

What do women want? - Counselling in contraception

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As Snowden said nearly 20 years ago 'The methods of fertility regulation from which most couples choose represent a choice among unpleasant alternatives. The choice is not so much a positive discrimination but a negative one, in that the methods not chosen are even more disliked than the method that is chosen. The contraceptive methods most people use are therefore the least unpleasant of the unpleasant set of alternatives. However, it is most important that this realistic summary is set against the other reality that consumers greatly prefer the available range of methods to no methods at all'. The choice in methods has now expanded but the decision process hasn't.

Women want what everyone wants. They want their agenda to be addressed in a sensitive, considerate, complete and timely manner. They want to be given all relevant information in a way that they can understand by a person they like and who they can trust to advise them fully, correctly, confidentially and safely. They are quite happy to answer questions as long as they believe that they are necessary. They want the clinician to treat them with respect and take into account their cultural and personal needs. The clinician must be able to advise them not just on contraceptive issues but also on all areas of sexual health. In short, just like all of us women want to be treated as equals and trusted with information to enable them to make decisions about their life. Services can always improve and listening to our clients can help us aim for the sky. Let me share with you what they have to say.