Publication Summary

Long Acting Reversible Methods of Contraception (LARC) in Scotland

Year ending 31 March 2015
Publication date – 3 November 2015

About this Release
This release from the Information Services Division (ISD) reports on the proportion of women of reproductive age prescribed long-acting reversible methods of contraception (LARC) in each NHS Board.

Key Points
- The total uptake of very long acting methods of contraception (the contraceptive implant, intrauterine device (IUD) and intrauterine system (IUS) in primary care and specialist sexual health services in Scotland increased from 50.2 per 1,000 women aged 15-49 in 2013/14 to 52.8 in 2014/15.

- All three very long acting methods of contraception have seen a slight increase in prescribing rate per 1,000 in 2014/15 compared to 2013/14.

- The contraceptive implant is the most popular method of LARC (29.4 per 1,000) while the intrauterine device (IUD) remains the least utilised method (5.8 per 1,000) in 2014/15.

- Uptake of these very long acting methods has increased in ten of the fourteen NHS Boards between 2013/14 and 2014/15.

Background
In typical use, the ‘long-acting’ or ‘lasting’ methods of contraception have a lower failure rate than alternative reversible methods (for example, the contraceptive pill or condoms). ‘Respect and Responsibility: Strategy and Action Plan for Improving Sexual Health’, published in 2005, states that the full range of contraceptive methods should be available to all patients.

In August 2011, the Sexual Health and Blood Borne Virus Framework 2011-2015 was launched, followed in 2015 by the Sexual Health and Blood Borne Virus Framework 2015-
2020 Update. Both of these support the use of LARC and the 2015-2020 update states that work has been carried out to improve access to LARC.

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Further Information
Find out more in the Long Acting Reversible Methods of Contraception in Scotland Report.

ISD Scotland publishes a wide range of information on Sexual Health including teenage pregnancies and terminations of pregnancy. Further information can be found on the ISD website.