



**Professional Guidance  
Training for Inserting and Removing  
Subdermal Implants**

**Preparation date March 2023  
Review date March 2025**

## Professional Guidance for Contraceptive Implant

### Context for this guidance:

The NHS Quality Improvement Scotland standards for sexual health services (1) states that women requiring contraception should 'have easy access to a range of contraception methods (including LARC) and are given the appropriate time and information to make informed decisions'.

Nurses and midwives require a level of knowledge and skills to safe guard and promote the interest of individual patients and clients (2). The Royal College of Nursing sets out guidance to establish principles for safe practice in the management and administration of medicines by registered nurses and midwives (3)

The original West of Scotland Sexual health MCN guidance was developed in 2006 to provide professional guidance to nurses and midwives who wished to acquire the knowledge and skills to undertake insertion and removal of the contraceptive implant but did not meet the training requirements previously set by the Royal College of Nursing eligibility criteria.

This guidance closely followed the training programme for medical and nursing staff developed by the Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare (FSRH). It was revised and further developed in 2009 by Sandyford in consultation with senior nurses from the West of Scotland Sexual Health MCN (Ayrshire & Arran, Dumfries & Galloway, Forth Valley, Greater Glasgow & Clyde and Lanarkshire Health Boards) and updated in 2011, 2014 and 2017 by the West of Scotland Sexual Health MCN (5).

The original guidance pre-dated the development of the current FSRH Letter of competence in subdermal implant techniques (LoC SDI) (4). The FSRH qualification is nationally recognised and requires recertification every five years. **All clinicians wishing to train in SDI techniques should be aware of this qualification and consider whether the FSRH qualification would be more suitable than a locally awarded certificate with no recertification element.**

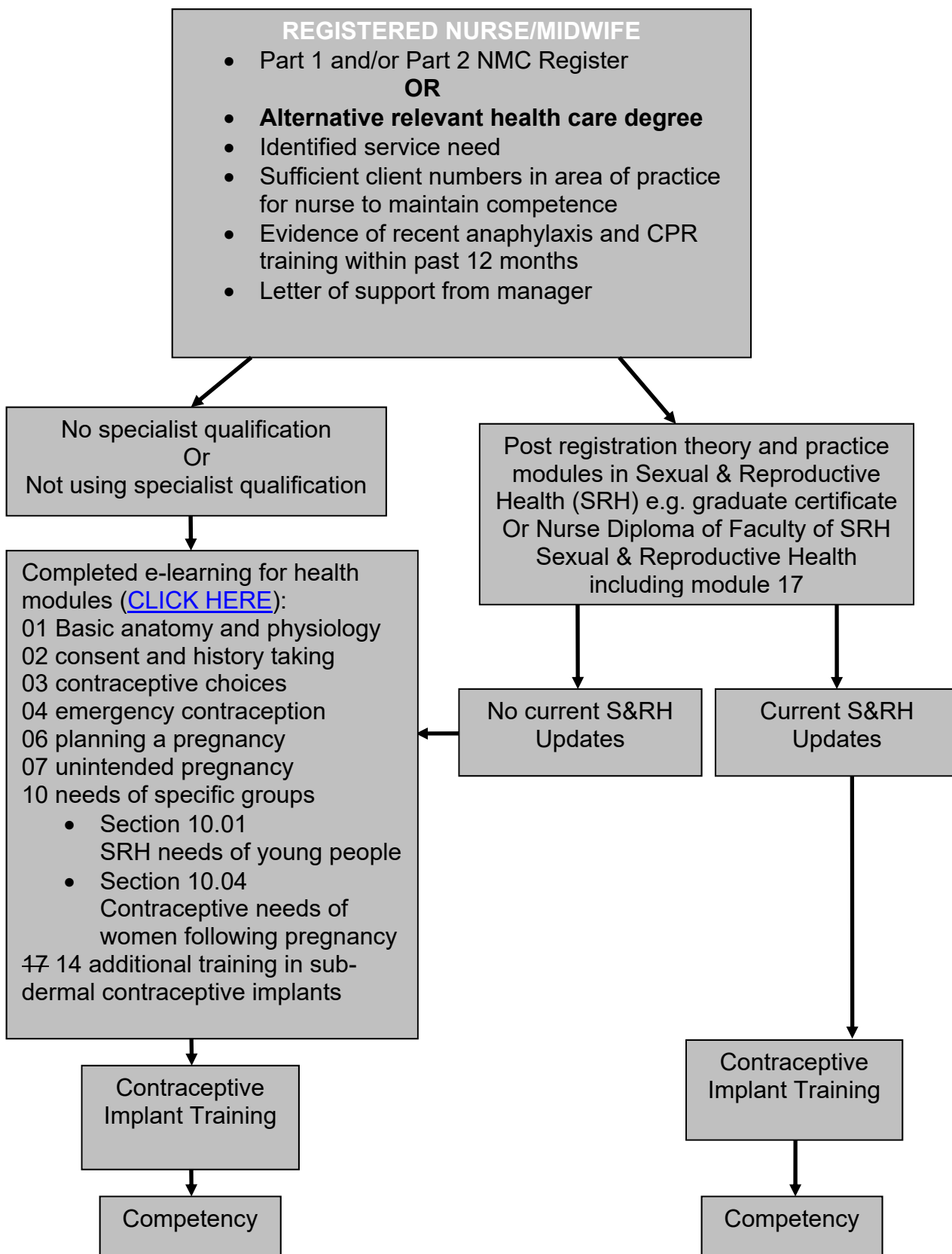
### Purpose of this guidance:

