



# **DACOWITS RFI #6**

**Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED)  
Office of Women's Health (OWH)  
19 March 2024**



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## **a. What education regarding contraception and family planning is provided to Service members?**

- Navy and Marine Corps recruits receive reproductive health and family planning, STI, and contraception education during bootcamp.
  - The Navy Medicine clinic at Recruit Training Command (RTC) Great Lakes oversees contraceptive education and access for over 13,000 female recruits annually completing entry-level bootcamp training.
  - The RTC hosts a Walk-In Contraceptive Clinic (WiCC) model that also includes cervical cancer, STI, and pregnancy screening.
- Educational resources for Service members, leaders, and providers on fertility, family planning, contraception and reproductive health are available on the [Navy Medicine Women's Health](#) webpage

## **b. Are routine health exams required? What family planning and contraceptive information is provided in well visit or other health exams and are these mandated?**

- Contraceptive Information
  - The Manual of the Medical Department (MANMED) Ch. 15 mandates all Sailors and Marines complete an annual Physical Health Assessment (PHA). The PHA ensures medical readiness of Sailors and Marines. It includes an inquiry about current contraceptive use and provides the opportunity for pregnancy and contraceptive counseling.
  - Other routine health exams are recommended for female Service members, including annual well-woman exams.
- Family Planning
  - PHA
  - Service members are also able to discuss family planning concerns during any other medical exam.



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## **b. i. Is there information and counseling provided on contraception, fertility-related services, transportation allowances, relevant policies, and outside resources?**

- Navy Medicine directs that Service women be counseled annually on unintended pregnancy prevention, family planning, emergency contraception, health promotion, and nutrition.
- Defense Health Agency directs via DHA-PI 6200.02 that contraceptive counseling be provided to all Service members during the following:
  - (1) healthcare visits during deployment
  - (2) initial enlisted and officer training
  - (3) annual well woman visits
  - (4) reproductive health preventive screenings
  - (5) physical exams
  - (6) when referred following completion of the PHA.
- [NAVADMIN 05/28](#) and [ALNAV018/23](#) outline the administrative absence policy and funded travel options for non-covered reproductive healthcare services for Service members. These policies can be found on [www.mynavyhr.navy.mil](http://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil).

## **b. ii. Are there other means of educating Service members, beyond routine health exams, about resources and information on family planning resources**

- The [Navy Medicine Women's Health](#) webpage features resources to increase access to health education via a “one stop shop” webpage.
- The webpage houses 108 service member/patient, 52 provider, and 83 leadership resources, as well as relevant policies to support comprehensive women's health and female force readiness.



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**i. Provide detailed information explaining how DHA and Military Services have implemented provisions outlined in SecDef's Memo (dated October 20, 2022) mandating by the end of 2022, a comprehensive contraception education campaign would: (1) increase Service members' awareness of resources available and the fact that TRICARE co-pays were eliminated for medical contraceptive services.**

- BUMED OWH regularly produces educational resources to guide providers in comprehensive contraceptive counseling, the provision of contraception, and ongoing care related to contraceptive management.
- To increase awareness among Sailors and Marines of co-pay eliminations for medical contraceptive services, the BUMED OWH disseminated this update throughout the Female Force Readiness Clinical Community, a multidisciplinary team of 234 Navy and Marine Corps leaders and providers.

**j. What surveys does DHA and Services conduct to measure Service members' (1) knowledge and awareness of family planning and fertility-related services, (2) satisfaction with such services, and (3) availability/accessibility of such services?**

- Every year the Navy conducts a Health of the Force (HoF) survey to provide service members an opportunity to share their thoughts on a range of issues. Questions related to access to contraception, family planning, and women's health care have been submitted for inclusion in the 2024 survey.



