that confidentiality appears on the first page,” “the website reinforces confidentiality and that is good,” “everything on the website is relevant and simple to understand,” “the website is colourful and the visuals really help with navigation (as someone with dyslexia).”

Points for improvement:

- The opening times would be better displayed on a 12 hour clock with am/pm rather than using a 24 hour clock

## Conclusion

Young People's Healthwatch Milton Keynes would like to thank Brook for inviting them to inspect their service and for arranging the visit. The group felt that Brook is providing all young people in Milton Keynes with a good service and that young people appreciate that such a service is available to them.

The points for improvement suggested by the young people are:

- That more males are encouraged to use the service
- That some areas could do with painting.
- That a box for the 'how did we do' sheets could be put on the reception desk.
- That reception staff consider how they phrase their request for young people to provide information on the registration form so that it feels more like asking them what they want.
- That some of the posters on the walls should be updated.
- That the opening times on the website would be better displayed on a 12 hour clock with am/pm rather than using a 24 hour clock

The Young People's group also considered the possible future of the service. The group felt that the service should not be cut or removed and should be maintained. They were unhappy about any proposal to combine the service with adult sexual health services and felt it was important for young people to have a separate service. They felt that while Brook should work closely with services such as CAMHS and Compass it should not be combined into a hub of health services for young people. They believed that young people would feel more comfortable if they knew that everyone was there for their sexual health.

In summary, the group felt the service should remain separate and well resourced.