

25 February 2025

SHQ goes back to school

SHQ is delivering free STI testing at university O-Days this year

Clinicians and educators recently attended Curtin University O-Day on 19th February, successfully providing 20 STI tests to attendees. They will also be attending Edith Cowan University Mount Lawley O-Day on 25th February and Joondalup on 27th February.

Stigma surrounding sexually transmitted infections and access to testing have long been barriers to people getting tested. By making our services available and free we are removing some of these barriers and improving access to testing and STI prevention.

SHQ Medical Director, Dr Samantha Johnson said:

“International students are often considered at a higher risk of contracting sexually transmitted infections, which is one of the reasons we decided to make testing free at these events, even for people without a Medicare card.

“By engaging with us in this convenient and accessible way, we are introducing university students to SHQ and our range of services so the next time they need support they will know where to go.

“The mobile STI testing was originally piloted at Sexpo Perth last year where the service was so popular, we ran out of tests mid-afternoon on both Saturday and Sunday.

“Mobile testing is just one of the many programs SHQ is running to improve access to sexual and reproductive healthcare.

“We have attended events and run education sessions at Western Australian Universities for years and students are always very keen to talk to us, so it made sense to expand our mobile STI testing to on-campus events.”

Rates of chlamydia and gonorrhoea have been increasing in Western Australia over the past 5 years, with chlamydia peaking at 12,885 cases in 2023 and gonorrhoea reaching 5207 cases reported last year. These are both common STIs in Australia but often have no noticeable symptoms. However, both are very easy to test for and can be treated with a course of antibiotics

Students who would like to access our free STI testing at the upcoming O-Days can complete a brief testing questionnaire via a QR code, collect their own samples with our SHQ testing kit in a nearby bathroom, and return it to our stall. Our friendly clinicians will then follow up with the results with their chosen contact method. All results and information collected are completely private and confidential.

Dr Samantha added,

“Not only is it important for clinicians to get out of the clinic and make themselves available to help keep the community healthy and safe, it’s also fun! I had a great time talking to Curtin Students, you can learn a lot about the diverse needs of the community by meeting people where they are and having a casual chat.

“We are grateful for the support of the ECU and Curtin University Guild in bringing free STI testing to their campus events and we look forward to bringing this vital service to more community events in the future.”

SHQ also runs a dedicated Youth Clinic every Thursday night where anyone aged 18 or under can access general consultations with no out-of-pocket cost for general consultations and low-cost procedure appointments.

Dr Samantha is available for additional comment.



SHQ Health Promotion Officer Luisa Goodie and Medical Director Dr Samantha Johnson (L-R) at Curtin University O-Day on 19 February 2025.