



World Contraception Day

2023



MANIFIESTO

Mental Health is part of Sexual and Reproductive Health

As is customary each year, World Contraception Day is a media wake-up call, reminding policymakers and public opinion that the right to Sexual and Reproductive Health belongs to everybody. Everyone deserves to enjoy responsible sexuality, free from ideological concepts.

We celebrate that the end of the COVID-19 pandemic has brought us back to normal relations and daily lives with the added experience of this unfortunate pandemic, which has affected all spheres of our lives: health, economic and social. It has also made us realise the importance of public health in the development of our lives.

Sexual and Reproductive Health still has many shortcomings in meeting the objectives of women's well-being rights recovered after the approval of Organic Law 2/2010, of 3 March, in Spain.

Gaps in guaranteed, universal, free and equal public access to sexual and reproductive health services and programmes. Gaps in the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and infections, which has increased markedly in recent years. Gaps in the prevention of unwanted pregnancies, especially among young people. Gaps in specific attention to people with disabilities. Lack of affective-sexual education in all its dimensions, preventing it from truly forming part of the curriculum during compulsory education. Education in respect for diversity is something we need to consolidate.

As the Spanish Contraception Foundation [Fundación Española de Contracepción] has claimed in earlier Manifestos, much remains to be done, especially concerning equality of care for all women.

On this new edition of World Contraception Day, we call for attention to Mental Health related to Sexual Reproductive Health and Contraception.

Sexual and Reproductive Health education, the use of contraception, and the recommendation of dual method use can help reduce the stress and anxiety associated with fear of unwanted pregnancy and STIs. By using effective and safe contraceptive methods, women achieve greater peace of mind and feel more satisfied with their sex lives, which can improve their mental health.

Contraception gives women the power to make informed choices and have control over their Reproductive Health. Choosing when to have children can boost self-esteem, confidence and a sense of autonomy and affect mental health positively.

Effective contraception allows for planning and achieving personal, educational or professional goals before parenting. This can lead to greater satisfaction and overall well-being, as women can focus on other aspects of their lives without constant worries about unwanted pregnancies.

Mental health is also a goal to be addressed, especially regarding abortion. According to a study by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, women who suffer a miscarriage tend to blame themselves, which makes them feel isolated and alone. Suffering from it doubles the likelihood of depression and anxiety and quadruples the risk of suicide.

There are 23 million miscarriages worldwide yearly, equivalent to 44 pregnancy losses every minute. It happens all the time, yet it never seems to happen. Between 15% and 25% of clinically recognised pregnancies end in miscarriage. For all these reasons, professional attention to women's mental health must be added to the demands derived from the amended Organic Law 2/2010.

Finally, we are encouraged by the incorporation of new sexual and reproductive rights in the legislation passed in various Latin American countries. From our fraternal relationship with Latin America, we want to highlight our unconditional support for their demands in the conquest of rights and freedoms in Sexual Health. Much to do and much to celebrate.

For the improvement of Sexual Health.

Spanish Contraception Foundation