



March 2019

Subject: Long-acting, reversible contraceptive devices

Dear Provider:

I am writing to inform you of a new benefit for your Summit Community Care patients. Effective March 1, 2019, your patients have the benefit of immediate postpartum placement of long-acting, reversible contraception (LARC) (intrauterine devices [IUDs] and etonogestrel implants) during their inpatient delivery admission.

How this benefit works

During an inpatient facility admission, you have the ability to implant the covered device of your patient's choice and receive the same reimbursement from Summit Community Care as if the device was implanted on an outpatient basis. The inpatient facility will provide the device. Please work closely with your OB unit to understand the logistics of obtaining devices.

What to do before providing this benefit to your patients

At the beginning of your patient's third trimester of pregnancy, we respectfully ask that you discuss the option of immediate postpartum placement of a LARC device with your patient. Please initiate education to teenagers during their adolescent well-care visits and provide additional counseling and support to your younger patients (ages 13-19) as this group is at the greatest risk for early discontinuation of contraception.¹ Some studies show there is lower discontinuation at two years of IUDs as compared to the etonogestrel implant.² When clinically appropriate, evaluate the safety of contraceptive method use for your patients with medical condition(s).

Advantages of LARC devices

As you are well aware, unintended pregnancies continue to be a major health problem in the United States. These unintended pregnancies are associated with higher rates of maternal and neonatal complications of pregnancy.³ Research shows that long-acting reversible methods are more effective at preventing unintended pregnancies; have significantly greater continuation rates than oral contraceptives, the vaginal contraceptive ring or the contraceptive patch; and have very low rates of serious side effects.⁴

As outlined extensively in several documents, the National American Congress of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG) promotes the use of postpartum LARC devices. The most notable of these is *Committee Opinion Number 642 — Increasing Access to Contraceptive Implants and Intrauterine Devices to Reduce Unintended Pregnancy* from October 2015. Please visit the ACOG

1 Aoun J et al. "Effects of Age, Parity, and Device Type on Complications and Discontinuation of Intrauterine Devices," *Obstetrics & Gynecology* (2014): 585-92.

2 O'Neil-Callahan M. et. al. "Twenty-Four-Month Continuation of Reversible Contraception," *Obstetrics & Gynecology* (2013): 1083-91.

3 Hellerstedt WL et al. "Differences in preconceptional and prenatal behaviors in women with intended and unintended pregnancies," *American Journal of Public Health* (1998): 663-6.

4 Winner B et al. "Effectiveness of long-acting reversible contraception," *New England Journal of Medicine* (2012): 1998-2007. All services referenced in this material are funded and provided under an agreement with the Arkansas Department of Human Services.

website (www.acog.org) for a complete list of documents and training videos related to this subject.

Again, thank you for the care you provide our members. If you have questions about providing this service to your patients, please contact Provider Services at 1-844-462-0022.