

The Online Chlamydia Initiative (OCI)
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
(for healthcare, community services and education
professionals)

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1. What is the Online Chlamydia Initiative (OCI)?

The Online Chlamydia Initiative (OCI) has been developed as part of the first South Australian Sexually Transmissible Infections (STI) Action Plan 2012-2015 to address the need for young people to have access to opportunistic STI screening that is free and readily available. The South Australian model has been informed by the pioneering work of Western Australia Department of Health's Online Chlamydia Project (available through www.couldihaveit.com.au or <http://www.getthefacts.health.wa.gov.au/>).

The OCI allows young people to access a website, complete a short self-screening questionnaire and – if eligible – download and print a pathology form, or download the form as a PDF to their smartphone, and take it to a pathology centre, where they will give a urine sample. The urine specimen is tested for [chlamydia](#) and [gonorrhoea](#), which are both STIs that can be identified by this testing method.

Positive results are then delivered via phone by a SHine SA nurse, removing the need for a clinical/doctor appointment throughout the testing process.

a. Who is eligible for testing?

Young people aged 16-30 years. There is a particular focus on vulnerable populations, specifically young people:

- from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds
- from culturally & linguistically diverse backgrounds
- who are gay or same-sex attracted
- who live in rural and remote areas of South Australia

b. Is there any cost?

The test itself is free and is Medicare exempt. Participants need to have access to a computer and printer, smartphone or tablet – computers may be accessed free through most public libraries (may be a small cost for printing), or you may be able to support a young person to access a computer and printer for free through your workplace.

If the test result is positive, treatment can be accessed for free through [SHine SA clinics](#) or [Clinic 275](#); there may be a cost for treatment through general practitioners if they don't bulk bill.

c. How is confidentiality maintained?

At SHine SA we are committed to ensuring the privacy of personal information provided to us. We believe that respect for client privacy is paramount in earning and maintaining our clients' trust.

The information that clients provide to us is voluntary, and confidential.

d. How do people get tested?

The test can be accessed online through www.getcheckednow.com.au and is completed through three simple steps:

STEP 1. Young people wanting to be screened for chlamydia and gonorrhoea go to the website and answer 7 questions to self-assess their risk and eligibility.

STEP 2. If eligible, the young person can then enter their details into the electronic form. The form is then downloaded and either printed out, or saved to a their smartphone or tablet.

STEP 3. The young person then visits an SA Pathology (formerly IMVS) Patient Collection Centre with their printed or saved form. Locations of SA Pathology collection centres are listed on the bottom of the test request form.

On arrival at the SA Pathology collection centre:

- The young person should give their printed form, or show their smartphone or tablet with the saved form to the receptionist.
- The young person will then be provided with testing equipment which is free, and asked to provide a urine sample. Ideally the young person should not have passed urine for at least one hour prior to giving the sample.
- The sample is then given to the SA Pathology receptionist for processing.

e. How do participants get their results?

Results should be available within 2-3 days for clients in the Adelaide metropolitan area, and 3-5 days in country areas. All results requested through the Online Chlamydia Initiative are reviewed and followed up by SHine SA nurses.

Participants will only be notified if they receive a **positive test result**. A SHine SA nurse will contact them using the details they have provided on the website.

Participants can telephone the SHine SA Sexual Healthline on 1300 883 793 between 9am and 1pm, Monday to Friday if they want to ask about their results or if they have any questions or concerns relating to the test or its process.

f. What happens if the result is positive?

Participants testing positive will need to visit a doctor or Sexual Health clinic for treatment. The SHine SA nurse will discuss this with the participant when they are informed of the test result.

Chlamydia and gonorrhoea are treated with different antibiotics, which require different dosages, length of treatment and administration methods.

For more information on recommended treatment follow the links below:

- [Chlamydia treatment](#)
- [Gonorrhoea treatment](#)

Chlamydia and gonorrhoea are both Notifiable Diseases. Under the SA Public Health Act 2011, medical practitioners and diagnostic laboratories have to report a range of infections (some of which are STIs) to the Communicable Disease Control Branch (CDCB) of SA Health. Positive tests for chlamydia or gonorrhoea are notifiable. SA Health may contact the client who has a positive result, but all of these processes are treated as private and confidential. The SHine SA nurse will explain more about this to the client in that instance.

The links below to the CDCB have more information about notifiable diseases:

- [For health workers](#)
- [For clients](#)

g. What happens if the result is negative?

