

Our ref: HG/cob

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Dear Ms Milbank,

We are writing to you as the Welfare Executive at The University of Nottingham Students' Union, and on behalf of the 32,000 students that we have been elected to represent – over 7,000 of whom are postgraduate students.

Over the past years, the lack of STI testing available in the Cripps Medical Centre (the on campus medical centre) has been a source of concern for many students, and many have raised this concern with the Students' Union, and we have been lobbying for fully funded STI testing on campus – including for those students without symptoms.

Last year, over 1,300 students signed petition cards that were delivered to the Vice-Chancellor asking for a Sexual Health and a Mental Health worker at the University – which highlights exactly how much the student population here at the University of Nottingham feel that the issue of sexual health should be a priority for the medical centre on campus.

The news that there is now funding for 1,000 people at Cripps to be tested for the four most common STIs has been welcomed by both the Welfare Committee and Students' Union Councillors. . We are, however, concerned about the upper age limit that has been imposed on this funding – with those students who are over 25 unable to be tested at Cripps. The Students' Union is concerned that a large number of our members do not have easy access to a vitally important service that other students can access – and ask for this upper age limit to be removed, to allow all our members the opportunity to be tested regardless of whether they are asymptomatic. Age discrimination in employment has recently been outlawed, and we urge you to reconsider this age limit within this Medical Centre. We appreciate that there is testing available for anyone at the City Hospital – but as the Students' Union we have clear Equal Opportunity policies, as well as policies to ensure that provision is equal for all students, and should not exclude any group of students – for example mature students.

Further, we (The Students' Union Welfare Executive and Officer), are continuing to campaign for permanent STI testing and a Sexual Health Clinic to be available at Cripps Medical Centre – as we feel this is vitally important for our members. We are writing to you today asking for you to allocate permanent funding to Cripps to support such a service for the next financial year – as this would be hugely beneficial to the client base at Cripps: currently more than 30,000 – the majority of whom are students. Indeed, in a yearly survey conducted by the University, a number of students regularly highlight the lack of STI testing as an area of concern.

As a Students' Union, we currently run a very successful campaign throughout the year that highlights the importance of safe sex ("Easy Tiger"), and we also run a Sexual Health & Guidance week. The introduction of a permanent Sexual Health Clinic and testing facility at Cripps would be very welcomed by the Students at this University.

Thank you for your time, and we look forward to hearing from you soon,

Yours sincerely

HELEN GILL

Welfare Officer 2006-2007

On behalf of the Welfare Executive Committee 2006 / 2007

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cc: **Dr Ian Trimble**, Chair of the Professional Executive Committee
Dr Hugh Porter, Cripps Medical Centre, University Park
Professor David Riley, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for the Student Experience, University of Nottingham
Mr Robin Dollery, Head of Student Services, University of Nottingham