Pleasure, safety consent the hot topics this Valentine’s Day

The key to a great Valentine’s Day is everyone having a safe, consensual and pleasurable time.

That’s the message Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service’s (SCHHS) Clinical Director of Sexual Health and HIV Services (Clinic 87), Dr Kuong Taing, who is helping to promote for this year’s National Condom Day (14 February).

"With the date coinciding with National Condom Day, what better time to remind people of the importance of healthy relationships and safe sex – and an important part of safe sex is obtaining mutual consent," said Dr Taing.

“We know that a lot of people have questions around consent – they want to do the right thing and get consent but aren’t always sure how to go about it.

“You need to ask for consent each time you have sex. It must also be continual – anyone can change their mind or say no at any time. Consent can’t be obtained under the influence of drugs or alcohol,” he said.

Dr Kuong said everyone also had the right to use condoms and other contraception to protect themselves from sexually transmissible infections (STIs) and unplanned pregnancy.

“Try and talk about safe sex early on, before getting intimate, and have some condoms handy,” he said. Condoms are very effective method in preventing most STIs and pregnancy.

Dr Taing said if you’re sexually active, it’s important you visit a doctor regularly to have sexual health checks as many STIs can easily be treated before complications occur.

The SCHHS Sexual Health and HIV Services (Clinic 87) specialises in sexual health, contraceptive options and HIV management for the Sunshine Coast and surrounding areas.

The service is staffed by experienced, non-judgmental clinicians, able to support your needs.

Referrals are welcome from your health provider, but not necessary to visit the clinic.
To make an appointment call 5470 5244.

Clinic 87 is located at Nambour General Hospital. The service also operates outreach clinics in Caloundra, Noosa and Gympie.

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