

Patient experiences of intrauterine device insertion in a community health setting

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Background:

Unplanned pregnancy remains a public health concern in Australia, with estimates of up to 50% of people experience an unintended pregnancy. Long acting reversible contraception (LARC) is a highly effective form of contraception.

The Intrauterine Device (IUD) is a small flexible contraceptive device and may be hormonal or non-hormonal. The IUD is inserted into the uterus via the cervical canal where it remains for 5-10 years depending on the type of device.

Recent negative publicity and social media posts around patient experiences of IUD insertion, have raised concerns about tolerance and acceptability. At this health service, pain relief includes paracetamol 1000mg and Ibuprofen 400mg which is self-administered approximately 1 hour before to the procedure. In addition, Xylocaine 1% spray is applied directly to the cervix 3 minutes prior to device insertion.

Methods:

A 3-5 minute survey in the form of QR code is sent to the patient's phone after IUD insertion. The patient completes the survey following the procedure, and uptake is voluntary. The Safer Care Unit at Peninsula Health approved the content of the survey.

Results:

Since October 2021, 514 patients have completed the survey. The majority of responses have been from people aged 20 – 43 years. Approximately 44% of patients were health care card holders. People attending the service are from the City of Frankston, Casey, Greater Dandenong, and Mornington Peninsula Shire. Responses include 89% of patients finding the IUD procedure “completely acceptable”, 7% “moderately acceptable”, with convenience of service and care provided rating > 90%. Pain score during the IUD procedure was an average of 4.65/ 10. After the procedure the average was 2.69/10. The types of devices inserted were hormonal (75%) and non-hormonal (25%).

Conclusion:

Tolerance and acceptance of IUD insertion in a community health setting is mostly positive. Although most people found the procedure acceptable, a small number reported a high pain score and may have benefitted from additional pain relief.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

There are no disclosures of interest.