

Importance to 'patients' or the population	Many people, particularly those from underserved groups are reluctant to go to sexual health services because they feel embarrassed or ashamed. This means they may take risks with their sexual health by not attending clinics.
Relevance to NICE guidance	Due to a lack of direct evidence, the committee were unable to make specific recommendations about things that services could do to reduce the perceived stigma of their potential users. Further research might enable future updates of this guideline to address the issue.
Relevance to the NHS	Reducing the stigma associated with sexual health services may make the people who are most at risk more likely to access the services and improve their sexual wellbeing.
National priorities	Medium
Current evidence base	No evidence
Equality considerations	People with the poorest sexual health are often those who would experience most stigma by attending sexual health services. This research could reduce inequalities in sexual health.