# SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE'S RIGHTS TO ACCESSIBLE SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES

NHS Education for Scotland

## 1 WHAT WE DID

The National Centre for Remote and Rural Health and Care is completing a narrative synthesis of international research on youth sexual health and wellbeing services in rural and island communities. This work aims to better understand how sexual and reproductive health services are provided to young people in these settings, and how services can be improved in a way that respects children's rights and lived experience.

## 2 IMPACT



This work will generate new, accessible evidence to inform improvements in sexual health and wellbeing services for young people in rural and island communities in Scotland.

By identifying what works well, where gaps exist, and what young people themselves experience as helpful or challenging, the research will support more responsive, equitable, and rights respecting service design. The findings will be shared to support service planners, practitioners, and educators to better meet young people's needs, regardless of geography.

## 3 UNCRC



This work supports key UNCRC rights, including **Article 24** on access to the highest attainable standard of health, **Article 17** on providing accurate information, **Article 12** on hearing young people's views, **Article 2** on non-discrimination regardless of where they live, and **Article 16** on protecting privacy in small communities.

## 4 GIRFEC

The work aligns with Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) wellbeing indicators, particularly:

**Healthy:** supporting access to information and services that promote physical and emotional wellbeing.

**Respected:** valuing young people's views and experiences.

**Included:** addressing geographic barriers and inequality of access

**Safe**: considering confidentiality, trust and appropriate support

## 5 THE PROMISE



This work reflects The Promise by promoting equity, early support, and listening to young people. It focuses on their experiences and the barriers they face, encouraging services to adapt to young people's lives. Improving access to sexual health support also strengthens prevention, wellbeing, and long-term outcomes, aligning with The Promise's aim to get support right early and reduce harm.

## 6 REFLECTIONS



Using a children's rights-based approach to research helps ensure that service improvement is informed by evidence, equity, and lived experience. For young people in rural and island communities, this work provides a foundation for more consistent, accessible, and rights respecting sexual health and wellbeing support across Scotland.

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR REMOTE AND RURAL HEALTH AND CARE
NES MEDICAL DIRECTORATE