

UNIVERSAL CONTRACEPTIVE SERVICE FOR WOMEN AGED 17-25

- A new universal contraceptive service for all women aged 17-25 (inclusive) has been agreed between the IMO, Department of Health and HSE.
- The scheme will apply to all relevant women in this age group who are ordinarily resident in the State, regardless of eligibility status (GMS/DVC/Private).

Who is eligible for the scheme?

All women aged 17-25 (GMS/DVC/Private) who are ordinarily resident in the State are eligible for the scheme, from the date of their 17th birthday to the day before their 26th birthday.

Where a woman is now over 26 but had a contraceptive device fitted before her 26th birthday and is now seeking to have it removed, such removal is also covered under the scheme.

You are deemed ordinarily resident if you have been living in the State for at least a year or you intend to live here for at least one year. Patients will need to provide their full name, address, date of birth and PPSN to access the scheme. All those aged 17-25 and ordinarily resident in the State are eligible to apply for same.

What types of contraception are covered?

All contraceptive options which are currently included on the GMS Reimbursement List are covered. This includes

- contraceptive pill,
- patch and ring,
- Mirena,
- Kyleena and Jaydess (coils, also known as intrauterine devices or systems; IUS, IUD),
- Implanon (contraceptive implant) and Depo Provera (contraceptive injection).
- Emergency contraception is also covered under the scheme.

Is the Copper Coil covered?

The Copper Coil is not currently on the GMS Reimbursable List, although it is expected to be added in the coming months.

What is the Patient Pathway?

- The Patient will have an initial consultation with their GP to discuss the contraceptive options appropriate to for their needs.
- At the end of this consultation, typically the GP will prescribe the preferred method of contraception. GPs may claim a consultation fee for this consult.
- The patient will then attend at the pharmacy where they will be dispensed the necessary contraceptive. Patient will need to have their PPSN and DOB on hand at the community pharmacy also. The medication or device is dispensed to the patient free of charge.
- If the patient is dispensed an implant or coil, the patient will then attend the GP surgery (can be same day) for insertion or fitting of same.
- For the coil, there is a follow up consultation, typically at six weeks, for a string check.
- In all cases if there are complications (e.g., irregular bleeding, excessive cramping and pain, significant mood alteration or other side effects experienced with the contraceptive method initially chosen) and an additional consultation is deemed medically necessary, this is allowable under the scheme.

What about those patients outside of the age cohort?

Private patients outside of the age cohort will continue to be treated as they have been prior to the commencement of the scheme.

The exception to this is those patients aged 26 and over who had a LARC fitted before their 26th birthday. In such circumstances removal of the LARC may also be claimed under the new scheme notwithstanding that the patient has passed their 26th birthday. To note, no further consultations / fittings of new a new coil, etc. would be covered as the patient is no longer otherwise eligible for the scheme.