

## ECHO Study Update

**22 May 2019** — The ECHO Consortium is pleased to announce that the primary analysis of data from the Evidence for Contraceptive Options and HIV Outcomes (ECHO) trial has been completed. ECHO is a randomised clinical trial, conducted among 7,830 women at 12 sites across Eswatini, Kenya, South Africa and Zambia, designed to provide high-quality evidence about the potential association between certain contraceptives and the risk of HIV acquisition. A draft manuscript describing the results has been submitted to a journal and is under peer review.

At the beginning of the peer review process, the draft manuscript was inadvertently and briefly accessible on the journal website. At the request of the ECHO Consortium, the journal quickly removed access to that non-peer reviewed version of the manuscript; however, a limited number of downloads of the draft manuscript occurred.

The ECHO Consortium is working to complete the peer review process, aiming for an expeditious publication of the finalised work. The ECHO Consortium is committed to transparency in scientific discussion and dissemination of the trial findings, as well as to the integrity and importance of the peer review process.

The ECHO Consortium is committed to informing all key trial stakeholders of the final results, in particular the study participants, before publication of a peer-reviewed manuscript, in a process guided by the Good Participatory Practice principles that are fundamental to this trial. We are proactively devising a strategic plan to reach out to site teams and participants with accurate, clear information within an abbreviated and appropriate timeframe. We therefore request that anyone who has downloaded the preprint manuscript refrain from sharing it and allow the ECHO Consortium to appropriately honor our commitment to disseminate the final trial outcomes first to trial participants and other key stakeholders.

The ECHO Study was carried out by a consortium led by FHI 360, the University of Washington, Wits Reproductive Health and HIV Institute and the World Health Organization and provides the most robust evidence to date on contraception and HIV infection risk. Once the peer reviewed article has been released, the World Health Organization will also expedite its review of the published results, to determine whether any changes are needed in its recommendations on contraceptive use by women at high risk of HIV acquisition. Publication of the ECHO results is an important part of this process, because decisions about WHO's Medical Eligibility Criteria are based on published, peer-reviewed data.

We look forward to sharing the ECHO trial results soon, which we hope will assist funders, policy-makers and service providers in working together with women on programmes grounded in informed choice for HIV prevention, treatment and contraception.