

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO: THEN AND NOW/NEWS ROUNDUP

control postpartum haemorrhage due to uterine atony, hysterectomy can be avoided through a tamponade: packing with meticulous layers of ribbon gauze or inflating a large balloon whose natural fit with the uterine lining leads to pressure on the uterine sinuses for controlling the bleeding. Whereas stomach or urological balloons have hitherto been used, the male condom provides a much cheaper and more accessible device that is inflated with isotonic saline solution to provide the hydrostatic pressure. With the new indication for male condoms in the control of postpartum haemorrhage,²¹ we should look forward to further innovative uses for both female and male condoms.

Statements on funding and competing interests

Funding. None identified.

Competing interests. None identified.

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News Roundup

NHS cuts hit sexual health services

Genitourinary medicine (GUM) units across the country have been forced to abandon plans to develop services due to budget cuts at PCT level. Any growth money available after the 3% budget cut can only be spent on the six key priorities laid out in the NHS operating framework document. For example, 48-hour access to GUM services is included in that list but chlamydia screening is not. The British Association of Sexual Health and HIV (BASHH) has discovered that at least 64 GUM providers have had difficulty getting any of the funds allocated to develop their services, despite a 2004 government pledge to plough £300 million into the sexual health sector. Jamie Hardie, President of the Society of Sexual Health Advisers, said he was worried this was going to be the pattern in other areas where chlamydia screening was due to have started: "On the one hand the government trumpets spending on [chlamydia] screening as part of its £300 million sexual health plans and, on the other hand, chlamydia screening that was budgeted for and planned for may have just been quietly postponed".

Source: <http://www.publichealthnews.com/news/showcontent.asp?id={F9F27BFC-D251-4D94-AAB1-F948C22A60A4}>

Reported by **Henrietta Hughes**, MRCGP, DFFP GP, London, UK

International fertility survey

Despite increasing media attention on the subject of fertility, public knowledge of reproductive health is remarkably low, according to a new international survey. This finding emerged from the first international fertility survey 'What You Never Knew About Fertility' carried out as part of World Fertility Awareness Month and sponsored by Organon.

The survey revealed an important lack of knowledge on 15 questions including the effects of age, contraception and the general health on fertility. When these questions were posed to 17 500 individuals worldwide, not one scored 100%. In fact, less than half of respondents were aware of the age at which female fertility starts to decline or the impact that factors such as obesity and sexually transmitted infections have on fertility preservation.

For more information and to obtain a brochure visit www.organon.com and for more information on fertility visit www.fertilityjourney.com.

Reported by **Henrietta Hughes**, MRCGP, DFFP GP, London, UK

Public lack knowledge of HIV

A recent survey of over 2000 Britons over the age of 15 years showed a lack of knowledge regarding transmission of HIV.¹ The survey, commissioned by the National AIDS Trust, showed that many of the people surveyed were unaware that HIV could be passed on through unprotected sex, and that 15% would rarely or never use a condom with a new partner. Only 10% would undergo testing for HIV before ceasing condom use in a new relationship.

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Reported by **Henrietta Hughes**, MRCGP, DFFP GP, London, UK

Dianette® and depression

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulation (MHRA) agency is to investigate depression in women taking Dianette® (co-cyprindiol) after the Adverse Psychiatric Reactions Information Link (APRIL) charity raised concerns. The charity has sent a dossier to the MHRA of reports from 100 women who said

they experienced severe depression while on the drug. The MHRA have stated that depression is a known side effect of the drug and this is included in the product information leaflet. They are undertaking a review to see if the advice needs updating or changing.

Source: <http://www.april.org.uk/>

Reported by **Henrietta Hughes**, MRCGP, DFFP GP, London, UK

Ghana vasectomy study

A recent project has been undertaken in Ghana to increase awareness of, access to, and utilisation of vasectomy services. Vasectomy in Ghana has a prevalence of less than 0.1%. Addressing both the supply and demand side issues that have contributed to the under-utilisation of vasectomy, the project aimed to increase the access to, and quality of, services in addition to tackling the negative myths and rumours about vasectomy among men and the general public and the bias against the method among providers. Interventions included training clinicians on no-scalpel vasectomy, training site staff in male-friendly services, developing and implementing a media campaign, conducting community outreach, and establishing an informational hotline. Results indicate the project was successful in increasing awareness of, access to, and utilisation of vasectomy services. In 2004, service volume was 6.6 times higher than the average number of procedures provided in the 10 years prior to the project (1994–2003). The number of men aware of vasectomy nearly doubled, and men's 'intention to consider vasectomy' also doubled.

Source: <http://www.acquireproject.org/index.php?id=344>

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