Contraceptive implants are commonly used within the UK and this guidance refers to the training for insertion and removal of single rod contraceptive implants. It is designed for staff who will insert implants in general settings, for example within midwifery services, addictions services.

PLEASE NOTE: This guidance can ALSO be used for Insertion Only Competencies.

1. The term nurse within this document is defined as a registered practitioner on part 1 or part 2 of the NMC Register.

## Pre-requisites to Access Training



## **Aims of training**

Having completed training, the trainee will be able to:

- Appropriately consult with and assess women who wish to use sub dermal implants
- Describe the composition and pharmacokinetics of implants and potential drug interactions
- Demonstrate understanding of mode of action of local anaesthetic and possible side effects
- Explain the indications and contraindications, medical eligibility criteria, advantages and disadvantages, side effects and complications of SDI use
- Explain the evidence based information that should be given to women choosing SDIs, including local pathways back into care if they require it, for example if they have bleeding or other side effects
- Describe the mode of action and contraceptive efficacy of SDIs
- Demonstrate competence in insertion of SDIs in conscious women, to include the use of local anaesthesia
- Manage medical emergencies associated with insertion and removal
- Describe the management of an impalpable implant and referral local referral pathway

## **Contraceptive Implant Training consisting of 3 components**

1. Theory
2. Model Arm Training
3. Clinical Training

Theory and model arm training must be complete before commencing clinical training. Practical sessions should be completed within twelve months of undertaking the theoretical training.

Specific documentation will be provided by the training centre including an activity log which should be completed by the trainee and signed off by the approved trainer.

### **1. Theoretical Training – completion of prerequisites of training (see flow chart above)**

### **2. Model Arm Training**

- Practice of technique of local anaesthetic administration
- Practice of techniques for subdermal insertion and removal of contraceptive implants
- Use of ethyl chloride spray if applicable

### **3. Clinical Training**

Clinical sessions for practice should be arranged through area Specialist Sexual and Reproductive Health Services. The trainee will observe a minimum of one insertion and one removal. The trainee must perform a minimum of two consecutive competent insertions and removals on conscious women who have agreed to take part in the training session. Some professionals will require additional training until the trainer and trainee are satisfied competence is achieved.

Specific documentation will be provided by the training centre including an activity log which should be completed by the trainee and signed off by the approved trainer.

### **Continuing Professional Development and Maintaining Competence**

A reflective log should be kept on implant experience in practice. Nurses should undertake a minimum of 6 insertions and removals per year, depending on whether they are competent in insertions only.

The responsibility for this lies with the individual and their line manager/employer and not the trainer or training organisation.

