

LONG ACTING REVERSIBLE CONTRACEPTION (LARC)

Family Planning Victoria (FPV) supports and advocates for people seeking contraception to be given evidence-based information on the efficacy, advantages and disadvantages of all contraceptive options. Everyone should be able to make contraceptive choices based on their personal needs, preferences and medical suitability. Long Acting Reversible Contraceptive (LARC) methods are highly effective, reversible forms of contraception.¹ LARC includes hormonal and copper-bearing intrauterine devices (IUDs) and the contraceptive implant. LARC is safe across the reproductive life course, including adolescence and for those who have not had children.² Rates of LARC uptake in Australia are lower than other high-income countries.³⁻⁵ Barriers to accessing these methods remain, including the limited number of healthcare providers trained in inserting LARC and misinformation about these methods.⁶ Improving LARC access is an effective strategy in reducing unintended pregnancy and abortions.⁷

Family Planning Victoria's Position

- People need affordable and timely access to LARC.
- People should be informed about LARC as part of a comprehensive contraceptive consultation.
- Increasing the number of primary care providers trained in LARC will increase LARC access.
- Nurses and midwives should be enabled to insert and remove contraceptive implants and IUDs.
- Education on LARC should be included in relationships and sexuality education.
- Nationally consistent data collection on contraception, unintended pregnancy, and abortion is needed to help inform policy and practice.

Actions – FPV will pursue a strategic approach to increase LARC knowledge and access by:

Advocating for government funding to increase training capacity in LARC insertion.

- Advocating for changes to Medicare rebates for nurse and midwife insertion and removal of contraceptive implants and IUDs.
- Advocating for affordable and where possible and appropriate free access to LARC.
- Building the Australian evidence base around contraception, unintended pregnancy and abortion to inform the development of strategies to increase LARC access.
- Ensuring accurate information about LARC is provided in courses for healthcare providers.
- Supporting the training of nurses and midwives for contraceptive implant and IUD provision.
- Developing community awareness about LARC.
- Developing relationships and sexuality education material that accurately informs people about LARC.

References

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