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Dear Working Group member,

We are excited to see more states stepping up to increase access to OCs and other birth control methods. In this newsletter, we feature proactive initiatives that will allow pharmacists to prescribe hormonal contraceptives in both Maryland and New Mexico. Britt Wahlin from Ibis Reproductive Health also wrote an op-ed that was recently published in the [Washington Post](#), which celebrates pharmacist-prescriber initiatives while also reminding the public that a future OTC OC is on the horizon. Please share it with your colleagues and on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)!

Having trouble keeping up with all of the different ways states are increasing access to OCs? We are debuting [a new chart](#) that identifies the many state laws and regulations that promise increased access to OCs. We also include an [op-ed](#) from working group member, Beth Sundstrom, featuring personal stories about the importance of contraceptive access. Next, we want to let you know that the New York City Bar Association is hosting a panel on OCs OTC on June 29, 2017 from 6:30-7:30pm that is open to the public. Finally, we are happy to highlight the most recent organizations that have signed onto our [Statement of Purpose](#).

Please let us know if you have any questions or comments.

Thanks,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate". The signature is written in a cursive, lowercase style.

Kate Grindlay
Project Director/Associate
Ibis Reproductive Health

Maryland pharmacist-prescriber bill passes

Maryland's pharmacist-prescriber bill recently passed into law without Governor Hogan's signature. Effective in 2018, pharmacists will be able to prescribe and dispense "contraceptive medications and self-administered contraceptive devices" approved by the US Food and Drug Administration. Pharmacists will be required to undergo a training to prescribe and dispense these contraceptives. The new law will require both Medicaid and private insurance reimbursement for the visit with the pharmacist.

Elite Daily: [How two states are actually trying to make birth control easier to get](#) (Kelly Blanchard from Ibis Reproductive Health)

Washington Post: [A step forward on birth control access](#) (written by Britt Wahlin from Ibis Reproductive Health with a focus on OTCs OTC)

New Mexico pharmacist-prescriber protocol passed

Pharmacists in New Mexico are now able to prescribe OCs, the patch, the ring, and the shot. The New Mexico Pharmacy Association worked in coalition with community organizers and clinicians to develop the training and protocols for pharmacists to prescribe contraceptive medications. The regulation from the New Mexico Board of Pharmacy is now in effect, but pharmacists must undergo a training before they can prescribe. The new regulation also allows a pharmacist to prescribe OTC methods (when a patient needs a prescription for insurance purposes, for example). The articles below also feature working group partner, Erin Armstrong, from the [American Civil Liberties Union of New Mexico](#) and Denicia Cadena, from working group partner, [Young Women United](#).

Albuquerque Journal: [Pharmacist can prescribe birth control pills](#)

Santa Fe New Mexican: [New rule lets pharmacists prescribe contraceptives in New Mexico](#)

State policy chart



We are debuting a new resource, [What is the law in your state?](#), for [freethepill.org](#) that outlines the enacted state laws guaranteeing increased access to OCs, including beyond what the Affordable Care Act requires. Tracked laws include guaranteed coverage of birth control without a co-pay or deductible, guaranteed coverage of OTC contraceptive medicines without

a prescription, pharmacist-prescribed OCs, and coverage of a one-year's supply. We look forward to adding more states as some are still in the midst of their legislative sessions and in future sessions.

The goal is for this chart to be accessible to a broad audience interested in knowing what is legal in their state. For additional in-depth tracking and information on implementation, please see the following charts and articles from our working group partners: [Guttmacher](#) and [the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy](#).

Argument for dependable access to contraception in South Carolina

Working group member, Beth Sundstrom, recently had an [op-ed](#) featured in the Huffington Post centering on the importance of contraceptive access in South Carolina, underscoring the benefits of consistent access to contraception through coverage of a 12-month supply and a future OTC OC. She also highlights many personal stories obtained from interviews as part of her work on the Women's Health Research Team that underscore the importance of insurance coverage and the barriers to accessing birth control. Please share on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter!](#)

NYC Bar Association panel on OCs OTC on the evening of June 29

Later this month, the New York City Bar Association will convene a panel of health and policy experts to discuss the scientific, legal, and sociological considerations for making OCs available OTC.

Speakers include:

Katharine Bodde, Policy Counsel, New York Civil Liberties Union

Paula Castaño, Assistant Clinical Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Columbia University

Hon. Shelley Mayer, New York State Assemblymember and Chair, Assembly Task Force on Women's Issues

Amitasrigowri Murthy, Assistant Professor, NYU School of Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynecology

The session will be held at the NYC Bar Association on June 29, 2017 at 6:30-7:30pm. 42 W 44th Street, New York, NY 10036. There is no fee to attend, but registration is recommended.

See more information [here](#).

Statement of purpose sign-ons

We are pleased to highlight the organizations that have signed onto our [statement of purpose](#) within the last month. Please help us demonstrate the wide support that exists for making OCs available OTC in the United States. [Email Mary](#) if you would like your organization to sign onto the statement of purpose.

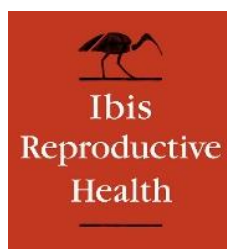
[Legal Voice](#)

[NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland Fund](#)
[National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners](#)
[Northwest Health Law Associates](#)

About us

The Oral Contraceptives (OCs) Over-the-Counter (OTC) Working Group is a coalition of reproductive health, rights, and justice organizations, nonprofit research and advocacy groups, university-based researchers, and prominent clinicians who share a commitment to providing all women of reproductive age easier access to safe, effective, acceptable, and affordable contraceptives. The working group was established in 2004 to explore the potential of over-the-counter access to oral contraceptives to reduce disparities in reproductive health care access and outcomes, and to increase opportunities for women to access a safe, effective method of contraception, free of unnecessary control, as part of a healthy sexual and reproductive life.

The working group is coordinated by Ibis Reproductive Health.



www.ibisreproductivehealth.org

Contact us

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