



# Annual Epidemiological Report

September 2018

Non-specific urethritis in Ireland, 2017

## Key Facts

- There were 652 cases of non-specific urethritis notified in 2017, compared to 740 cases in 2016
- The notification rate (NR) continued to decrease, to 13.7 per 100,000 population

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## Introduction

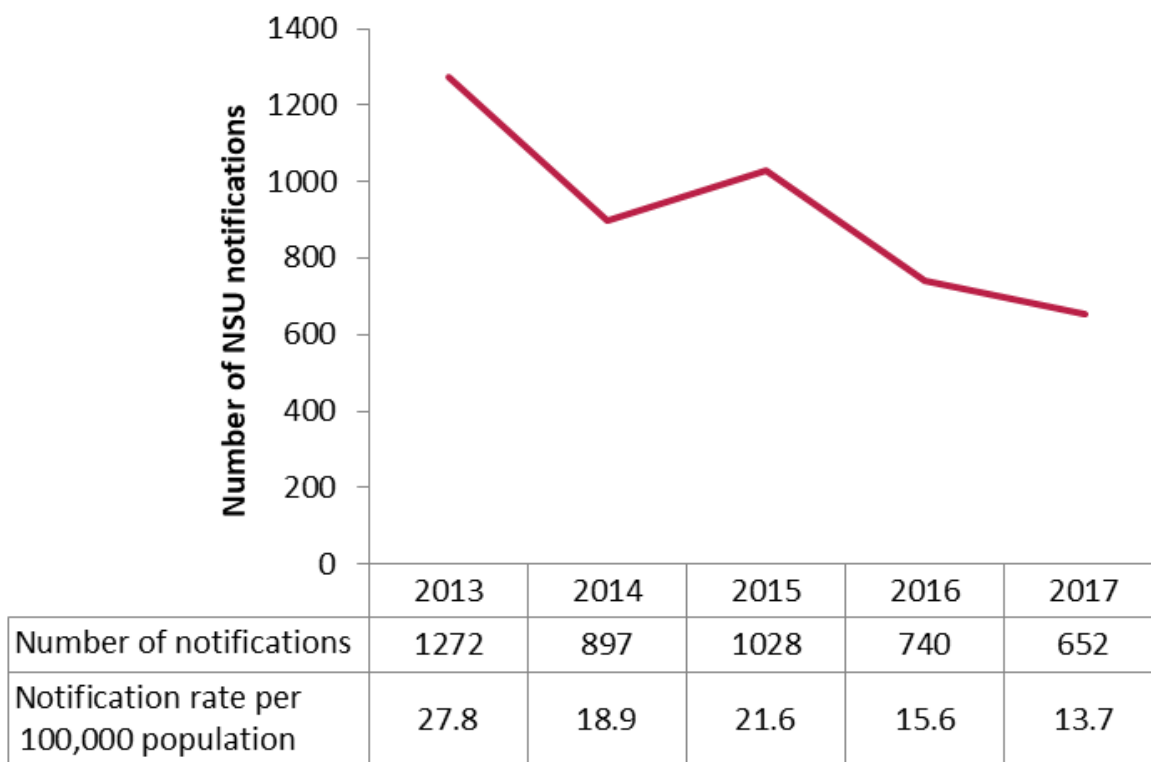
Non-specific urethritis (NSU) is defined as urethral inflammation that is not the result of infection with *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*. NSU can have a number of causes, including irritation to the urethra by soaps, creams or an object, or sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Where caused by STIs, the commonest organisms responsible for NSU are *Chlamydia trachomatis* and *Mycoplasma genitalium* [1]. Chlamydia is a notifiable disease, and cases are generally notified separately as chlamydia rather than as NSU. Reports on chlamydia are available at <http://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/hivstis/sexuallytransmittedinfections/chlamydia/surveillanceanddiseasereports/>

NSU is notifiable under the Infectious Disease Regulations in Ireland [2]. Notifications from STI clinics and primary care are collated by Departments of Public Health and notified to the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) on a quarterly basis. Data are notified as total numbers of NSU, with breakdown to clinic level available for some, but not all, HSE areas (see Table 1). Data for three STI clinics are outstanding for 2017; it is unlikely that these data will be reported as the pattern of missing data is unchanged since 2013 (Table 1).

