



PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday 21 September 2016: For immediate release

National sexual health charity to close

MEDFASH (Medical Foundation for HIV & Sexual Health) has announced that it will close at the end of 2016.

Cathy Hamlyn, Chair of the charity's Board of Trustees explained: 'Over recent years MEDFASH has continued to do valuable work in the field of sexual health and HIV but our income stream has become increasingly unpredictable and continued to decline. We believe that operating in this way is not sustainable. So, with great regret, the Board has decided that the only responsible way forward is for the charity to undertake an orderly closure.'

'I would like to pay special tribute to the staff, consultants, supporters and volunteers of MEDFASH over the years, and in particular our current Chief Executive. Ruth Lowbury has been a tremendous leader of the organisation, especially over recent years as ongoing funding has become increasingly difficult for the organisation to achieve.'

Ruth Lowbury, Chief Executive, said: 'I am immensely proud of what we have achieved at MEDFASH and the support our work has provided to health professionals and policy makers. We are negotiating with other organisations to hand over our ongoing projects and publications so they can continue to provide the support necessary to our stakeholders.'

Ruth Lowbury added: 'We would like to thank all those who have funded or collaborated with MEDFASH over the years, including the British Medical Association which first established and supported the charity. There is still much to do to improve sexual health and the management of HIV, both in this country and beyond, and we hope those organisations will maintain their commitment and build on the achievements of MEDFASH.'

ENDS

Notes for editors:

1. MEDFASH (Medical Foundation for HIV & Sexual Health) is an independent registered charity dedicated to quality in HIV and sexual healthcare. It has been supporting and guiding health professionals and policy-makers since 1987. Charity number 1148836. Company limited by guarantee no 07994516 (registered in England and Wales). Registered office: BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JP. www.medfash.org.uk
2. Originally founded as The British Medical Association Foundation for AIDS in 1987, the charity became MEDFASH in 2002 and over the years has expanded its focus from HIV to encompass many other aspects of sexual health. It has also broadened to include work at European level. Its overriding aim has been to improve the quality of care for people with HIV and other sexual and reproductive health needs by offering information, guidance and support to those working in the field, whether providers, commissioners or policy-makers.

3. Often working in partnership and always focusing on HIV and sexual health, MEDFASH has over the years reviewed implementation of national strategy, developed national and European guidance, developed service standards, reviewed services, examined the feasibility of national clinical audit, produced policy information bulletins, published educational materials and managed the delivery of training.

Press contact details:

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