



## Key actions for advocates to advance subcutaneous DMPA

Many family planning (FP) advocates are already pursuing increased choices and access to contraception for women and adolescent girls in their country. The introduction and scale-up of an easy-to-use injectable called subcutaneous DMPA (DMPA-SC, or Sayana® Press\*) can help advocates to realize many of their existing access goals. This includes advocacy efforts that advance their country's FP2020 commitments and the Sustainable Development Goals—especially Goals 3 (good health and well-being) and 5 (gender equality).



**How to use this tool:** This tool provides examples of actions that may be useful in advancing access to DMPA-SC. Actions are grouped by three key themes: using evidence to inform advocacy, conducting direct advocacy with decision-makers, and informing and influencing policies.

1. Before using this tool, determine your country's stage when it comes to access to DMPA-SC. See: "Access staging tool for subcutaneous DMPA: Identify your country's stage."
2. Use this tool to identify the types of actions you can take to help increase DMPA-SC access, across the different stages.
3. Consider this tool a starting point for generating policy goals and advocacy actions relevant to your country's stage. These are illustrative suggestions—you do not need to conduct every activity, and you may need to adapt them for individual country contexts.
4. Don't be afraid to innovate with your advocacy actions! Creativity and ingenuity can make a huge difference in the lives of women and adolescent girls.



### Helpful Hint:

It is important to frame your DMPA-SC advocacy within the larger context of informed choice, broad method mix, and contraceptive access. A wide range of FP methods should be accessible to women and adolescent girls, and they should be able to freely choose the method that best meets their needs.

\*DMPA stands for depot medroxyprogesterone acetate. Sayana Press is a registered trademark of Pfizer Inc.

## Use **evidence** and data to help inform decision-making on DMPA-SC.



**Stage 1:  
Initiation**



**Stage 2:  
Preparation**



**Stage 3:  
Introduction**



**Stage 4:  
Integration**

**Action:** Share information with your country's decision-makers about how introduction of DMPA-SC can help increase method choice, address unmet need, and expand access to contraceptives in their country.



**Action:** Learn about your decision-makers' DMPA-SC information needs and connect with research and/or implementing partners to identify existing evidence that can be shared and/or to determine if new data or studies are needed.



**Action:** Encourage researchers to engage a wide variety of decision-makers, advocates, and women's and youth groups in the design of introduction data collection or research studies in your country. This will help ensure their buy-in and interest in using results to make informed changes to policies and programs.



**Action:** Track new research or introduction data on DMPA-SC in your own or neighboring countries. Collaborate with research and implementing partners to spotlight studies/efforts and their importance for evidence-based decision-making.



**Action:** Work with researchers and implementers to help translate and package their emerging data and evidence for specific use by policymakers, including informing their decision-making on:

- ▶ Policy development and implementation related to DMPA-SC.
- ▶ National and subnational scale-up of DMPA-SC.
- ▶ Expansion of DMPA-SC through additional delivery channels.



### Helpful Hint:

The Advocacy Pack for Subcutaneous DMPA has a variety of evidence-based tools and templates—including a product overview, evidence at-a-glance, and key facts guide. Start off by getting familiar with these tools and the evidence they offer. You can then adapt these resources for use with decision-makers in your country.

## Engage in direct **advocacy** to build momentum for DMPA-SC.



**Stage 1:  
Initiation**

**Stage 2:  
Preparation**

**Stage 3:  
Introduction**

**Stage 4:  
Integration**

**Action:** Generate demand for a range of contraceptives including DMPA-SC in your country, especially among health workers, women, and adolescent girls. Bring citizen voices to bear on the decisions and actions of policymakers, including through media.



**Action:** Conduct and/or update a stakeholder mapping to identify key decision-makers and influencers—including donors—with whom to engage on DMPA-SC advocacy.



**Action:** Foster commitments by decision-makers to expand access to broadening contraceptive choice and access for women and adolescent girls, including making DMPA-SC available in your country.



**Action:** Conduct direct outreach meetings with target decision-makers, donors, and influencers on DMPA-SC, including specific calls for:

- ▶ Introduction of DMPA-SC to expand contraceptive method mix and access for women and adolescent girls in your country.
- ▶ Consideration of a total market approach—both public and private sectors—in the provision of DMPA-SC.
- ▶ Development and/or harmonization of related health and development policies to support scale-up of DMPA-SC through multiple service delivery channels.
- ▶ Dedicated, long-term funding—including domestic resources—for DMPA-SC and other contraceptive supplies.



