



shc Sexual Health Centre

Beyond the Bird Box: Innovative Sexual Health Outreach in Cork's Cruising Sites

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Reg Name: The Sexual Health Centre Ltd. | Charity No: CHY 19919 | Reg No: 130615
18 South Mall, Cork City, Co. Cork | 021 427 6676

Our Mission

- Provide comprehensive, up-to-date information about sexual health, wellbeing and sexuality.
- Offer a safe space for individuals to express concerns without fear and get non-biased answers.
- Help sexual health and sexuality be seen as a normal part of life.
- Encourage a nationwide acceptance of sexual health as an integral part of life.

Sexual Health Centre Services



Rapid HIV
Testing



HIV Support



Pregnancy Support
Services



Sex Workers Support



LGBTQIA+ Support



LGBTQIA+ Counselling



Compulsive Sexual Behaviour
Counselling



Mobile Unit



Youth Sexual Health



Free Condoms



STI
screening



Training



Advice Line



Vulnerable Groups



Fast Track Cities

Helpline number 021 427 6676

Website: www.sexualhealthcentre.com

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Background

- **Background:** Cruising sites are public environments where gay bisexual and men who have sex with men (gbMSM) meet to engage in sexual activity.
- These sites have been shown to play a part in HIV and other sexually transmitted infection transmission.
- By making condoms and lubricant readily available at these sites, gbMSM are better equipped to engage in safer sex and reduce the risk of STI transmission.



Why Birdboxes



- Bird boxes were selected as a **discreet and practical** method for distributing condoms and lubricant in public cruising areas.
- Their familiar appearance allows them to **blend naturally** into outdoor environments without drawing unwanted attention, which helps protect the privacy of users.
- The design also provides a **weather-resistant** and tamper-resistant way to store sexual health supplies, ensuring they remain clean, accessible, and usable.
- This subtle approach supports harm reduction by offering resources directly where they are needed—**without stigma or barriers**.

Implementation

- **Installation of Resources:** Three discreet wooden bird boxes have been strategically placed at known cruising sites to improve access to sexual health resources in high-risk environments.
- **Contents:** Each box is stocked with up to 160 condoms and 120 sachets of lubricant, supporting harm reduction and safer sex practices.
- **Digital Access:** A QR code is affixed to each bird box, linking directly to the Sexual Health Clinic (SHC) website, where individuals can access information, testing options, and support services.
- **Maintenance:** The bird boxes are checked and restocked weekly to ensure consistent availability of supplies.
- **Community Engagement:** A Health Promotion Worker regularly visits the sites, engaging in brief, non-judgmental conversations and signposting individuals to SHC services both in person and online—often using geolocation apps to extend outreach in these spaces.





- Approximately 480 condoms and 360 lubes are distributed each week
- 21 STI test kits distributed so far
- 85 gbMSM reached in 2024
- Frequently discussed topics:
 - PreP & PEP
 - HIV testing
 - U=U
 - STI screening
 - LGBTI support and counselling
 - Chemsex harm reduction

Community Engagement

- Geolocation apps (such as Grindr) have been used to inform users when our health promotion officer will be at these sites to facilitate one-to-one conversations and gather feedback on this health promotion strategy.
- The profile functions as a professional presence within a hookup-focused space, providing sexual health information and signposting to SHC services.
- Individuals can reach out to our health promotion officer with specific queries.
- This approach is particularly valuable for individuals who may not feel comfortable accessing traditional health services—such as married men or others who keep their sexual activity hidden—who may be unable to order SH24 kits to their home or purchase condoms openly.



Feedback

*Thank you so much for
the gifts.*

**Your efforts make a real
difference in helping people
protect themselves and
make informed choices.**

**IT'S COMFORTING TO KNOW THAT
SUCH SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE IN OUR
COMMUNITY. KEEP UP THE AMAZING
WORK!**

We truly appreciate your
services and help at the
cruising sites!

Thank you so much for the incredible work you do.
The free distribution of condoms and lubricants,
along with the informative sexual health education
you provide, is truly empowering.



Challenges and Solutions

Challenges

- **Littering-** improper disposal of condom wrappers, used condoms, and lubricant sachets.
- **Sexual solicitations-** most interactions are respectful, but the nature of these environments can sometimes blur boundaries. Staff are trained to maintain a professional presence, redirect interactions appropriately, and prioritize safety while delivering sexual health support.

Solutions

- **Weekly Site Cleaning-** To address littering and maintain the cleanliness of cruising sites
- **Installation of a Fourth Bird Box as a Bin-** To provide a discreet and accessible waste disposal option, a fourth bird box has been repurposed as a dedicated bin.
- **Familiarity and Trust-Building-**
Consistent presence of the Health Promotion Worker at the sites has helped establish recognition and trust within the community.



Thank You!