

DMPA-SC Access Collaborative

Increasing contraceptive access and options



Increased access to contraception is one of the best ways to build strong economies, create healthy families, and advance the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women. Subcutaneous DMPA, or DMPA-SC, is an innovative injectable contraceptive that can dramatically expand access and choice for women and adolescent girls when offered as part of a broad method mix. Because it is easy to use and requires minimal training, DMPA-SC enables women to self-inject, and is a simple addition to service delivery channels in both the public and private sectors.

Led by PATH in partnership with JSI, the DMPA-SC Access Collaborative (AC) provides data-driven technical assistance, coordination, and tools to ensure that women and adolescent girls in countries throughout Africa and Asia have equitable access to self-injection as one contraceptive option, delivered through informed choice programming. DMPA-SC is part of the family planning method mix of more than 50 countries around the world, more than 30 of which offer self-injection. This includes countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Europe.

A novel contraceptive option is transforming access and use

Injectable contraceptives are widely used in many countries because they are effective, safe, and private. DMPA-SC makes injections simpler because it is injected into the fat under the skin, rather than into the muscle like intramuscular DMPA (DMPA-IM). The DMPA-SC product available today (Sayana® Press) combines the contraceptive drug and needle into a single device that is small, light, and easy to use. As of May 2017, it can be purchased at US\$0.85 per dose for qualified buyers—a price similar to DMPA-IM.

Incorporating DMPA-SC into a country's FP program and contraceptive method mix can help in the following ways.

Make evidence-based self-care more available and accessible

The World Health Organization includes a strong recommendation for contraceptive self-injection as a self-care approach in its [Consolidated guideline on self-care interventions for health and well-being](#). Introducing self-care interventions, including contraceptive self-care, has the potential to transform health systems and accelerate progress towards universal health coverage.

Advance national and global family planning goals, especially those related to access and use

Based on a robust evidence base compiled by the AC and partners, an increasing number of countries worldwide are adding DMPA-SC to their contraceptive method mix and scaling up self-injection along with provider-administered DMPA-SC.



A health worker holds DMPA-SC along with other contraceptive methods.
Photo: PATH/Will Boase

Key global family planning goals

FP2030: Achieve a future where women and girls everywhere have the freedom and ability to lead healthy lives, make their own informed decisions about using contraception and having children, and participate as equals in society and its development.

Ouagadougou Partnership: Double the number of users of modern contraception to 13 million by 2030.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Achieve universal sexual and reproductive health and rights (targets in SDGs 3 and 5).

Evidence suggests that DMPA-SC:

- Can be delivered through all levels of the health system and across the total family planning market, being uniquely suited for task-shifting, remote distribution, and harder-to-reach populations.
- Can increase access for new FP users, including young women and adolescent girls.
- Can promote continued voluntary contraceptive use—research has shown that self-injection enables women to use injectable contraception longer than injections from providers.

Strengthen delivery systems and markets for all family planning methods

DMPA-SC self-injection represents the first time in more than a decade that a new contraceptive practice is being scaled up globally. Investments made in expanding access to DMPA-SC and self-injection through public and private delivery channels—including community-based distribution and pharmacies and drug shops—can be used to increase access to other FP methods.

The Access Collaborative is working to ensure sustainable access to DMPA-SC as part of a broad contraceptive method mix

Since 2017, the Access Collaborative has been working with ministries of health across public and private sectors to facilitate introduction and scale-up of self-injectable DMPA-SC. While support has spanned more than 50 countries, recent priority geographies include the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Madagascar, Nigeria, Senegal, Uganda, and Zambia.

The AC provides dedicated technical assistance to integrate DMPA-SC alongside other methods in family planning programs in several ways as outlined below.

Technical assistance and tools to accelerate introduction and scale-up of self-injectable DMPA-SC

AC experts provide flexible, demand-driven scale-up support to a wide range of countries that request technical assistance in the development of costed introduction and scale-up plans, self-injection program design, policy landscaping, supply planning, monitoring and evaluation of scale-up progress, and health worker training design, curricula, and materials, including digital approaches. For more information about technical assistance, visit www.FPoptions.org/TA or contact FPoptions@path.org.

