

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH FACT SHEET 2019

All women have the right to good sexual and reproductive health across the lifespan. This fact sheet details the sexual and reproductive health of the **99,930 women and girls** who call Whittlesea home.¹

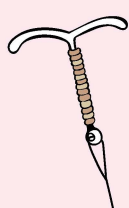
BIRTHS

3,672 babies were born to Whittlesea residents in 2016, which is 523 more than reported in 2015.²

Total fertility rate (TFR) refers to total number of children born or likely to be born to a woman in her lifetime.

According to 2016 data, the TFR for women in Whittlesea was 1.99, which was higher than the Victorian average of 1.73.²

The adolescent fertility rate (AFR) is defined as the number of births per 1,000 women ages 15 to 19. The AFR for Whittlesea was 9.1, which is lower than the Victorian average of 10.4.³

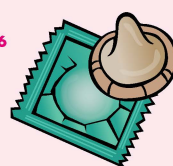
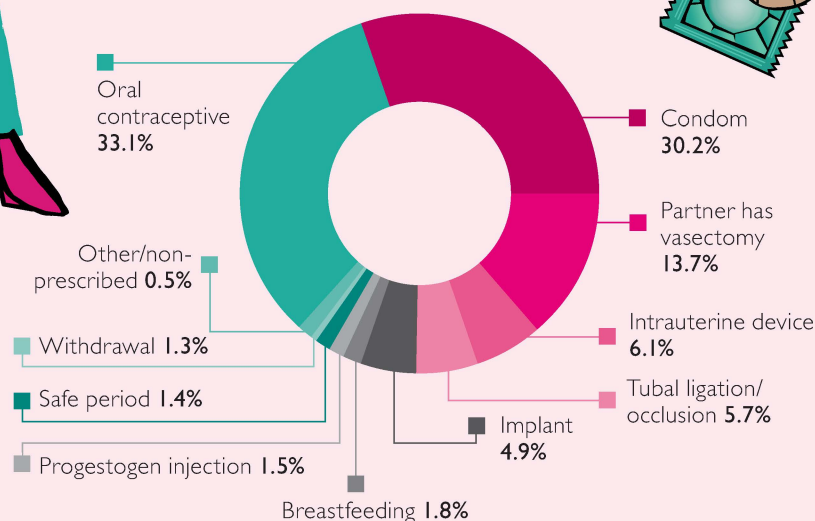


CONTRACEPTION

66% of heterosexually active women aged 16-49 report contraception use.⁴

Less effective contraceptive methods and those prone to human error (such as the oral contraceptive pill and condoms) are used most commonly, despite the availability of a number of long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs) proven to be more effective.^{1,2} There is an unmet need for women in the northern region to be informed about and have access to LARCs and abortion services.⁵

PRIMARY CONTRACEPTIVE METHODS⁶



UNINTENDED PREGNANCY AND ABORTION

It is estimated that approximately **1 in 2 Australian women** have had an **unintended pregnancy**.⁵

It is estimated that **1 in 3 Australian women** will have an **abortion** at some point in her life.⁵

ENDOMETRIOSIS

Endometriosis is an under-recognised **chronic disease** where cells similar to those that line a woman's uterus grow in other parts of the body, usually around the pelvis. It is estimated to affect more than **700,000 Australian women and girls**.⁸ The average time between the onset of symptoms and diagnosis of endometriosis is between **7 to 12 years**, leaving many women suffering the associated pain and symptoms in silence.⁸



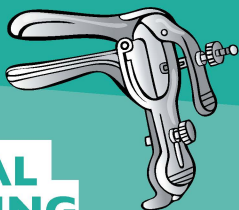
SEXUALLY TRANSMISSIBLE INFECTIONS (STIS)

For women, **chlamydia** is the most commonly reported STI in Whittlesea, accounting for approximately **76%** of all notifications for women.⁸ The **chlamydia** rate of **272** per 100,000 people is **lower than the Victorian rate of 423** per 100,000 people.⁸

HEPATITIS B

In Whittlesea, the prevalence rate of **chronic hepatitis B** is slightly higher than the Victorian prevalence rate of **0.99%**. Currently **1.04%** of the population in Whittlesea are living with **chronic hepatitis B**, which equates to **2,640** people.⁹

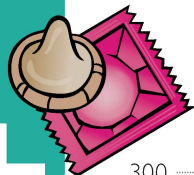
Hepatitis B causes **inflammation of the liver** and can lead to **liver cirrhosis** and **cancer**.⁹



