Updates on Contraceptive Technology in Afghanistan

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Description of available contraceptive methods in Afghanistan:

Afghanistan has one of the highest maternal mortality ratios and lowest contraceptive prevalence rate globally. Limited information is known regarding Afghan Men and Women’s attitudes toward child bearing, child spacing, and contraceptive use, which is essential for delivery of appropriate services. A quality study conducted among postpartum couples enrolled at maternity hospitals in Kabul, Afghanistan. The study revealed important themes that highlight the complex inner-relationship between acknowledged risk of child bearing, desire for family planning, rationales for limited contraceptive use and barriers to contraceptive use.(1)

Nationally 15.5% of currently married women in Afghanistan are using at least one method of modern contraception. (2)

Use of Modern Contraception by Wealth Quintile
(Percentage of currently married women 10-49 years of age)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wealth quintile</th>
<th>Use at least one modern method</th>
<th>Method used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest (poorest)</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest (richest)</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>8.1</td>
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</table>

Source: Afghanistan Household survey (Ministry of Public Health 2006)
Note: DMPA= depot medroxy progesterone acetate (Depo-Provera); IUD= intra Uterine Device

In a cross- sectional analysis of factors associated with prior contraceptive use among hospitalized obstetric patients in Kabul Afghanistan to assess the
prevalence and correlates of prior contraceptive use among hospitalized obstetric patients, medically eligible (e.g. conditions not requiring urgent medical attention such as eclampsia, or not imminently delivering obstetric patients admitted to three Kabul public hospitals were consecutively enrolled in this cross sectional study. An interviewer-administered questionnaire assessed demographic information, health utilization history, including prior contraceptive use, and intent to use contraception, correlates of prior contraceptive use was determined with logistic regression.

Study result showed prior contraceptive use is low among the women in Kabul, Afghanistan, particularly in younger less educated women. (3)

**List of Barriers to Contraceptive use in Afghanistan:**

- Sociocultural barriers
- Immediate desire for another pregnancy
- Spousal disapproval
- Lower educational level in couples
- Limited public health education
- Poor access to reproductive health services by all population
- Fear of side effects and poor trust on providers by some individuals.

**References**

