

## **Demographic & contraceptive usage profile of under 16s requesting termination of pregnancy in Leeds**

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**Aims & objectives:** To ascertain the contraceptive usage profile of under 16s requesting termination of pregnancy.

**Study design:** Case notes review of a cohort of teenagers aged less than 16 years, who underwent termination of pregnancy in our Fertility Control Unit between 1st January and 31st December 2000.

**Results:** Of the 2411 women who underwent termination of pregnancy, 505 (21%) were aged less than 20 years, of which 51(2%) were aged less than 16 years. Thirty-four (67%) were 15 years old, 13 (25%) were 14 years old and 4 (8%) were 13 years old. Thirty (59%) were referred by a general practitioner, 17 (33%) by a family planning doctor and 4 (8%) by a private clinic. One girl had an abortion six months prior to this referral, while the rest were experiencing their first pregnancy. Twenty-nine (57%) did not use any form of contraception, 5 (10%) used the combined pill, 16 (31%) used condoms, and 1 (2%) used both combined pill and condom. Twenty-five (49%) of the referring doctor's letters contained no information about the intended future post-abortion contraceptive of choice. Of those that had this information, 12 indicated intention to use the combined pill, 5 Depo Provera, 1 Implanon, 1 either Depo Provera or Implanon, 3 planned to return to their doctor for further discussions and 4 were unsure of the method to be used. After the abortion, 32 (63%) decided to use the combined pill, 11 (22%) Depo Provera, 2 (4%) Implanon and 2 (4%) condoms. Three returned for a second abortion after 9 months, 11 months and 15 months respectively, one had Mirena IUS inserted and the other two had Depo Provera given at the time of the second abortion.

**Conclusion:** Over half of this cohort of under 16s was not using any form of contraception at the time they became pregnant. More than half chose to use the combined pill post-abortion, a method they generally fail to use consistently. It is suggested that these results indicate a need for more effective sex education and closer cooperation and communication between general practitioners, family planning doctors and the termination of pregnancy service. Achieving this should result in a reduction in the incidence of unwanted pregnancy in this age group.