

SCOPE

1 Guideline title: Long-acting reversible contraception: the effective and appropriate use of long-acting reversible contraception

1.1 Short title

Long-acting reversible contraception

2 Background

- a) The National Institute for Clinical Excellence ('NICE' or 'the Institute') has commissioned the National Collaborating Centre for Women and Children's Health to develop a clinical guideline on long-acting reversible contraception for women for use in the NHS in England and Wales. This follows referral of the topic by the Department of Health and the Welsh Assembly Government (see Appendix). Long-acting reversible contraception is defined here as methods that require administration less than once per cycle or month. The guideline will provide recommendations for good practice that are based on the best available evidence of clinical and cost effectiveness.
- b) The Institute's clinical guidelines will support the implementation of National Service Frameworks (NSFs) in those aspects of care where a Framework has been published. The statements in each NSF reflect the evidence that was used at the time the Framework was prepared. The clinical guidelines and technology appraisals published by the Institute after an NSF has been issued will have the effect of updating the Framework.

3 Clinical need for the guideline

- a) Work is ongoing in England and Wales that aims to reduce rates of unintended pregnancy. The strategy is documented in *A strategic framework for sexual health in Wales* (January 2000), *The national strategy for sexual health and HIV* (in England; July 2001), and the subsequent implementation plan (June 2002). Improving access to contraception, and the range of methods available as an integral part of broader sexual health services, is an essential element of achieving this aim.
- b) The effectiveness of barrier and oral contraceptive pills is dependent on their correct and consistent use. By contrast, long-acting reversible methods have high effectiveness that does not depend on daily compliance.
- c) Currently there is very low uptake of long-acting reversible contraception (around 5% of contraceptive usage). A number of factors contribute to this. Issues for providers include the initial cost, which may be thought of as too high particularly if the methods may not be used or required for the intended duration, the need for specific clinical skills (including awareness of current best practice, insertion practice and ability to give information or advice on the methods available) and facilities.
- d) Expert clinical opinion is that long-acting reversible contraceptive methods may have a wider role and an increase in their use could help to reduce unintended pregnancy. The current very low uptake of long-acting reversible contraception suggests that health professionals need better guidance and training so that they can help women to make an informed choice from a full range of contraceptive methods. Enabling women to make an informed choice about long-acting reversible contraception and addressing consumer preferences is an important objective of this guideline.

- e) There are no current formal professional or NHS guidelines covering this topic that are widely used or tailored to cover UK practice.

4 The guideline

- a) The guideline development process is described in detail in three booklets that are available from the NICE website (see 'Further information'). *The Guideline Development Process – Information for Stakeholders* describes how organisations can become involved in the development of a guideline.
- b) This document is the scope. It defines exactly what this guideline will (and will not) examine, and what the guideline developers will consider. The scope is based on the referral from the Department of Health and Welsh Assembly Government (see Appendix).
- c) The guideline will take into account the results of any related technology appraisals being carried out by the Institute.
- d) The areas that will be addressed by the guideline are described in the following sections.

4.1 Population

4.1.1 Groups that will be covered

- a) The guideline will offer best practice advice for all women of reproductive age who may wish to regulate their fertility through the use of long-acting reversible contraceptive methods.
- b) The guideline will identify specific issues that may be relevant to particular groups, including women with HIV, learning disabilities, physical disability and under 16s.

- c) The guideline will address specific issues for the use of these methods in women during the menarche and before the menopause.

4.1.2 Groups that will not be covered

- a) The guideline will not deal with contraception for men because there are currently no long-acting reversible methods.
- b) The guideline will not be relevant to women outside reproductive age.

4.2 Healthcare setting

- a) The guideline will cover the necessary elements of clinical care for provision of long-acting reversible methods of contraception in general practice, community contraceptive clinics, sexual health clinics and hospital services.

4.3 Clinical management

4.3.1 The guideline will cover the benefits (contraceptive and non-contraceptive), risks, interactions, administration or insertion (timing of insertion and removal), and side effects of and contra-indications to the use of the following methods.

- a) Hormonal methods for women:
 - intrauterine systems and implants
 - injections
 - sub-dermal implants
 - vaginal rings.
- b) Non-hormonal methods for women:
 - intrauterine devices.

Advice on treatment options will be based on the best evidence available to the development group. When referring to pharmacological treatments, the guideline will normally make recommendations within the licensed indications. Exceptionally, and only where the evidence

supports it, the guideline may recommend use outside the licensed indications. The guideline will assume that prescribers will use the Summary of Product Characteristics to inform their prescribing decisions for individual consumers.

- c) Guidance on the information that should be available to enable consumers to make informed decisions about the contraceptive method to use.

4.3.2 Guidance on any preliminary assessment required before using the method of contraception, and guidance on the appropriate monitoring and follow-up regimen for each method.

4.3.3 Guidance on the skills and facilities required by health professionals in the use of these technologies.

4.3.4 Advice on when long-acting reversible contraceptive methods may be less effective and when additional contraceptive precautions may be required (for example, when beginning or changing between contraceptive methods).

4.3.5 The guideline will not cover the following areas.

- a) Methods of contraception that are intended to result in permanent sterilisation.
- b) Contraceptive methods that are related to coitus or that require frequent (more than once per cycle (month) for women) repeat administration – for example, the combined oral contraceptive pill or progesterone-only pills.
- c) Post-coital or emergency contraceptive methods including coil insertion for that use.
- d) Use of the technologies for other non-contraceptive reasons (for example, menorrhagia).

- e) Use of the technologies in women after the menopause (for example, for hormone replacement therapy).

5.1 Audit support within guideline

The guideline will incorporate review criteria and audit advice.

The audit advice should complement other existing and proposed work of relevance.

5.2 Status

5.2.1 Scope

This is the final scope.

5.2.2 Guideline

The development of the guideline recommendations will begin in February 2003.

6 Further information

Information on the guideline development process is provided in:

- *The Guideline Development Process – Information for the Public and the NHS*
- *The Guideline Development Process – Information for Stakeholders*
- *The Guideline Development Process – Information for National Collaborating Centres and Guideline Development Groups*

These booklets are available as PDF files from the NICE website (www.nice.org.uk). Information on the progress of the guideline will also be available from the website.

Appendix – Referral from the Department of Health and Welsh Assembly Government

To prepare clinical guidelines for the NHS in England and Wales on the effective and appropriate use of long-acting reversible contraception, including intra-uterine devices and sub-dermal implants.