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Govt to roll out self-injectable contraceptives

KAMPALA. Health minister Dr Jane Aceng has announced plans to roll out self-injectable contraceptives to enable women of reproductive age have a wider choice of birth control options.

Dr Aceng, while presiding over the opening of the 2nd Uganda National Conference on Family Planning in Kampala yesterday, said her ministry is exploring ways of rolling out countrywide the self-injectable contraceptive.

"We actually have self-injectable contraceptives in the country and this is called Sayana Press. It is effective, has lesser side effects and can easily be administered by the recipient," she said.

Dr Aceng said users after receiving education from health workers can be given about three doses to use by themselves while at home.

The Health minister said the innovative method can help a woman delay pregnancy for about three months before taking another dose.

"It enables those who need family planning not to be disturbed by looking for transport money to go back to a health facility to access a second dose," she said.

Mr Edison Twesigye, the Seyana press scale up officer, working with international health organisation Path, said the overall goal of the self-injectable contraceptive is avoiding unplanned pregnancies.

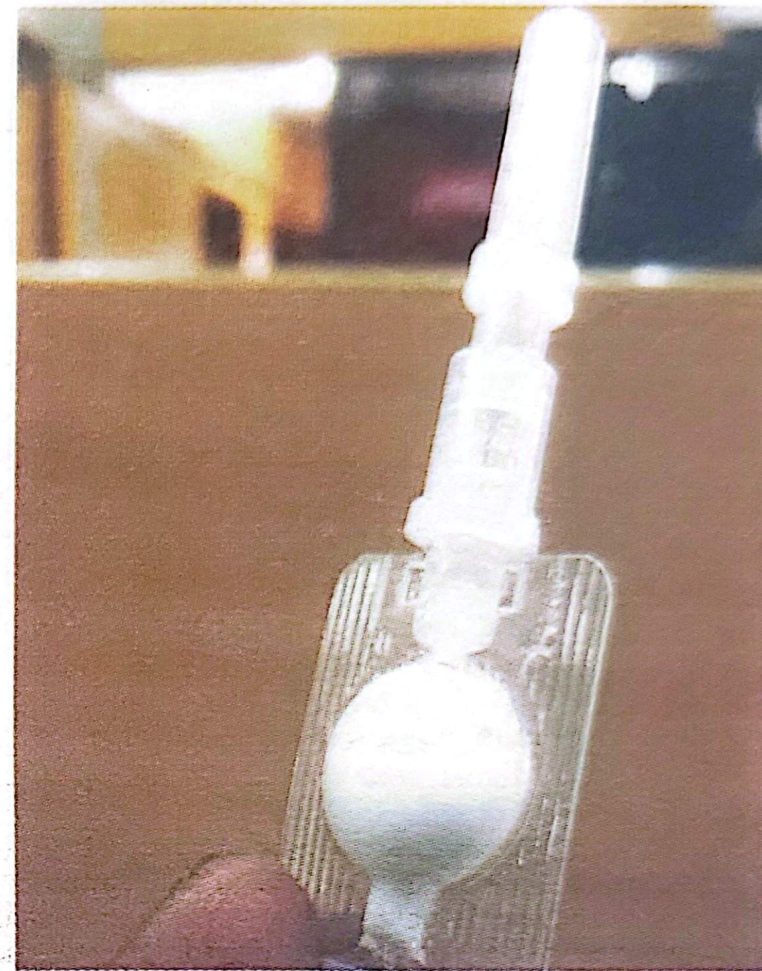
He said the self-injectable contraceptives were first piloted in Mubende District in 2016 and have since been extended to Oyam and Gulu districts in northern Uganda.

Reducing teenage pregnancies

At the conference, the head of the UK's Department for International Development, Ms Jennie Barugh, asked government to include the self-injectable contraceptive in the method mix to reduce the unmet needs of family planning, currently standing at 28 per cent.

Ms Barugh said this will help in bringing down the high rate of teenage pregnancies and also reduce the number of unsafe abortions.

"When women can access contraception, they become empowered to have fewer children and start families later in life, giving them an opportunity to complete schooling, earn a better living and escape the trap of



Piloted. Sayana Press is an easy-to-use hormonal birth control option for women. It is an injection, with a very small needle, that women can give to themselves to prevent pregnancies for 3 months. A woman using Sayana Press will need a new injection every three months, for a total of four shots every year.

PHOTO BY ERIC DOMINIC
BUKENYA

poverty," said Mr Alain Sibenaler, the United Nations Population Fund representative to Uganda.

He said access to voluntary family planning is a human right and is one of the most important investments.