

Adolescent Contraception

Experiences at Emavundleni Research
Centre
Cape Town



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Overview

- Stats
 - At our site
 - In SA
- Experiences with adolescent contraception
 - Barriers
 - Myths
 - Misconceptions
 - Adherence
- Clinical Guidance and Legislation in the Western Cape
- Adults vs Adolescents
- Our GOAL
- Discussion & Questions



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Statistics

- Use of contraception in married women = 59.8%
 - Injectable = 28.4%
 - Sterilization = 15%
 - Oral contraceptive = 10.9%
 - Male condoms = 4.3%
 - IUD = less than 1%
 - Implant was not available at the time
- At Emavundleni Research Centre: A quick look at one of our adolescent studies:
 - 15 sexually active young girls
 - 100% of sexually active girls using contraception (protocol requirement)
 - Mostly Injectable : 86%
 - **No IUD**
 - **No pill**
 - 2 Implants

*Population Reference Bureau,
Family Planning Worldwide 2013*



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Experiences with Adolescent Contraception

- General Barriers (especially with IUD and Implant):
 - Fear of bleeding changes
 - Fear of discovery by parents:
 - The IUD is extremely unpopular among older women in the community we serve.
 - Lack of support by local clinics for IUD users in terms of bleeding changes and management
 - Hesitance of health professionals to offer IUD to adolescent girls
 - Lack of EDUCATION about OPTIONS and CHOICE
 - Need among young women to prove their fertility (amenorrhea is a problem)



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INJECTABLE

- DMPA and Net-En available at our site
- Myths and Misconceptions:
 - Injectable is the only choice. Either 3 monthly or 2 monthly. Most girls choose 3 monthly because it meant less visits to the clinic
 - Amenorrhea: Girls who develop amenorrhea stop the method, believing that their blood is “blocked” or “building up”. They can eventually smell the blood and it comes out as nosebleeds.
- Adherence
 - Nurses at the clinic are unfriendly. They get reprimanded if they are late for their injection so they just don't go back.
 - Clinic times vs school times



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Implant

- New Urban Myth:
 - Gangsters are attacking women and cutting the implant out in order to smoke it= massive barrier
 - Women have requested to remove implants soon after insertion because of this
 - Not confirmed yet
- Fear of insertion process
- Implant damages your arm
- Belief that long term methods are only for older women



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IUD

- **Myths and Misconceptions**

- The IUD is only indicated for women who have completed their families
- Hesitation by health professionals to offer IUD to 16-18 year olds
- IUD causes STIs
- It moves around the lower abdomen

- **Barriers**

- Mothers of young girls force them to remove the IUD
- No support from local clinics
- Fear of pain and prolonged bleeding
- Beliefs and attitudes of health care workers



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Clinical Guidance

- No specific guidance for adolescent contraception
- Our site has a general contraception SOP but nothing specific to adolescents
- No laws governing adolescent contraception provision
- WHO Medical Eligibility Criteria : no medical reason currently exists for denying contraception based on age



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Adults vs Adolescents

- Factors that influence adolescents: school, friends parents
- Counseling messages need to be clear
- Dispel myths
- Provide support for side effects specifically bleeding changes
- Education for both adolescents and adults to make informed choices
- We would like to increase implant and IUD uptake



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Thank You

