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Dear Working Group member,

As Communications and Outreach Manager for the Free the Pill project, I am excited to share with you three important aspects related to my work on the campaign to make an OC available OTC: updates on state policies (have you seen the [state chart](#) I maintain?), connecting our partners with media outlets to highlight the need for an OTC OC for the communities who could benefit most, and building support from partners such as providing [Free the Pill swag](#) and getting more organizations to sign onto our [statement of purpose](#). In this newsletter, I am pleased to share with you two new state laws that are building on the momentum to increase contraceptive coverage and access in the United States. I also wanted to highlight an [op-ed](#) from Working Group steering committee member Raegan McDonald-Mosley on the need to increase access to reproductive health for Black women, including by moving OCs OTC. Please share widely with your networks. Finally, I would like to let you know about our latest statement of purpose sign-ons.

Thank you,

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

Mary Durden
Communications and Outreach Manager
Ibis Reproductive Health

New law on pharmacist provision of hormonal contraception

Utah Governor Gary Herbert recently signed a law that allows pharmacists to provide hormonal contraception. The [law](#) will allow trained pharmacists to provide the pill, patch, and ring to women ages 18 and over who will be required to check in with a doctor every two years. It will go into effect on May 8, 2018.

US News & World Report: [Conservative Utah lets women get birth control from pharmacy](#)

Washington's Reproductive Parity Act signed into law

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, in March the Washington State legislature passed the Reproductive Parity Act, which will require coverage of OTC contraceptive drugs, devices, and products without requiring a prescription for that coverage to kick in. Governor Jay Inslee officially signed the [bill](#) into law later last month. This is a groundbreaking law that will guarantee coverage of a future OTC OC, condoms, and abortion care.

Auburn Reporter: [Washington's Reproductive Parity Act is a win for women and a model for the nation](#)

Media highlights

OCs OTC Working Group steering committee member Raegan McDonald-Mosley, Chief Medical Officer at Planned Parenthood of Maryland, recently published an [op-ed in Black Press USA](#) (and several of its local affiliates) on Black women's access to reproductive health with a special emphasis on what an OTC OC would mean for Black women in the United States. Please take a moment to share with your organizations and post on social media!

Some sample, suggested posts:

We need to work to make reproductive health care more accessible for people where and when they need it - birth control pills over the counter would be a significant step forward.
@DrRaegan <http://bit.ly/2G7QJD1> #FreeThePill

From @DrRaegan: Current systems for providing birth control are not meeting Black women's needs -- birth control pills over the counter could help. <http://bit.ly/2G7QJD1> #FreeThePill

@DrRaegan asks us to think bigger about how to break down barriers to contraception for Black women & provide more contraceptive options directly in people's communities <http://bit.ly/2G7QJD1> #FreeThePill

In other news, Working Group members Kathleen Besinque, Dan Grossman, and Aimee Thorne-Thomson were recently featured in an article in *Ms. Magazine* about the promise of pharmacist-prescribing birth control and a future OTC OC. [Contact Mary](#) if you would like to see a copy of the article. Also, check out NPR's piece, [Birth control apps find a big market in 'contraception deserts'](#), which highlights the gap that needs to be filled in areas where accessing a health care provider to prescribe birth control proves to be exceedingly difficult and how apps can fill the need to increase access.

Statement of purpose sign-ons

We are pleased to highlight the organizations that have signed onto our [statement of purpose](#). 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.

[Black Women for Wellness](#)

[Forward Together](#)

[Indigenous Women Rising](#)

[Latino Commission on AIDS](#)

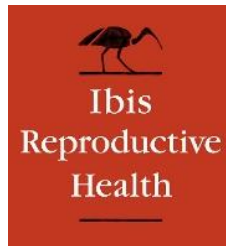
[National Hispanic Medical Association](#)

[SPARK Reproductive Justice Now!, Inc.](#)

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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