



## National Chlamydia Screening Programme: Lessons learnt report

### The incident: changing date of birth on a test result

During the routine process of checking and validating all chlamydia test results, a client's date of birth (DOB) on the original self-completed request form did not tally with a result file received from the laboratory. The DOB on the test request form made the child under 13 years of age whereas the test result reported by the lab made the service user over 13 years of age. In the validation process, the two forms were found not to be matching.

Two separate issues needed to be addressed:

- the fact that a young person under 13 had taken a chlamydia test
- two different dates of birth for the same service user

### What was done well

Guidelines in the sexual health service's 'Safeguarding policy' were followed, and relevant staff and agencies were informed. Following further investigation, a formal referral was completed and submitted to the Children & Young People Services.

The validation process between original test request form and result issued by the laboratory worked effectively in that it identified the mismatch and highlighted that data had been changed.

Urgent investigation undertaken by the laboratory found that the laboratory staff had assumed it was the wrong date of birth and amended this. Measures have been implemented to prevent this from happening again.

### Lessons to be learnt

- professionals and others should never make assumptions regarding data on forms and subsequently altering these without checking first
- providers should ensure that effective processes are in place to detect test request from or for under 13 year olds
- providers should ensure that the chlamydia care pathway minimises the risk of processing test kits for under 13 year olds without being assessed

### Final Outcome

- the laboratory have implemented measures to ensure staff never change the DOB or other details and understand that this must always be something the service provider can investigate
- the sexual health service provider feels assured that they have appropriate procedures in place to identify and effectively act on potential safeguarding issues