Only two cases of pelvic infection and both were cases known to me in Glasgow: one in a prostitute with gonorrhoea and the other in a woman who had tried to abort herself with a knitting needle. As a direct result of organised adverse publicity, the manufacturers of the Dalkon Shield went out of business and the reputation of all IUDs worldwide suffered a slump from which it has never recovered. A similar campaign against Depo-Provera\(^7\) was mounted from the USA in the early 1980s and injectable methods never achieved the popularity they deserve for commercial reasons. Women are ill-served by ‘market forces’.

**Elizabeth S B Wilson, MBBS, FFPRH**

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Reference

**Nurse IUD fitting**

We are writing to respond to the Personal View article by Cooling and Dunster entitled ‘Nurse intrauterine device training’ that was published in the July issue of the Journal.\(^1\) We wholeheartedly applaud the positive experience expressed within this article and note that “…nurses who are recognised trainers and experienced in IUD insertion to supervise the training of doctors…” as this underpins the work the FSRH Associate Nurse Training Group has been undertaking recently. However, we felt the need to respond to the not-so-positive comments about the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) guidance being ‘absurd in requiring the learner to observe the trainer doing five insertions in patients: one is usually sufficient …’. The RCN has been instrumental in the development of guidance in order to ensure that Sexual and Specialist Care nurses have good news.

Disposdable modified vasectomy forceps can now be obtained for about £2 from the supplier mentioned below. This company is also making disposable ‘deep’ implant removal kits, which are prepared to supply small numbers of specialist disposable surgical instruments is difficult, however we have good news.

Many primary care organisations are bringing in ‘single-use instruments policies’ as a result of new NHS guidance on decontamination aimed at improving the quality of surgical instrument reprocessing across the health care sectors in England. Finding manufacturers who are prepared to supply small numbers of disposable surgical instruments is difficulty but we have good news.

Disposdable modified vasectomy forceps can now be obtained for about £2 from the supplier mentioned below. This company is also making disposable ‘deep’ implant removal kits, which include mosquito forceps and small Langenbeck skin retractors.

Contact: Unisurge International Ltd, Unit N, Dales Manor Business Park, East Way, Sawston, Cambridge CB22 4TJ, UK. Tel: 01223 839911. E-mail: info@unisurge.com.

**Diana Mansour, FRCP, FFPRH**

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**References**

**Underuse of the IUD**

I read the article on the underuse of the intrauterine device (IUD)\(^3\) in the July issue with great interest and noted that none of the references are prior to 1983. That is 25 years ago, however the real blow to the IUD’s popularity was in the late-1970s when the Dalkon Shield\(^5\) was pilloried and vilified as a source of pelvic infection and infertility on what I believe was false scientific evidence. At that time there was a UK IUD network, organised by Professor R Snowden of Exeter University to which 20 major family planning clinics belonged.

Every device fitted and every subsequent patient visit was recorded and sent to Exeter. In 1977, over 40 000 fittings had been recorded, of which 7282 were Dalkon Shields. There were

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

Letters to the Editor are welcome and generally should not exceed 600 words or cite more than five references. For comments on material published in the most recent issue of the Journal, correspondence should be received within 4 weeks of dispatch of that Journal to be in time for inclusion in the next issue. When submitting letters correspondents should include their job title, a maximum of two qualifications and their address(es). A statement on competing interests should also be submitted for all letters. Letters may be submitted to the Editor or the Journal Editorial Office (details on page 205).

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