



Faculty Statement on Use of Contraceptive Implants

The use of long acting reversible contraceptives has been encouraged in the UK to help reduce the number of unplanned pregnancies. Over the last few years there has been a significant increase in the use of sub-dermal implants.

No contraceptive method is 100% effective but with correct insertion the failure rate of implants is less than 1% making it an extremely effective method to prevent pregnancy. It is a much more effective than taking the contraceptive pill or using condoms.

It is standard practice following insertion of an implant for the healthcare professional and the woman to check the implant is in place under the skin in the upper arm. Very occasionally, the implant is not released during the insertion process.

To date the majority of implant devices used in the UK were Implanon but in October a new device was introduced called Nexplanon¹. This device has a preloaded applicator which should reduce risk of insertion error and is radio-opaque and can therefore be identified on X ray or CT scan.

Healthcare professionals in the UK can be trained in the insertion of these devices to a national standard. All implant inserters should obtain both theoretical and practical experience before changing to the new product.

Reference

1. FSRH CEU Statement (September 2010) Nexplanon (Updated November 2010 - <http://www.ffprhc.org.uk/admin/uploads/CEUStatementNexplanon1110.pdf>)

05 January 2011