

## **Implanon: Reducing clinic follow-up attendance default rates by telephone appointments**

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Objective: To ascertain the feasibility of telephone follow-up of patients who had Implanon rods inserted for long-term contraception instead of the recommended clinic follow-up appointments.

Study design: Comparison of the follow up data of two groups of patients who had Implanon rods inserted. The first group of 30 women was offered routine clinic follow up appointments while the second group of 38 patients was offered telephone follow-up. The Clinic nurse negotiated a suitable time for the follow-up telephone call with the women and gave them a specimen of the checklist of questions to be asked before they left the clinic.

Results: Sixteen (53%) of the patients offered routine clinic follow-up appointments failed to attend. Thirtytwo (84%) of the patients offered telephone follow-up were contactable, 22 at the first attempt, 5 each at the second and third attempts. Of these 32, 5 wanted a further clinic follow-up appointment. Of the 6 that were not contactable, 3 had given wrong telephone numbers while 2 came back to the clinic on their own. 6 patients initially offered telephone follow-up appointments declined. All of these failed to attend their clinic appointments. In neither of both groups were any major problems encountered.

Conclusion: It appears that telephone follow-up appointments following insertion of Implanon rods for long-term contraception is a feasible option, with the consequent gain in reduction of clinic attendance default rates and scarce resource waste. Those providing this service might wish to further explore the use of this option in their service.