Increased data sharing to make connections between country priorities and needs and global priorities

A key component of the AC is its monitoring, learning, and evaluation work to facilitate data-driven decision-making. The AC team shares data and information gathered across countries with international donors to help shape the global market for DMPA-SC, with the ultimate aim of dependable supply available to meet demand. The team helps monitor global supply and in-country demand, assess funding gaps and communicate needs to key donors, and highlight country-level success stories, innovative approaches, and challenges that need urgent attention. The AC also addresses learning questions to inform knowledge gaps and decision-making on self-injection introduction and scale-up.

Central to these activities is the AC's online dashboard of collated data on DMPA-SC and self-injection scale-up progress from approximately 20 countries. The team continues to improve the dashboard to include more customized and agile visualizations that reflect partners' information needs.

Learning and Action Networks

The AC facilitates two Learning and Action Networks (LANs)—one Anglophone and one Francophone—that include family planning program leaders and implementers from across sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.

These LANs allow for information exchange and learning within and across countries by sharing evidence, resources, and lessons learned, troubleshooting programmatic challenges, and accelerating the adoption of best practices for the scale-up of DMPA-SC and self-injection. The LANs host

The bigger picture: Why collaboration matters

A reliable supply of DMPA-SC at affordable prices will only be achieved if country partners—including ministries of health, FP technical working groups, implementers, commercial entities, and civil society groups—work together.

A strong global market starts at the country level. Equipped with tools and analysis supported by the AC, such as costed scale-up plans, evidence-based forecasting, and consumption monitoring, partners can build well-functioning public- and private-sector markets in-country. Without these pieces, countries are at greater risk of stockouts and product expiry in warehouses and on shelves.

Unlocking country demand for DMPA-SC self-injection will help shape a robust global market for this product. The AC and partners are well-positioned to track overall demand from countries and communicate insights to global stakeholders. This information is critical to ensuring the amount of product produced matches global demand and is made available at ideal prices.

webinars, workshops, and virtual discussion groups on topics including self-injection, private sector service delivery, monitoring and evaluation, lower-cost training approaches, and more.

DMPA-SC Resource Library

As part of its efforts to share resources and tools, the AC has developed the [DMPA-SC Resource Library](http://www.FPoptions.org) at www.FPoptions.org to house comprehensive information on evidence, country introduction, service delivery and advocacy tools, and more.

Self-injection Ambassadors

The AC leads the Self-injection Ambassadors advocacy initiative through which self-injection champions are engaged across countries to elevate the evidence-based potential of self-injection to increase contraceptive access and options. The initiative has grown to include 24 Ambassadors from nine countries. The Access Collaborative equips these experts with the latest evidence and advocacy tools and convenes the group regularly for collaborative learning exchange.

Join our efforts to increase access

Ensuring women and adolescent girls have access to a wide range of contraceptive methods, including DMPA-SC self-injection, requires coordination and partnership across all levels. We encourage new country partners to join our efforts. For more information, please email FPoptions@path.org. You are also welcome to sign up for our mailing lists at www.FPoptions/contact.

PATH

PATH is a global organization that works to accelerate health equity by bringing together public institutions, businesses, social enterprises, and investors to solve the world's most pressing health challenges. With expertise in science, health, economics, technology, advocacy, and dozens of other specialties, PATH develops and scales solutions—including vaccines, drugs, devices, diagnostics, and innovative approaches to strengthening health systems worldwide. Learn more at www.path.org.

JSI

JSI is dedicated to improving and promoting public health in the United States and across the globe. JSI works in more than 40 countries, partnering with clients to develop flexible, innovative approaches that solve complex public health problems, strengthening health systems to improve services—and ultimately, people's health. Learn more at www.jsi.com.

November 2022

More information

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