

DEMAND FOR LONG-ACTING REVERSIBLE CONTRACEPTION AMONG ATTENDEES AT AN URBAN SEXUAL HEALTH CLINIC: A SURVEY

Authors:

Wong A¹, McNulty A^{1,2}

¹Sydney Sexual Health Centre, Sydney, NSW

²School of Population Health, UNSW Sydney, NSW

Background:

Long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) is not routinely offered in all publicly funded sexual health clinics (PFSHC) in NSW. We conducted a survey among existing attendees at our sexual health service in urban Sydney to ascertain potential demand for this service.

Methods:

A brief survey via computer-assisted self-interview (CASI) was conducted. This was administered before clinic appointments on all patients identified as female at birth. An introduction on LARC and potential cost was displayed followed by three questions: whether the respondent would be interested in LARC at our service, whether they would be interested in a subdermal implant (SDI) or intra-uterine device (IUD) and whether they would want to discuss further with their clinician. Univariable analysis (chi-squared test) was done.

Results:

Survey period was May 2022–August 2022 (12 weeks). There were 370 responses (55% response rate). Median age was 27 years (IQR 24-32). 55.1% were Medicare ineligible. 72% were born outside of Australia/New Zealand. 11.6% reported recent sex work. 16.2% were not on any contraception & 31.6% used condoms only. 18.9% had current LARC (11.6% IUD & 7.3% SDI).

42 respondents (11.4%) were interested in LARC at our service but 53 (14.3%) were unsure. Among those interested, 51.2% preferred SDI and 26.8% were interested in either IUD or SDI. Only 8 (19.5%) respondents were interested in IUD only. 22 respondents (6%) requested discussion with their clinician on the day.

Interest in LARC at our service was *not* associated with: recent sex work ($p=0.16$), Medicare status ($p=0.12$) & current contraception use ($p=0.12$).

Conclusion:

In our PFSHC, a significant proportion of attendees at-risk of pregnancy were not on reliable forms of contraception. Despite this, self-reported interest in LARC was lower than expected and many respondents were unsure at the time of survey. The SDI was the most popular choice in this survey.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

None.