**Action:** Build alliances with advocates working on broader contraceptive access issues—such as task shifting, private-sector engagement, or method choice—and include DMPA-SC messaging and policy objectives as part of a shared advocacy agenda.



**Action:** Monitor DMPA-SC program/introduction sites to ensure there is a broad method-mix (not just DMPA-SC) and informed choice for women and adolescent girls, as well as to guard against stockouts of DMPA-SC and other contraceptive supplies. Bring issues to the attention of implementing partners and ministry officials.



### Helpful Hint:

Depending on your country context, there are many policies that can expand access to DMPA-SC. For examples of policies that may be relevant, see “Important policies for advancing access to subcutaneous DMPA.”



### Helpful Hint:

Don't go at it alone with your advocacy for DMPA-SC. In addition to collaborating with other advocates, make sure you are working with and within broader FP and sexual and reproductive health mechanisms in your country, such as FP technical working groups or FP advocacy coalitions.

## Understand, inform, and influence policies that expand access to DMPA-SC.



**Stage 1:**  
Initiation



**Stage 2:**  
Preparation



**Stage 3:**  
Introduction



**Stage 4:**  
Integration

**Action:** Draw on the tool, “Important policies for advancing access to subcutaneous DMPA,” to map your country’s policy gaps, bottlenecks, and potential enablers to support expanded access to DMPA-SC for women and adolescent girls across implementation stages.



**Action:** Bring together decision-makers, advocates, researchers, implementers, health professionals, and citizen representatives in targeted dialogue aimed at jointly addressing and/or advancing critical access issues through policy change and implementation.



**Action:** Provide targeted policy development support given your individual or organizational expertise and/or facilitate connections between decision-makers and global and regional partners to ensure policy development support for introduction and scale-up of DMPA-SC.



**Action:** Monitor the implementation of relevant policies and their impact on access to DMPA-SC for women and adolescent girls and spotlight accountability challenges to key decision-makers and duty-bearers.



**Your innovative actions here:**



### Helpful Hint:

As you conduct your policy mapping, it is important to keep in mind the different service delivery channels you aim to leverage for DMPA-SC in your country. These channels may include public-sector facilities, community-based distributors, pharmacies and accredited drug shops, and even self-injection of DMPA-SC by women.

Depending on your target service delivery channel(s), there may be unique policy barriers or opportunities. For example, if your country is exploring using community health workers to teach women how to self-inject, you may need to develop or amend specific policy guidelines.



### We love your ideas.

Tell us what innovative actions you are taking to advance access to DMPA-SC in your country that can be shared with others. Email us at [advocacyandpolicy@path.org](mailto:advocacyandpolicy@path.org).

## Your access and accountability questionnaire

As an advocate, one of the most important actions you can take is to ask key questions of decision-makers about access related to DMPA-SC. Doing so can help hold decision-makers and other key stakeholders accountable for advancing or approving critical policies. For example, asking your ministry of health (MOH) about the status of product registration can help reinforce this as a priority issue and encourage the MOH to address any bottlenecks in the registration process.

Use these questions to spark dialogue with relevant stakeholders across the stages.



### Stage 1: Initiation

- Does your MOH understand how the ease of use and unique features of DMPA-SC can provide opportunities to expand access to injectables and broaden the method mix?
- Is product registration underway?



### Stage 2: Preparation

- Has the product been registered?
- Has a comprehensive introduction plan been developed, and is someone accountable for overseeing it?
- Has funding been identified and secured to support introduction?
- Do policy restrictions on community-based distribution, private-sector provision of contraceptives (pharmacy/drug shop access), or self-injection exist?



### Stage 3: Introduction

- Have contraceptive stockouts happened, and in which delivery channels?
- Have data and information from introduction efforts and research studies been shared with advocates?
- Is the product being introduced in the context of informed choice? How is quality of care being monitored in introduction efforts?
- How has new 2017 global guidance on HIV and injectable contraception been addressed in service delivery? (For more information, see "DMPA and HIV: What advocates need to know.")
- Are policy discussions on scale-up taking place? Do these include dialogue on product affordability to the MOH and consumers, and sustainable financing for procurement, distribution, and programming?



### Stage 4: Integration

- Has DMPA-SC been made available throughout your country?
- Has DMPA-SC been included in all relevant policies affecting access, including the national Essential Medicines List, community-based distribution, private-sector provision, and self-injection?
- Has sustainable financing been identified and secured to support access at scale?