## Epidemiology

There were 652 cases of NSU notified in Ireland in 2017, a decrease of 12% compared to 2016 when 740 cases were notified (Figure 1). The notification rate (NR) continued to decrease in 2017, and was 13.7 per 100,000 population, a 37% decrease from 2015 (NR 21.6/100,00 population). Interpretation of these trends is difficult given the absence of information on the causes of NSU.

**Figure 1: Notifications of NSU in Ireland, 2013-2017 (notification rates shown in table)**



## Technical notes

1. Data for this report were provided in aggregate format by Departments of Public Health, further detail is provided in Table 1.
2. Aggregate data were collated on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2018, and were correct at the time of publication.
3. Notification rates were calculated using population data that was taken from Census 2016 (for calculations for 2014-2017) and Census 2011 (for calculations for 2013) from the Central Statistics Office.

**Table 1: Returns of NSU by HSE area, 2017**

HSE Area	Site*	Data returned
East <sup>†</sup>	Public Health	Yes
	GUIDE clinic	Yes
	Mater clinic	-
	Gay Men's Health Service	-
Midlands	Public Health	Yes
	Portlaoise STI clinic	Yes
	Mullingar STI clinic	Yes
Midwest <sup>†</sup>	Public Health	Yes
	Limerick STI clinic	Yes
	Nenagh STI clinic	Yes
	Ennis STI clinic	Yes
Northeast	Public Health	Yes
	STI clinic	Yes
Northwest	Public Health <sup>#</sup>	Yes
	Sligo STI clinic	Yes
	Letterkenny STI clinic	Yes
Southeast <sup>†</sup>	Public Health	Yes
	Carlow STI clinic	Yes
	Clonmel STI clinic	Yes
	Waterford STI clinic	Yes
South <sup>†</sup>	Public Health	Yes
	STI clinic	Yes
West	Public Health	Yes
	STI clinic	-

\*Public Health includes GPs, other primary care, student health and others. Yes, data returned; -, data not returned. †Data were collated nationally as the total number of NSU notifications in the HSE area, the number of notifications by site was not collated nationally. #Data does not include Donegal patients who may have attended Altnagelvin, Derry.

## Further information

- Previous years' NSU data are available as part of annual STI and epidemiological reports at the following locations:
  - 1995-2012: <http://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/hivstis/sexuallytransmittedinfections/publications/stireports/2010-2012reports/>
  - 2013-2016: <http://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/hivstis/sexuallytransmittedinfections/publications/stireports/> and <http://www.hpsc.ie/abouthpsc/annualreports/annualepidemiologicalreports1999-2016/>

- Keep up to date with HIV and STIs in Ireland at <http://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/hivstis/sexuallytransmittedinfections/publications/stireports/stiweeklyreports/>.

## Acknowledgements

HPSC would like to sincerely thank all who provided data for this report; Microbiology Laboratories, infectious disease surveillance staff within the Departments of Public Health, Consultants in Infectious Disease/Genitourinary Medicine, STI clinics and GPs.

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## References

1. P Horner, K.B., C O'Mahony, P Muir, K Radcliffe, C Evans and on behalf of the Clinical Effectiveness Group of the British Association for Sexual Health and HIV, *2015 UK National Guideline on the management of non-gonococcal urethritis*. International Journal of HIV&AIDS, 2015. 0(0) 1-12.
2. Government of Ireland. Infectious Diseases (amendment) Regulations 2016 S.I. No. 276 of 2016. 2016 : Ireland. 2016.