Attendance at an annual contraceptive update, held locally by specialist sexual and reproductive health services, would be beneficial to ensure the professional is aware of current best practice.

This training document relates to contraceptive implants available at the time of writing. It is the trainee's responsibility to undertake the necessary training relating to any new devices introduced in future.

### **Trainers**

Trainers should have recognised experience as a trainer e.g. FSRH Registered Trainer, University Educational Qualification or mentor on NMC register as per Faculty guidance. The trainer should be demonstrably competent in SDI insertion and removal.

### **References**

1. Healthcare Improvement Scotland (2022) Sexual Health Standards
2. Nursing and Midwifery Council (2018) Professional standards of practice and behaviour for Nurses and Midwives and Nursing Associates.  
<https://www.nmc.org.uk/globalassets/sitedocuments/nmc-publications/nmc-code.pdf>
3. Royal College of Nursing: Guidelines for medicine management  
<https://www.rpharms.com/recognition/setting-professional-standards/safe-and-secure-handling-of-medicines/professional-guidance-on-the-safe-and-secure-handling-of-medicines>
4. FSRH Training for those wishing to complete the Letters of Competence in Subdermal Contraceptive Techniques Insertion and removal (LoC SDI-IR), Insertion only LoC SDI-IO), Removal only (LoC SDI-RO) [Education & Training - Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare \(fsrh.org\)](https://www.fsrh.org/education-and-training/)
5. WOS Managed Clinical Network Professional Guidance for Contraceptive Implants (2014) <https://www.wossexualhealthmcn.org.uk/west-of-scotland-managed-clinical-network/training/training-documentation.htm> website accessed 02/10/18.

### **Further Reading**

- NHS Quality Improvement Scotland (2006), Best Practice Statement Patient Group Directions  
[http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/previous\\_resources/best\\_practice\\_statement/patient\\_group\\_directions.aspx](http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org/previous_resources/best_practice_statement/patient_group_directions.aspx)
- NICE LARC guidance 2005 (reviewed 2010) <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg30>
- FSRH Guidance: Progestogen-only implant (2021) [FSRH Clinical Guideline: Progestogen-only Implant \(February 2021\) - Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare](https://www.fsrh.org/clinical-guidance/progestogen-only-implant-february-2021/)

## Websites of Interest

- <https://www.wossexualhealthmcn.scot.nhs.uk/>
- [www.fsrh.org](http://www.fsrh.org)
- [www.fpa.org.uk](http://www.fpa.org.uk)
- <https://www.nhsinform.scot/>
- <https://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/>
- [www.nmc.org.uk](http://www.nmc.org.uk)
- [www.mhra.gov.uk](http://www.mhra.gov.uk)

## Record of Training

<b>TRAINEE NAME:</b>	
<b>PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS</b>	
<b>NMC PIN Number, Renewal and Revalidation Date:</b>	
<b>SRH Qualification Details (including date achieved)</b>	
<b>Place of Work</b>	
<b>Current Role</b>	
<b>TRAINER</b>	
<b>Name of trainer</b>	
<b>Place of work</b>	
<b>Qualifications</b>	
<b>FSRH diploma/membership number</b>	
<b>FSRH recognised trainer number</b>	
<b>FSRH LoC SDI number</b>	
<b>GMC/NMC Number</b>	

THEORETICAL TRAINING		
	Where and when undertaken	Name and signature of approved trainer
e-Lfh e-modules or equivalent completion date		
CPR		
Anaphylaxis		
Certificates for above training seen by approved trainer		
MODEL ARM TRAINING		
	Where and when undertaken	Name and signature of approved trainer
Insertion of implant		
Removal of implant		
OBSERVED PRACTICE		
	Where and when undertaken	Name and signature of approved trainer
Implant insertion - observed		
Implant insertion		
Implant insertion		
Implant removal – observed		
Implant removal		
Implant removal		

## Record of Training Continued

<b>IMPLANT INSERTIONS (2 consecutive competent insertions required for sign off)</b>			
Type of implant	Date	Comments	Name and signature Of Approved Trainer

<b>IMPLANT REMOVALS (2 consecutive competent removals required for sign off)</b>			
Type of implant	Date	Comments	Name and signature Of Approved Trainer



## Appendix A: Competence Record

During training the trainer must initial and date the column he/she feels adequately reflects the trainee's competency with regard to the insertion and removal of single rod contraceptive implants. On completion of training, Level A must be met in all areas of practice prior to being signed off as competent.

