

Visiting a Sexual Health Clinic

Safe sex practices are only half the job. As a sex worker, it's also important to get your sexual health checked regularly. There are public sexual health clinics throughout Sydney and regional NSW. Here are some things to expect when you visit.

Medicare Cards

You may be asked for your Medicare card but you are not obliged to provide it. You do not have to give your real name or date of birth, however, if you forget the details you gave, you won't be able to collect your test results. You may also be asked for a phone number, but this is only so you can be contacted about results and so your record can be easily located when you return.

Personal Information

If you do provide your Medicare card, you are still able to request that certain information is not recorded on your file. For example, you can ask that your sex work status or information about your sexual partners is not recorded. In fact, you can ask for anything you choose to be omitted from your file.

Drop-In Days

Some sexual health clinics have designated drop-in days for sex workers. Check out their websites, or give them a call and ask if they have any specific services for sex workers.

Testing

Familiarise yourself with the full range of tests that are available and don't be afraid to ask for any or all of them. If clinic staff make assumptions about your sexuality or your private or work sexual practices, by suggesting that you don't need certain tests (for example, an anal swab), it is fine to disagree with them and ask for those tests to be done.

Treatment

If you need treatment for a sexually transmitted infection (STI), a publicly-funded sexual health clinic will usually provide this for free, whilst a GP generally won't do this. Also, if you are a sex worker and you have symptoms that indicate you may have an STI, they may provide treatment on the spot. Receiving immediate treatment for the suspected STI can reduce the time it takes to return to work.

Certificates

You can ask the clinic for a 'Certificate of Attendance' in your working name. You are not required to show your test results to your workplace, as they are confidential by law. A certificate of attendance certifies that you attended the clinic and should be issued to you regardless of your results or expected results.

Support

You can call SWOPconnect to find out where your nearest sexual health clinic is. You can also ask a peer (including Mandarin, Cantonese and Thai speakers) to answer any questions you may have about your visit.

Contact

Email: swopconnect@swop.org.au

Phone: (02) 9206 2166

Freecall: 1800 622 902 (outside Sydney, within NSW)