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NICE Shared Learning Awards 2008



Raising the profile of LARC in North Lincolnshire

Aim

Recognising that the oral contraceptive pill has traditionally been the first line of defence for women against pregnancy and that newer, less fallible and longer lasting methods of contraception have been developed, North Lincolnshire PCT committed to ensure that women and men can make an informed choice about the method of contraceptive they use. Our aim is to raise the profile of long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) methods and increase contraceptive choices for women and men in North Lincolnshire.

Objectives

Provision of contraception is an important healthcare service and patient choice is paramount. Our objectives were to:

- Raise the profile of LARC methods and create a demand through social marketing approaches with the resident population of North Lincolnshire.
- Raise awareness with clinical and non-clinical staff of the merits of LARC methods, provide training for fitters and increase overall capacity where required.
- Monitor uptake in use of LARC methods.

Context

A working group was established and an implementation plan drawn up in accordance with NICE guidance 30. Our desire was to increase public awareness of LARC methods and increase demand, alongside raising clinicians' awareness to ensure that it was offered as a choice alongside oral contraception. An audit was carried out, clinical and non-clinical awareness sessions were provided, uptake of LARC was monitored, training provided, the number of services available increased and a social marketing approach was adopted.

Results

North Lincolnshire PCT has seen a 52% increase in the use of LARC methods overall. The audit and survey has shown that we have a well established network of services that are performing to a high standard and that are acceptable to the population. The social marketing campaign targeting young people and pharmacies has been highly successful. We now provide input on LARC via Sex and Relationship Education programmes in schools and are currently targeting postpartum women through health visitors and midwives.

Monitoring and evaluation

The contraceptive survey will be carried out again to build upon data already collected and identify any significant changes in local perception and awareness of local campaigns. The audit of services will take place as part of the annual review of service providers. Provider services are incorporating LARC methods and campaign questions within their evaluations. The significant growth area for 2007/08 for implants has been in women aged 15-25, and for intrauterine methods in women over 30.

Key learning points

- To be successful you need engagement from commissioners, service providers and key partnerships.
- Raising awareness and increasing service capacity is not enough, you need to create a demand from women and men who wish to access contraception in order to plan when they become parents in order to ensure informed choice.
- Setting a baseline, being able to monitor uptake and show a cost or other benefit is key to continued support from engaged partners.

North Lincolnshire 
Primary Care Trust

SHARED LEARNING AWARD ENTRY SUBMITTED BY

Organisations North Lincolnshire PCT

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