ACOG’s Efforts to Increase Access to Post-partum LARC

Betsy Wieand
The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
August 19, 2014
Outline

- Clinical Evidence of Safety and Efficacy
- ACOG’s LARC Program
- Current Activities to Support Greater Access to Postpartum LARC
- How ACOG Can Help Going Forward
- Resources
Clinical Evidence of Safety and Efficacy

- ACOG believes that post-partum insertion of LARCs is safe, effective, and advantageous
- Expulsion rates of intrauterine devices (IUDs)
  - Expulsion rates are higher in the immediate post-partum period compared to interval insertion
  - However, the disadvantage of expulsion are outweighed by the advantages because of:
    - Unprotected sex between delivery and follow-up
    - Failure to return for a follow-up visit
    - Not obtaining an IUD at the follow-up visit
- Effects on breastfeeding
  - There are **theoretic** concerns about placement of hormonal implants less than 4 weeks after childbirth, but observational and randomized controlled studies have found little evidence to support these concerns
  - In a randomized controlled trial, there were **no differences** in breastfeeding duration or infant growth between women who received hormonal and copper IUDs
  - Copper IUDs have **no theoretic effect** on breastfeeding
ACOG’s LARC Program

- The Long-Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) Program at the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists works to lower the unintended pregnancy rate in the U.S by connecting providers, patients, and the public with the most up-to-date information and resources on LARC methods and increasing access to the full range of contraceptive methods.

- In working toward that mission, the LARC Program focuses on accomplishing the following activities:
  - Create, revise, and review clinical and educational materials with our LARC Work Group of expert advisors
  - Advocate on behalf of providers and patients to ensure access to LARC methods
  - Create educational and practice support tools to improve contraceptive practice quality and efficiency
  - Advocate for reimbursement and coverage of LARC methods
  - Develop and provide educational outreach materials and training activities
  - Build relationships with family planning colleagues and organizations
  - Provide updates on the LARC Program with our E-newsletter and through other media
  - Conduct research on LARC knowledge, attitudes, and practice patterns
Supporting Greater Access

- ACOG is in the process of compiling and publishing state Medicaid policies on post-partum insertion.
- ACOG has identified the need for physician training on post-partum insertion and is looking into how to best deliver this training.
  - Our New York District has received grant money to deliver trainings and they are currently developing didactic videos.
  - Our Georgia Section is collaborating with partners in the state to figure out the best way to implement trainings.
  - One of our Fellows in Washington State, Dr. Sarah Prager, has been conducting trainings with slides, videos, and instructions on how to develop simulations.
How ACOG Can Help Going Forward

- Connect states’ staff to ACOG Section leadership or other Fellows in the state who advocate on this issue
- Link Fellows to Ryan Residencies and Family Planning Fellowship programs for support and technical expertise on how to implement policies on post-partum insertion
  - How do labor and delivery units stock IUDs and implants?
  - How and when do physicians counsel patients on post-partum LARC?
- Develop training materials and strategies. The ACOG LARC Work Group will hold its first planning meeting in Fall 2014 and hopes to expedite materials and assistance.
Resources

- Visit our website: [www.acog.org/goto/larc](http://www.acog.org/goto/larc)
- Clinical resources
  - Practice Bulletin #121: Long-Acting Reversible Contraception: Implants and Intrauterine Devices
  - Committee Opinion #450: Increasing Use of Contraceptive Implants and Intrauterine Devices To Reduce Unintended Pregnancy
  - Committee Opinion #539: Adolescents and Long-Acting Reversible Contraception: Implants and Intrauterine Devices
- Billing resources
  - LARC Quick Coding Guide
  - Health Management Associate’s Guide: Medicaid Reimbursement for Immediate Post-Partum LARC
Contact Information

Betsy Wieand
Health Policy Analyst, Government Affairs
ewieand@acog.org

Alicia Luchowski
Director, LARC Program
aluchowski@acog.org