



Oral Contraceptives Over-the-Counter Working Group Updates

September 2, 2021

Dear Working Group member,

I hope that this email finds you well. We are busy planning for the upcoming virtual **OCs OTC Working Group Annual Meeting on September 22 and our World Contraception Day activities on September 23!** [Registration](#) for these events is now open and will close September 15.

This year's annual meeting will include an opening session starting at 11am ET on the state of the movement that will be open to the public, followed by a series of sessions that will be limited to working group members who have signed onto our [Statement of Purpose](#) as well as invited guests. If you or your organization have not signed on and would like to or if you have any questions about registration, please **reach out to Jess Sanchez** before September 15 to ensure that you can attend the event.

As always, the annual meeting will be an opportunity for the coalition to collectively gather in community and revisit our shared goals for OTC birth control pills in the US that are affordable, covered by insurance, and available to people of all ages. We hope to see you there!

With gratitude,

Victoria Nichols

Victoria Nichols
Free the Pill Project Director
Ibis Reproductive Health

Join us for a Free the Pill webinar: September 13

How did women's health advocates get from disrupting Senate hearings because of safety concerns regarding the birth control pill in 1970 to advocating for over-the-counter access for birth control pills today?

In partnership with the [National Women's Health Network](#), a working group member, Free the Pill will be hosting a webinar on **September 13 from 12-1:30pm ET**. Please join us for "From Righteous Disruption to Over-the-Counter Advocacy," an intimate conversation with three venerable women's health advocates, Byllye Avery, Cindy Pearson, and Suzanne Junod. They'll share the history of birth control, the advocacy that made it safer, and the action we need now to make it accessible. Please register and share widely with your networks using our [suggested social media posts and graphics!](#)

[Register](#)

#FreeThePill Youth Council update



In celebration of World Contraception Day, the #FreeThePill Youth Council will be collaborating with Kuhoo Verma, star of Hulu's *Plan B*, for a discussion about the Free the Pill campaign and barriers to contraceptive access for young people. The conversation will also showcase the [Free the Pill Virtual Store](#), which remains open for visitors to explore a world where the pill

is available over the counter, covered by insurance, and without age restrictions. Visitors to the virtual store are also [encouraged to take action](#) to free the pill by signing on to a letter urging the Biden administration to ensure young people have equal access to any future OTC birth control pill!

Media highlights

UK makes birth control pills available over-the-counter; US advocates fight to "Free the Pill"

This feature on Free the Pill in [Ms. Magazine](#) highlights why it's so urgent for the US to join the list of 100+ countries where birth control pills are available OTC.

Illinois is making it easier for you to get birth control

Britt Wahlin, working group steering committee member, is quoted in this [Rewire](#) article, which applauds Illinois legislation allowing pharmacists to prescribe birth control and heeds the call to increase contraceptive access—especially during the pandemic.

As a doctor, I fight to make my state let pharmacists prescribe birth control

In this [Truthout](#) op-ed, Tracey Wilkinson, a working group member, shares why Indiana should join its neighbor Illinois, and 18 other states, in allowing pharmacists to prescribe birth control.

Top reasons the birth control pill should be OTC

In this [video](#), Raegan McDonald-Mosley, CEO of Power to Decide and working group steering committee member, shares five reasons the pill should be OTC and encourages providers to join the movement to free the pill.

A quick call to action

Want to learn more abt the history of #BirthControl, the advocacy that made it safer & the action we need now to make it more accessible? Join us for a webinar w/ three venerable #SRH advocates from 12-1:30pm ET on 9/13! bit.ly/3mvVxai @TheNWHN @FreeThePill

Free the Pill: From Righteous Disruption to Over-the-Counter Advocacy

Monday, September 13, 2021 | 12 - 1:30pm ET



Byllye Avery

Founder, Black Women's Health Imperative



Cindy Pearson

Former Executive Director, National Women's Health Network



Suzanne Junod

Independent Scholar & Consultant, former FDA Historian

A webinar moderated by Miriam Yeung, Free the Pill Consultant

Co-sponsored by:

Free the Pill



Register here: bit.ly/3mvVxai

[Click to Tweet](#)

Resources and more

Free the Pill policy agenda

In advance of World Contraception Day, check out our policy agenda for recommendations for expanding contraceptive access in the time of COVID-19. Please share with your colleagues working on state and federal policy.

[Read Policy Agenda](#)

OTC vs. Pharmacy chart

OTC access is not yet available, but in multiple states pharmacists can prescribe the pill as well as other contraceptive methods! Learn more about these two innovative models of access.

[Learn More](#)

Statement on racial justice

The OCs OTC Working Group Steering Committee is **committed to fighting racial injustice** and calling out systemic racism and inequities in sexual and reproductive health.

[Sign On](#)

Statement of purpose

Our coalition is more than 100 members strong! Has your organization signed onto our **statement of purpose** yet?

[Sign On](#)

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 easier access to safe, effective, and affordable contraceptives, especially for those who currently face the

greatest barriers, and support making birth control pills available over the counter. **Free the Pill** is the public-facing education campaign for the working group.

The working group is coordinated by **Ibis Reproductive Health**.

[Email Us](#)



OCs OTC Working Group | 2067 Massachusetts Ave, Suite 320, Cambridge, MA 02140

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Sent by jsanchez@ibisreproductivehealth.org