**Level B = Limited competence and further training deemed necessary**

**Level A = Competent**

LEARNING & PRACTICE	SA Level	Level B	Level A
<b>CONTRACEPTIVE IMPLANTS - KNOWLEDGE</b>			
Able to state composition, mode of action and efficacy of implant			
Able to state indications and contraindications of contraceptive Implants			
Able to describe advantages and disadvantages of contraceptive implants			
Able to state potential drug interactions			
Able to state side effects, bleeding pattern and complications of implants			
Able to describe follow-up required & continuation rates of implants			
Able to state management of impalpable implants			
Able to describe possible medical emergencies associated with insertion of contraceptive implants, and how these would be managed			
<b>LOCAL ANAESTHETIC - KNOWLEDGE</b>			
Able to describe pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics of local anaesthesia			
Able to state indications and contraindications to local anaesthetic			
Able to state side effects and complications of local anaesthetic			
Able to discuss the management of complications of local anaesthetic			
<b>CONSULTATIONS/ASSESSMENT AND ADVICE</b>			
Able to assess suitability and counsel women requesting a contraceptive implant appropriately			
Adapts consultation style to suit client's understanding			
Keeps clear records			
<b>PRACTICAL SKILLS (MODEL ARM)</b>			
Demonstrates competence in the insertion technique of implant			
Demonstrates competence in the removal technique of implant			
<b>PRACTICAL SKILLS (LIVE PATIENT)</b>			
Identifies and marks insertion site			
Uses aseptic technique			
Obtains and correctly uses suitable local anaesthesia			
Demonstrates the correct use of local anaesthetic prior to insertion of implant			
Demonstrates the correct insertion of an implant on 2 or more consecutive occasions			
Demonstrates the correct removal of an implant on 2 or more consecutive occasions			
Verifies the location of the implant post-insertion and encourages patient to do so			
Gives appropriate post-procedure information to patient along with local pathways back in to care			
Wound care advice to women and inform them to check implant in situ once wound healed			

## Appendix B: Statement of Competence

<b>STATEMENT OF COMPETENCE</b>
<b>INSERTION</b>
This is to certify that (name):
Has undertaken training in insertion of subdermal single rod contraceptive implants and is deemed to be competent.  Approved Trainer's signature:
Approved Trainer's name (please print):
Date:
Name of approved Centre or Practice:
<b>STATEMENT OF COMPETENCE</b>
<b>REMOVAL</b>
This is to certify that (name):
Has undertaken training in removal of subdermal single rod contraceptive implants and is deemed to be competent.  Approved Trainer's signature:
Approved Trainer's name (please print):
Date:
Name of approved Centre or Practice:

## Appendix C: Trainee Statement

TRAINEE STATEMENT
I confirm that the information on this form is correct I understand that I have a professional responsibility to maintain my competence if I continue to use it in my practice I understand that if new devices come on the market in the future it is my responsibility to undertake any necessary training to fit and remove them
Name:
Date:
Signature:

Nurses and midwives have a responsibility to audit their professional expertise and practice and maintain a portfolio of evidence to support this and meet revalidation requirements. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure this and seek peer review and case based discussion relating to practice. Local arrangements should be in place to support ongoing professional practice.

## Appendix D: Maintaining Competence

<b>EXAMPLE LOG OF ALL INSERTIONS AND REMOVALS AS EVIDENCE OF PRACTICE</b> NB recommended minimum requirement is 6 procedures per annum	
Number of Insertions Dated between: / / and / /	<i>Please state number</i>
Number of Removals Dated between: / / and / /	<i>Please state number</i>
Number of hours update in contraception/sexual health undertaken over the past year: How obtained ( <i>Please circle all appropriate</i> ) Workshop    Conference    Clinical Update    Articles/papers/reading    Course    E-learning Give details below (location, date, topic covered, type of learning, how it affected practice)	