

SEX WORKERS

STATEMENT

At Melbourne Sexual Health Centre (MSHC) we believe that providing sexual health care to all sex workers is integral to the overall health of sex workers and safety in work places. Therefore, we aim to provide a safe, non judgmental environment for you to attend MSHC every month for your sexual health check up and certificate.

Our services are confidential, we do not require a Medicare Number and you may use a "pseudonym" or make up name. Please remember the information you have given us. We only ask that we have at least one way of contacting you in case we need to.

SEX WORK

Definition: The provision of sexual services by one person to, or for, another (whether or not of a different sex) in return for payment or reward.

SEXUAL SERVICES

In Victoria there are three main definitions of sexual services:

- Having sexual penetration with another person. Oral, anal and vaginal sex are all forms of sexual penetration whether you perform this or have it performed on you.
- Masturbating someone; the genitals can be clothed and the person does not have to cum, this is still considered to be masturbation.
- Allowing someone to view or participate in acts of sexual penetration, masturbation or any form of physical contact which has sexual overtones.

LEGAL OR NOT?

Victorian law about sex work is governed by:

1. Prostitution Control Act 1994
 2. Health (Infectious diseases) Regulations 2001
- In Victoria sex work is legal if the Prostitution Control Act (1994) (version Incorporating

amendments as at 1 January 2010) is adhered to, that is:

- to work you must be over 18 and the choice to practicing sex work must be yours
- It is illegal for anyone to force you or bully you into practicing sex work

LEGAL

To be legal, sex work must be carried out in brothels, through an escort agency or you can work as a private worker; BUT all of these options must comply with the Prostitution Control Act (1994) and have a current license. Licenses are issued by the Business Licensing Authority (BLA) and all license numbers must be preceded by the letters PCA as defined in the Prostitution Control Act.

Licenses must be displayed near the front entrance of premises or carried by you if you are a private worker. Brothels are also regulated by local council and require a planning permit issued by the council in accordance with the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

ILLEGAL

The following forms of sex work are all illegal:

- Street sex work
- Working in unlicensed brothels
- Working in a premises that does not have a planning permit from the local council
- Working in escort agencies that are not licensed
- Working in private without being registered with the BLA

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A SEX WORKER: MONTHLY HEALTH CHECKS

In accordance with the Prostitution Control Regulations (1994) you must have swabs taken every month for Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea and Trichomoniasis and blood tests every three months for Syphilis and

This fact sheet is designed to provide you with information on Sex Workers. It is not intended to replace the need for a consultation with your doctor. All clients are strongly advised to check with their doctor about any specific questions or concerns they may have. Every effort has been taken to ensure that the information in this pamphlet is correct at the time of printing.

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HIV. Each month the clinician will also examine your genital area for the presence of herpes and warts. Depending on your gender, the specimens we require can include a urine test and/or swabs from your throat, vagina, cervix and anus.

On your first presentation at MSHC we will also do a blood test to check whether you have had Hepatitis B, are a carrier of Hepatitis B, or been vaccinated with Hepatitis B. If it is appropriate we can vaccinate you for Hepatitis B. The vaccination consists of three doses given on the day you come in, one month and then six months later. This gives most people life long protection.

At each visit, once the examination and tests are done, your clinician will write you a certificate which states that you have attended for sexually transmitted infections (STI) screening and whether swabs and/or blood tests have been performed. If you have not phoned or attended for your results from your previous visit the clinician will also give you these results.

Please take the opportunity to talk with your clinician about any sexual health issues that are concerning you.

THE BROTHEL'S RESPONSIBILITIES

A brothel must provide you with free condoms and lubrication, clean showers and baths, a continuous supply of hot and cold water and clean linen in accordance with the Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001.

GENERAL INFORMATION

As MSHC can be very busy we advise you to attend as early as possible for the session.
Monday to Thursday 9am-12.30pm and 1.30pm-5pm
Friday 1.30pm-5pm.

Try not to attend on the day you need your certificate as if the clinic is very busy you may not get seen. Please allow two hours for your visit at MSHC.

For further information on your responsibilities and those of the brothel you work for please visit:

<http://www.sexworker.org.au/> (RhEd website)
<http://www.swop.org.au/> (SWOP website)

REFERENCES

Resourcing Health and Education in the Sex Industry (RhED))

Prostitution Control Act (1994)

Legal Issues for Professionals in the Sex Industry (LIP) <http://www.communitylaw.org.au>

Scarlet Alliance (the Australian Sex Workers Association) <http://www.scarletalliance.org.au>