



FSRH Statement on release of Office for National Statistics Quarterly Conception Rates for Women under 18 data: July - September 2015

22nd November 2016

FSRH welcomes the publication of the Office for National Statistics' quarterly conceptions for women under 18 statistics for England and Wales for the third quarter of 2015.

The data continues to show a decrease in under 18 conceptions, with the rate falling from 22.1 conceptions per 1000 in the comparable quarter in 2014 to 19.7 per 1000 in 2015 – approximately an 11% decrease.

Whilst overall these figures indicate the maintenance of the downward trend in teenage conceptions, the data reveals variation in conception rates across local authorities that once again remains a cause for concern. For example, Rotherham's conception rate has nearly doubled compared with the previous quarter in 2015, rising from 17 to 31.3 per 1000, likewise Nottingham reported a rising rate of 24.7 to 37.7 per 1000 conceptions from the previous quarter.

FSRH is concerned that such differences indicate a disparity in funding of, and access to, contraception, suggesting that the £200 million cut to the public health budget is manifesting itself in restrictions in the provision of, and access to, contraceptive care across some parts of the England and Wales.

In light of this, with the Chancellor's Autumn Statement imminent, FSRH calls on the Government to ensure the protection of the public health budget in order to mitigate worsening access to contraceptive care and continue the downward trend in teenage conceptions.

Further, this downward trend in teenage conceptions cannot be maintained without enabling the UK's young people to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health. Therefore FSRH calls on the Government to listen to the overwhelming consensus that age-appropriate PSHE education should be made statutory in all schools.

Dr Asha Kasliwal, FSRH President said:

'We welcome this continued progress in the reduction of teenage conception rates. However, the regional variation that this data illustrates raises concerns that in some areas of England and Wales young people are struggling to access contraceptive care, mirroring reports from our membership that over the past year services are being closed or restricted due to increasing pressure on public health budgets.'

'Only with investment in sexual and reproductive healthcare and Government-backed statutory PSHE education will the UK truly be able to empower its young people to protect themselves against unintended pregnancy and maintain this downward trend in teenage conception rates.'

Ends

Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare, 27 Sussex Place, London NW1 4RG. Charity No. 1019969.

Notes to editors:

- The Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare (FSRH) is the largest UK professional membership organisation working at the heart of sexual and reproductive health (SRH), supporting healthcare professionals to deliver high quality care. It works with its 15,000 members, to shape sexual reproductive health for all. It produces evidence-based clinical guidance, standards, training, qualifications and research into SRH. It also delivers conferences and publishes The Journal of Family Planning and Reproductive Health Care. For more information please visit: www.fsrh.org
- Office for National Statistics (November 2016) Quarterly conception to women under 18: July-September 2015 Available at:
<http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/conceptionandfertilityrates/datasets/quarterlyconceptionstowomenagedunder18englandandwales?platform=hootsuite>
- For further information please contact:
Harry Walker
Head of External Affairs
Email: policymanager@fsrh.org
Telephone: 020 3751 8077