Only those clients who receive a positive test result for chlamydia or gonorrhoea will be contacted. Clients who want to contact SHine SA regarding their results can phone to speak to a nurse on the Sexual Healthline on 1300 883 793 between 9am and 1pm, Monday to Friday.

h. What happens if someone has symptoms?

Young people experiencing symptoms of any STI should see a doctor or sexual health clinic. The Online Chlamydia Initiative only tests for chlamydia and gonorrhoea which are two common STIs. Symptoms may be caused by other infections, sexually transmitted or otherwise, and so a full medical review is recommended. Prompt review by a doctor or sexual health nurse can also result in earlier initiation of treatment, lessening the discomfort and risk of potential complications of infections and transmissions to partners.

i. What about partners?

It is important that partners of participants who test positive through the Online Chlamydia Initiative are advised to get tested and treated. There are a variety of methods by which notification of partners can occur and not all require the client to disclose their involvement.

Clients can inform partners themselves either face-to-face, by telephone, or through anonymous means such as the websites <http://www.letthemknow.org.au/LTK.html> or <http://www.thedramadownunder.info/notify/>. Participants can also receive support to notify partners through the health practitioners involved in their care.

The SHine SA nurse, as well as the health professional providing treatment, will discuss these methods with the participant to ensure that the importance of partner notification is understood and that the participant's safety is ensured throughout.

2. How is it relevant to my organisation and role?

The Sexually Transmissible Infections Action Plan 2012-2015 states "The responsibility for prevention, testing, treatment and management of STIs in South Australia is shared among state government services, publicly funded hospitals and clinics, ACCHS, non-government agencies and GP practices."

Increases in STIs, particularly chlamydia and gonorrhoea diagnoses in South Australian youth, highlight a need for increased availability and promotion of screening tools for such infections.

Youth health workers, particularly those working with vulnerable populations, have an important role in promoting and facilitating access to the Online Chlamydia Initiative (OCI). Your role can include:

- promoting the OCI through distribution of promotional materials
- talking to clients about the importance of maintaining good sexual health, and the reasons why testing for STIs is an important part of this process
- showing clients the website and familiarising them with the process to illustrate how easy it is to be tested using the online process
- supporting clients (where needed) with transport to and from SA Pathology collection centres
- inviting SHine SA educators to come and speak with your clients about our services (contact <mailto:holley.skene@health.sa.gov.au>)

The OCI is not intended to replace testing of clients who present to a health professional for an STI screen. For best practice such clients should receive a face-to-face full sexual health history and individually tailored STI screen. However, if a young person should present to a health centre requesting assistance to use the online process, then health workers should facilitate access to the website and assist participants to complete the form and complete the testing process as described above.

3. How can the Online Chlamydia Initiative benefit my clients?

The OCI offers your clients a method of being screened for chlamydia and gonorrhoea that has greater convenience, is more discreet and has no cost. There is no need to see a health practitioner unless the test is positive. Clients can give a sample at their convenience (during collection centre opening hours) and do not have to divulge details of their sexual history unless requiring further testing or treatment.

4. Who wouldn't be appropriate to refer for online testing?

Clients who have no method for contact (i.e. have no access to a phone) would not be suitable for the OCI, as it is important for SHine SA nurses to be able to contact clients with their test results. Other clients who would not be eligible for the OCI would include:

- clients outside the target age range of 16-30 years
- International students and travellers
- residents from other Australian states

5. Are there other infections that clients should be aware of?

Chlamydia and gonorrhoea are two common STIs but there are others that clients should be aware of. Information on STIs, blood-borne viruses and safer sex practices is available through

- <http://www.shinesa.org.au/go/information-and-resources/choose-a-topic/sexually-transmitted-infections>

6. How can I promote safer sex strategies to my clients?

Counselling clients on safer sex strategies should include reinforcing with clients that they always have the right to say "no" and promoting the use of condoms. You can also provide your client with one or more of the SHine SA pamphlets which address safer sex. These can be downloaded from

<http://www.shinesa.org.au/go/information-and-resources/shine-sa-resources/leaflets>

SHine SA offers [training and workshops](#) for workers in community and youth services relating to talking with clients about sexual health and relationships.

SHine SA also offers community education sessions for groups (contact holley.skene@health.sa.gov.au)

7. Where can I get more information?

More information on the Online Chlamydia Initiative is available through this website www.getcheckednow.com.au or by contacting the SHine SA Sexual Healthline:

Tel: 1300 883 793

Toll free: 1800 188 171 (country callers only)

Monday-Friday, 9am-1pm

sexualhealthhotline@health.sa.gov.au