

**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**LARC's (Long Acting Reversible Contraception)  
Statement in response to the negative LARC, ABC report Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2017**

Family Planning NT believes that decisions about contraception should be made in conjunction with a health care professional and that everyone should have access to accurate and unbiased information to enable appropriate & informed contraceptive choice.

LARCs (Long Acting Reversible Contraception) including the levonorgestrel IUD (Mirena) and the subdermal implant (Implanon NXT) are the most effective reversible methods of contraception available. They have the additional advantage of being long lasting, convenient to use and generally well-regarded by most users. LARC method failure rates rival that of tubal sterilisation at less than 1%, and unintended pregnancy rates are lower than those reported for contraceptive pill users.

Like all progestogen-only contraceptive methods, LARCs may result in a change of bleeding pattern which may include no bleeding, frequent or prolonged bleeding. Users of the levonorgestrel IUD most commonly experience a reduction in bleeding over time and it is used as a treatment for heavy menstrual bleeding for this reason. Only 1 in 5 users of the contraceptive implant have an increase in bleeding that persists beyond the first few months.

LARC use, and in particular the subdermal implant, is not known to be associated with pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) which is an infection of the upper part of the female reproductive system namely the uterus, fallopian tubes, and ovaries. PID is a known side-effect of IUD insertion but occurs in less than 1 in 300 people. The risk of PID is only increased for the first 3 weeks after insertion, after which it returns to the previous background risk. Users of IUDs are encouraged to return at any sign of infection and when treated promptly with antibiotics are unlikely to experience any long term complications.

The End

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