



Oral Contraceptives Over-the-Counter Working Group Updates

July 29, 2021

Dear Working Group member,

My name is Victoria Nichols, and I am excited to introduce myself as the new Free the Pill Project Director! I am honored to partner with you to bring oral contraceptives over the counter in the US and ensure they are affordable, covered by insurance, and available to all.

I come to this work eager to learn, collaborate, and innovate. My background is in health policy, and I have a passion for transforming policies, systems, and practices to equitably address diverse needs. I was drawn to Ibis Reproductive Health because of the **organization's equity values**, and I strongly align with the OCs OTC Working Group steering committee's **commitment to racial justice**. In my role, I will aim to deepen our commitment to these values and strengthen principled partnerships to achieve shared goals.

As I complete my first month at Ibis, I am reflecting on the opportunities ahead and the history upon which we are building. It is a privilege to join you at this exciting time, with HRA Pharma so far along in their FDA-required research. I look forward to connecting at our virtual annual meeting on September 22 and celebrating World Contraception Day on September 23! Stay tuned for registration details, which we will send soon.

In solidarity,

Victoria Nichols

Victoria Nichols

Free the Pill Project Director
Ibis Reproductive Health

#FreeThePill Youth Council update



The #FreeThePill Youth Council is excited to welcome a new cohort of youth activists who will be developing organizing skills and fighting to free the pill!

The [Free the Pill Virtual Store](#) remains open for visitors to learn about barriers to birth control access, earn merchandise, view Free the Pill artwork, and take action to free the

pill. The store allows visitors to see what a corner store would look like in a world where birth control pills are made free, over the counter, and without age or insurance limits.

UK reclassifies two POPs as "pharmacy medicines"

Two progestin-only pills ([HRA Pharma's Hana](#) and Maxwellia's Lovima) have been [approved as "pharmacy medicines"](#) and will be available for purchase in the UK, no prescription required! In the UK, this classification of medicines means a pharmacy consultation will be required to purchase the product. By allowing more convenient access to a progestin-only birth control pill, this will give people of all ages in the UK greater control over their reproductive health by eliminating the prescription requirement and doctor's visit.

As you know, in parallel to the launch of Hana, HRA Pharma is working with the FDA to pave the way for a switch in the US, which would be the first time any birth control pill would be available without a prescription in the US.

Media highlights

Is trans telehealth the future—or just a cash grab?

This [Mother Jones](#) piece examines the positive impact of telemedicine on health care for trans people, citing Free the Pill as a revolutionary "road map for transforming trans health."

Colorado will provide free birth control to undocumented people. It's a rare way to expand access.

[The Lily](#) highlights the critical organizing efforts of the [Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights](#), a working group member, in passing

legislation to ensure the state's undocumented communities have access to birth control.

A quick call to action

Birth control access isn't just a health care issue, it's a:

- !!Racial justice issue
- !!LGBTQ+ rights issue
- !!Economic justice issue
- !!Disability justice issue
- !!Human rights issue

So let's treat it that way. Let's #FreeThePill!

[Click to Tweet](#)

Resources and more

State policies chart

More and more states are passing laws to make birth control pills easier to access. View our state policy chart to follow these exciting updates!

[View State Policies](#)

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.

Statement of purpose

Our coalition is more than 100 members strong! Has your organization signed onto our [statement of purpose](#) yet?

[Read the Statement](#)[Sign On](#)[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](#)

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