

A focus on correct and consistent condom use at ATU Sligo

Despite public health efforts to educate about sexual risk behaviours and provide strategies to reduce STI's, young people particularly the 18–24-year-old age group, continue to contract STI's at an alarming rate (Health Protection and Surveillance Centre (HSPC), 2021).

Aims

- Normalise the discussion about sexual health from the first day of a student's college journey
- Improve on campus access to free condoms and lubricant
- Facilitate correct and consistent condom use in the student population through demonstration of correct condom practise

Actions Four actions were identified to improve the sexual health of our student population

1. Sexual Health packs designed and distributed

- 2,500 sexual health packs distributed to students at:
- first year induction
- sexual Consent presentations
- six sexual health events throughout the year



2. Sexual health education begins on the first day of college

The student health nurse presented to 1st years at induction to introduce:

- sexual health packs
- signpost to available sexual health services
- to become more familiar to students, as an available resource



Barriers to condom use:

- cost
- accessibility
- embarrassment
- partner reaction
- peer influence

(Lally et al, 2015; McBride et al, 2012)

47.7% of Irish students reported inconsistent condom use (Dolphin et al 2018)

Condom promotion demonstrated a positive effect in 85% of studies for a high degree of condom use (Evans et al, 2020)



3. New condom dispensers

- new condom dispensers were installed in the Student Services building
- mobile condom dispensers sourced for use at all health promotion events

4. Demonstration of correct condom application

Education sessions highlighted:

- correct condom application technique
- explanation on the “do’s” and “don’ts” of condom use
- assorted sizes and shapes of cucumbers reflects reality!!

Results

- positive engagement and supportive feedback from students
- verbal feedback following condom demonstration indicated positive learning outcomes
- thousands of free condoms and lubricant sachets distributed

Conclusion Students supported:

- to be reflective about their sexual decisions
- with the tools to make safe and informed sexual health choices
- to be confident and competent to use condoms correctly and consistently
- to access free condoms and lubricant on campus

Collaboration

- HSE Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme (SHCPP)
- National Condom Distribution Service (NCDS)
- Mental Health & Wellbeing Project Officer, ATU Sligo
- Healthy Campus Co-ordinator, ATU Sligo
- 4th year Health Promotion Students, ATU Sligo

References:

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