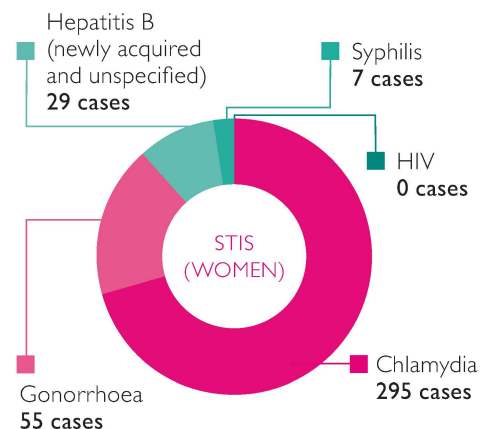
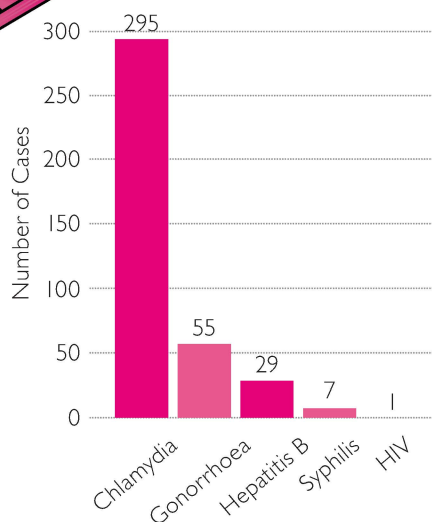
CERVICAL SCREENING

53.8% of women in the Whittlesea region participated in **cervical screening** in 2014 – 2015.¹⁰ This reflects a drop of **1.5%** since 2013. It is recommended that all people with a cervix aged 25-74 should have a **Cervical screening test**, even if they have been vaccinated for HPV.

81% of women diagnosed with cervical **cancer** in 2014 did not participate in **regular cervical screening**.¹⁰



WHITTLESEA STI NOTIFICATIONS¹⁰

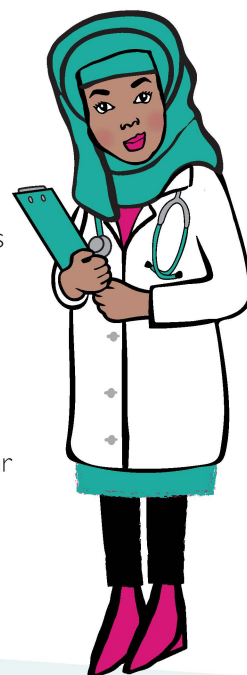


FEMALE GENITAL CUTTING (FGC)

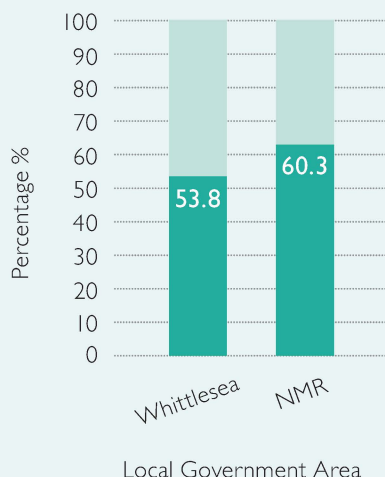
A significant population of women in the NMR are from communities where FGC is practised.¹¹ At WHIN we recognise FGC as a violation of human rights and a harmful traditional practice with no known health benefits. For more information, please consult WHIN's dedicated FGC resources on our website.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

In Whittlesea, 180 sexual offences were reported by females in 2018.¹² The rate of victim reports of 9.1 per 10,000 women were lower than the Victorian average of 14 per 10,000 women.¹²



% PARTICIPATION IN CERVICAL SCREENING 2014 - 2015¹⁴



AT WHIN, WE ADVOCATE FOR:

Women's rights to experience safe and respectful intimacy and relationships, and freedom to express and their sexuality without abuse, discrimination or violence.

Women's rights to choose if, when, how and how often they have children.

Sexual and reproductive health services that are accessible, affordable and appropriate.

The **NMR** includes the local government areas (**LGAs**) of Banyule, Darebin, Hume, Moreland, Nillumbik, Whittlesea and Yarra.

REFERENCES: Refer to <https://www.whin.org.au/resources/sexual-and-reproductive-health-resources/> for the full list of fact sheet references.