



FSRH statement on changes to the provision of fertility and sterilisation services by CCGs

12th December 2017

The FSRH is concerned about recent reports that nine Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) are considering plans to cut or modify access criteria to fertility and sterilisation services funded by the NHS. This means that thousands of men and women would be left with no access to IVF, specialist fertility treatments and female and male sterilisation (vasectomies).

Such plans come at a time when Local Authorities (LAs) are under severe budgetary pressure. Recently, the [Advisory Group on Contraception found that two thirds of LAs have made cuts to SRH services since 2016](#), with half of them reducing spending on contraceptive services in the year 2017/18. The [Local Government Association \(LGA\) has warned](#) that SRH services are at a tipping point.

Dr Asha Kasliwal, FSRH President said:

“Plans to cut the provision of fertility treatments and sterilisation services do not take into account the needs of men and women who require these services.

The existence of a post-code lottery for IVF treatment is unacceptable – socio-economic status and geographic location should not determine access to medical treatment.

Moreover, prevention is a basic principle of public health, and cuts to sterilisation services means prevention is not afforded a central place in the planning of healthcare services. This is a false economy, as cuts to prevention represent increased costs further down the line.

This is especially concerning in a time when community SRH services are being severely downsized as a result of cuts to the public health grant over the last years.

We urge CCGs to reconsider their plans and ensure fertility and sterilisation services are integrated into healthcare provision.”

Ends

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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
- The AGC report *“Cuts, Closures and Contraception: An audit of local contraceptive services in England”* details the severe impacts of cuts to public health and local authority budgets, based on Freedom of Information requests sent to every council in England. The report can be found [here](#).

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