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## **k. How are contraception services made available to servicewomen (e.g., by appointment, walk-in, other)?**

- Sailors and Marines have multiple avenues to obtain contraception including through their primary care provider, WiCCs, or through referral to an OB/GYN clinic. Contraceptive services are available during the following:
  - (1) healthcare visits during pre-deployment
  - (2) initial enlisted and officer training
  - (3) annual well woman visits
  - (4) reproductive health preventive screenings
  - (5) physical exams
  - (6) when referred following completion of the PHA
  - (7) any time upon member request
- MTF pharmacies may dispense a 12-month supply of contraception at one time.
- Plan B One-Step® (generic equivalent) is available at all military and network pharmacies for \$0 and without a prescription.

## **l. What is the implementation status on the SecDef's Memo (dated October 20, 2022) that all military medical treatment facilities (MTFs) with appropriate clinical capability expand services to include dedicated hours for walk in contraceptive care for Service members.**

- There is no Service specific requirement for Walk-in Contraception services.
- Navy Medicine providers play a critical role in supporting WiCCs throughout the MTFs and support optimization of contraception access for Sailors and Marines in the operational setting.
- The BUMED OWH developed a Walk-In Contraception Tool Kit to enable rapid stand-up of walk-in services across Navy Medicine.



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## **m. Does DHA or the Services track the number of family planning appointments?**

- Health care for family planning covers a wide range of medical services and the Navy does not track each of these individual services.
- Navy Medicine does utilize a contraception dashboard through the Defense Centers for Public Health Portsmouth to monitor trends in contraception appointments and services provided to Sailors and Marines.

## **n. What are the average wait times for obtaining contraception by Service members?**

- The Service does not have a requirement for tracking these wait times.
- The Navy monitors Service Member's Individual Medical Readiness and ensures adequate access to the health care readiness needs of the member. Service members have multiple avenues to obtain contraception.

## **o. Please provide statistics on the number of appointments made for family planning purposes (e.g., contraception) from servicewomen in the most recent year of complete data.**

- These statistics are not tracked by the Service.
- Sailors and Marines have multiple avenues to access family planning services including through their operational medical provider, primary care provider, or referral to other specialty care.

## **p. How does DHA and the Services track wait times for Service members who schedule a family planning appointment?**

- Health care for family planning covers a wide range of medical services
- The Navy does not track each of these individual services.



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## q i. What data are available from DHA and all Services on Service members experiencing infertility?

- Among respondents in the [2020 Women's Reproductive Health Survey](#),
  - 14.3% of surveyed Sailors and 9.6% of surveyed Marines self-reported being unable to conceive after 12 months of trying.
  - 12.1% of surveyed Sailors and 10% of surveyed Marines were told by a doctor they had fertility problems not related to their age.
  - These findings are similar to national rates reported by the CDC which demonstrate 13.4% of all women ages 15-49 experience difficulty getting or staying pregnant. (Source: [Key Statistics from the National Survey of Family Growth](#) (data are for 2015-2019)).

## q ii. Number of Service members requesting fertility treatment?

- Among respondents in the [2020 Women's Reproductive Health Survey](#),
  - 13.2% of surveyed Sailors and 7.7% of surveyed Marines saw a provider from within the MHS to talk about ways to help them become pregnant.
  - 5.3% of surveyed Sailors 4.4% of surveyed Marines saw a provider from outside the MHS to talk about ways to become pregnant.
  - 11.5% of surveyed Sailors and 9.4% of surveyed Marines reported an unmet need for fertility services since joining the military.



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## q. iii. Number of Service members utilizing fertility treatment?

- According to the [2020 Personal and Professional Choices Survey](#),
  - 778 out of 12,974 participants (6%, of male and female Sailors) reported at least one of their children was conceived with the use of fertility treatments.
  - Among survey respondents who reported using infertility treatment, 74% used infertility treatments because they were diagnosed with infertility, 8% used them because they were a single parent or part of a same sex couple.
  - Of women respondents, 7% reported their most recent pregnancy was the result of infertility treatments.

## r. Do the DHA or the Services track infertility causes or the incidence of infertility?

- The Navy does not currently track infertility causes or the incidence of infertility.