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Dear Working Group member,

Our first-ever Free the Pill Day was a huge success and we couldn't have done it without your support and participation! We increased awareness and understanding of the benefits of an over-the-counter birth control pill through social media and earned media, garnering over 3,500 tweets and more than 10 media stories. We had strong engagement among our working group partners and saw an uptick in followers across Free the Pill's social media channels. We also revealed our new "[Freedom to Thrive](#)" [video](#) on Free the Pill Day, highlighting barriers to birth control access, the benefits of the pill, and why an OTC option is part of the solution. I hope you will take 50 seconds to watch and share!

As a reminder, our annual working group meeting will be on September 27 in Washington, DC. We will also be celebrating World Contraception Day on September 26. **We ask that you please complete this [registration request form](#) by May 31 if you are interested in attending one or both of these events.**

In this update, we share a job posting for a [Free the Pill Project Assistant](#). Niara Lezama, who joined our team last summer in this role, will be leaving for medical school at the end of June. We are grateful for her contributions to the team and wish her all the best in this new chapter. Please share the job posting within your networks!

Next month, on June 18 from 2-3pm ET, we will be hosting a webinar with working group Steering Committee member Anne Burke (Johns Hopkins University) who will share her research evaluating the prevalence of contraindications to progestin-only and combined oral

contraceptives based on data from insurance claims.
[Register here!](#)

In this update, we also share New York's newly signed contraceptive equity legislation.

Finally, we highlight coverage of Free the Pill Day in [CNN](#) and [Scary Mommy](#), an op-ed from working group member Margot Radding (DKT International) in [Ms. Magazine](#), and a [Slate](#) article about online birth control prescribing that cites recent research on online prescribing platforms.

With gratitude,



Kate Grindlay Kelly
Project Director/Associate
Ibis Reproductive Health

Reminder: Annual working group meeting

This year's Oral Contraceptives (OCs) Over-the-Counter (OTC) Working Group Annual Meeting will take place **Friday, September 27** in Washington, DC. We will also be celebrating World Contraception Day on Thursday, September 26 with activities on Capitol Hill in support of Free the Pill and an evening reception co-hosted with the [American Society for Emergency Contraception](#). Please fill out our [RSVP form](#) by **Friday, May 31**, our priority registration deadline, to let us know if you can attend these events. At this time, we are able to guarantee one person from each organization for the annual meeting. After the priority deadline, additional spots may become available on a first-come, first-served basis. Please let [Mary](#) know if there is an additional person from your organization who is interested in attending.

Job opening: Project assistant for Free the Pill!

Come join our team to help Free the Pill! [Ibis Reproductive Health](#) is seeking a Project Assistant in its Cambridge, MA office. The ideal candidate will be committed to work on sexual and reproductive health, rights, and justice and is enthusiastic about providing communications, research, and administrative support to the team working on the [Free the Pill Campaign](#) and the [Oral Contraceptives Over-the-Counter Working Group](#) to make oral contraception available over the counter in the United States. Learn more [here](#) and please share with your networks!



Prevalence of contraindications to oral contraceptives webinar

We invite you to join us for a webinar, "Prevalence of medical contraindications to progestin-only and combined oral contraceptives in a large insurance claims database," featuring working group Steering Committee member [Anne Burke](#), director of Johns Hopkins' Family Planning Division. She will share her research evaluating the prevalence of contraindications for both progestin-only and combined oral contraceptives and analyzing the contraceptive use patterns among women with these contraindications. The webinar will take place Tuesday, June 18 from 2-3pm ET. [Register here!](#)

New York's contraceptive equity bill

Last month, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo signed the state's [Comprehensive Contraception Coverage Act](#), which would ensure insurance coverage for "all FDA-approved contraceptive drugs, devices, and products, including all FDA-approved over-the-counter contraceptive drugs, devices, and products as prescribed or as otherwise authorized under state or federal law without cost sharing." The new law also states that coverage must include emergency contraception, whether dispensed with a prescription or obtained over the counter.

Media highlights

["You should buy birth control online,"](#) published last month in *Slate*, highlighted the findings of a study on [online birth control prescribing led by Ibis Reproductive Health researcher Carmela Zuniga](#). This study, recently published in the *Journal of Telemedicine and Telecare*, found that the nine online platforms studied were adequately screening for contraindications.

Margot Radding, working group member, wrote an op-ed for [Ms. Magazine](#) describing her own obstacles (namely, her insurance company) in getting multiple packs of birth control pills before leaving for a four-month trip to India.

"First, we have to get past the doctor's consultation. Then, we have to go to a pharmacist--and, on occasion, suffer through hours of on-hold jazz jingles and a bureaucratic bridge troll--before getting a three-month pack of the pills we're entitled to."

Click to share this article on Twitter:

"Shifting birth control to an over-the-counter medication would lessen the bureaucratic and financial burdens, allowing birth control to be used for what it was made to do--give women the freedom to follow their own life path."

[CNN](#) and [Scary Mommy](#) covered our first-ever Free the Pill Day, highlighting social media posts from Free the Pill and the day's participants!

Statement of purpose sign-ons

We are pleased to announce that we have passed 100 organizational signatories to our [statement of purpose](#)! Congratulations to [SisterLove](#) for being our 100th! If your organization has not yet signed on, please consider formalizing your support for making OCs available OTC in the United States. [Email Mary](#) if you would like your organization to sign-on!

[ETR](#)

[Grandmothers for Reproductive Rights](#)

[Michigan Organization on Adolescent Sexual Health](#)

[SisterLove](#)

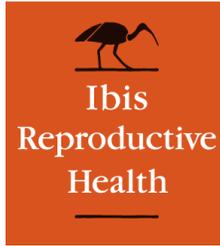
[Upstream USA](#)

[The Woodhull Freedom Foundation](#)

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

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