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Teenage Pregnancy Strategy for England

We very much welcome the findings of the Article by Kaye Wellings and colleagues¹ (May 23, 2016) that reports the changes in pregnancies in girls aged under 18 years in England since [A: please provide specific time frame]. This careful analysis identifies some of the many and varied factors that affect this important outcome; amongst these factors are activities that were implemented as part of the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy. Given that country-level (or even regional-level) randomised controlled trials are not possible in such large and complex areas, the kind of detailed analyses described by Wellings and colleagues are immensely helpful in moving beyond simple associations and in lending support to the idea that the Strategy contributed substantially to this result.²

Sexual behaviour is shaped by a web of interconnected factors that operate at individual, relational, family, community and societal levels. The Strategy was designed to address this. Our thesis is that it was the combined effort of a number of individual components; coordinated action at the national, regional, and local levels was a key guiding principle of the 10-year programme.

To describe how this happened, we have recently produced two articles which provide further detail of the Strategy.^{3,4} First, we explore the key components within the WHO ExpandNet framework; this provides a framework with which to identify the important features of successful scaling up of policies linked with complex issues.³

Second, we have produced a short summary of the Strategy,⁴ and a working paper that provides considerably more detail of the various activities of the Strategy at

national and local levels, including information on where to access the extensive supportive resources that were developed to assist policy makers and practitioners. These resources will be of interest to readers who wish to gain more understanding of the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy and some of the factors behind its success.

[A: please add Conflict of interests]

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- 1 Wellings K, Palmer MJ, Geary RS, et al. Changes in conceptions in individuals younger than 18 years and the circumstances of young mothers in England in 2000–12: an observational study. *Lancet* 2016; published online May 23. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(16\)30449-4](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(16)30449-4).
- 2 Toynbee P. 2013 The drop in teenage pregnancies is the success story of our time <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/dec/13/drop-teenage-pregnancies-success-story-children> (accessed April 20, 2016).
- 3 Hadley A, Chandra-Mouli V, and Ingham R. (2016a) Implementing the United Kingdom Government's 10-year teenage pregnancy strategy for England (1999 to 2010): applicable lessons for other countries. *J Adolesc Health* 2016; 10.1016/j.jadohealth.2016.03.023 **[A: unable to find reference from details or from doi. Could you check, and provide a direct link if available]**
- 4 Hadley, A. The Teenage Pregnancy Strategy for England: concerted effort can make a difference. *Entre Nous*. No 80. 2014. http://eeca.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Entre_Nous_80.pdf (accessed April 26, 2016).

Note :

Hadley, A., Ingham, R. and Chandra-Mouli, V. (2016b) Implementing the United Kingdom's ten-year teenage pregnancy strategy for England (1999-2010): How was this done and what did it achieve? **[A: reference removed. Please provide a full reference if the paper has been published]**