

Freetest.me Universities Rate Highly in Sexual Health Report Card

Sexually transmitted infections are easy to push to the back of your mind, but with rising rates and almost three quarters of new diagnoses among those aged 16-24, sexual health is especially important at university.

Chlamydia, the most common STI shows no symptoms in most cases, however if left untreated can cause serious health issues such as pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) and infertility. Some reports suggest that up to one in four students report having contracted a sexually transmitted infection during their first year at university, with Chlamydia being by far the most common.

It's therefore important for universities to take sexual health seriously, and that's why Superdrug has released its Sexual Health Report Card – letting students know which universities are providing the best sexual health services.

It's Bristol that tops the list as the UK University with the best sexual health services, according to the report, and it's followed by Nottingham, St Georges, University of London, Dundee and Leeds.

For us at freetest.me (the leading provider of free online chlamydia test kits via www.freetest.me), it's no surprise to see some of our most active areas at the top of that list, with the top 6 universities in England being in regions that provide the freetest.me chlamydia testing service. It's great to see the regions that we work with, and the Universities within them share our ambition to provide the best and most accessible sexual health services in their communities.

Unfortunately, despite Bristol being praised for its "forward-thinking delivery methods" the region has recently stopped funding the freetest.me postal test kits, which tested over 2200 young people in the city each year and was described by patients as "top notch" and "If Carlsberg did chlamydia tests..!" in recent online reviews (www.trustpilot.com/review/freetest.me).

It is equally unsurprising to us that full freetest.me is not commissioned to provide screening in any of the bottom 10 rated universities. The report states that the bottom rated locations have "significant room for improvement" – we'd like to suggest they start by offering the freetest.me service!

Tim Alston, Technical Director at Preventx, the company behind freetest.me says "We receive 1000s of visitors every week looking to get tested, yet we're unable to offer a free postal test kit in areas that haven't commissioned the freetest.me service. We ask them what they'll do next, and over 80% say they'll simply 'not bother' to seek testing elsewhere – it's really disappointing".

The top ten in full are:

- 1 University of Bristol
- 2 University of Nottingham
- = St. Georges, University of London
- 4 University of Dundee
- 5 University of Leeds
- 6 University of Cambridge
- = Loughborough University
- 8 University of Edinburgh
- = Kings College London
- 10 University College London

Here are the bottom ten, named and shamed:

- 41 University of Southampton
- = University of St. Andrews
- = Queen Mary's University London
- = University of Surrey
- 46 Swansea University
- 47 University of Birmingham
- 48 City University London
- = University of Reading
- 49 University of East Anglia
- 50 Cardiff University

NOTES TO EDITOR

Sheffield based Preventx Limited provides the www.freetest.me chlamydia screening service in 100s of NHS trusts and Local Authorities around England and offers a private screening service via www.test.me. The free testing service dispatches over 120,000 test kits to young people each year. Preventx recently won the Medilink Yorkshire and Humber award for Outstanding Achievement after opening an in-house specialist sexual health laboratory that now processes around 100,000 tests per annum.

Tim Alston, Technical Director

T: 0333 344 4463 E: tim@preventx.com

