

*The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends oral contraceptives should be available over the counter if pharmacists are available to counsel.*

## **Pharmacists Expanding Healthcare Access Hormonal Contraceptives**

### **ALMOST 50% OF PREGNANCIES IN THE UNITED STATES ARE UNINTENDED.**

Unintended pregnancies are associated with a lack of prenatal care, poor behavior by the mother (alcohol and smoking), low birth rates, and an increased rate of child abuse. [1]

### **THERE IS A HIGH PUBLIC COST RELATED TO UNINTENDED PREGNANCY IN MINNESOTA.**

In Minnesota in 2010, the federal and state governments spent \$332.6 million on unintended pregnancies; of this, \$203.9 million was paid by the federal government and \$128.7 million was paid by the state. The total public costs for unintended pregnancies in 2010 was \$318 per woman aged 15–44 in Minnesota, compared with \$201 per woman nationally. [2]

### **PHARMACISTS IN MINNESOTA NEED THE AUTHORITY TO PRESCRIBE SELF-ADMINISTERED HORMONAL CONTRACEPTIVES.**

This would help reduce the negative effects of unintended pregnancies on an individual and community level by removing unnecessary and inefficient barriers.



**Pharmacists, and hormonal contraceptives, part of the solution.**

#### **For More Information**

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# Pharmacists Expanding Healthcare Access

## Hormonal Contraceptives

### PHARMACISTS IN OTHER STATES

California, Colorado, Hawaii, Maryland, New Mexico and Oregon all have the statutory authority enacted which allows their pharmacists under certain guidelines to prescribe self-administered hormonal contraceptives to their patients. Illinois, Missouri and New Hampshire are currently in the process of developing legislation which calls for pharmacists to prescribe and dispense "certain contraceptives." [3]

### SUPPORTING RESEARCH

One study showed that 68% of women are interested in having the pharmacist prescribe hormonal contraception with greater interest in certain groups:

- Past difficulty in getting a prescription for a contraceptive
- Uninsured
- Low income
- History of unintended pregnancy or pregnancy scare
- African American or Latina

41% of non-users said they would start if they could access at a pharmacy. Most women in the United States believe that hormonal contraception should be available without prescription and would personally use pharmacy access. Seventeen to 22 million women constitute the potential market for pharmacy access to hormonal contraceptives in the United States. Women's enthusiasm for pharmacy access suggests that the pharmacy is an important site for the provision of sexual health education, screening and supplies. [4]

A study in Washington found that women who took a 20 item self-administered questionnaire had 96% agreement with their health care provider's same day evaluation. When women are interested in oral contraceptives, they become well informed by doing online research before heading to the clinic. Studies have shown that sexual risk-taking behavior will not increase if access to oral contraceptives increases. It also showed that patients who are not prescribed oral contraceptives from their physician still see their physician for yearly preventative care such as STI screening, pap smears, breast cancer screenings, and more. Pelvic exams are not required to get a prescription for oral contraception and do not pose a risk to the patient. [5]

Another study showed that improving access to contraceptives can reduce the unintended pregnancy rate by half and resulted in a teen birth rate of 6.3 per 1,000 as compared to the national average at 34.1 per 1,000. [6]

\*For patients under 18 years of age, pharmacists could only prescribe if the person has evidence of a previous prescription from a practitioner other than a pharmacist for a self-administered hormonal contraceptive.

- [1] American Public Health Association. (2006, November 08). Ensuring that Individuals are Able to Obtain Contraceptives at Pharmacies. (Policy number: 200611).
- [2] State Facts About Unintended Pregnancy: Minnesota. (2016). Guttmacher Institute. Retrieved 16 November 2017, from <https://www.guttmacher.org/fact-sheet/state-facts-about-unintended-pregnancy-minnesota>
- [3]"Pharmacists Authorized to Prescribe Birth Control in More States ...." 4 May. 2017, <https://naspa.us/2017/05/pharmacists-authorized-prescribe-birth-control-states/>.
- [4] Landau, Sharon Cohen, Molly Parker Tapias, and Belle Taylor McGhee. "Birth control within reach: a national survey on women's attitudes toward and interest in pharmacy access to hormonal contraception." *Contraception* 74.6 (2006): 463-470.
- [5] American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. (2015). Access to Contraception. Committee Opinion No. 615. *Obstet Gynecol*, 125, 250-5.
- [6] Peipert, Jeffrey F., et al. "Preventing unintended pregnancies by providing no-cost contraception." *Obstetrics and gynecology* 120.6 (2012): 1291.