



**NARAL  
Pro-Choice Oregon**

## **EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION PHARMACIST SURVEY**

### **Summary**

In spring of 2005, NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon conducted a survey in conjunction with its Choice Action Teams from Multnomah and Washington Counties: Joint Legislative Committee. The Committee is composed of Multnomah and Washington County volunteers and activists committed to reproductive rights. The survey was designed, implemented, conducted, and completed by citizen activists with oversight from NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon.

Oregon counties represented in this survey sample include: Multnomah, Washington, Marion, Lane, Benton, Deschutes, Yamhill, Clackamas, Josephine, Jackson, Coos, Douglas, Lincoln, Clatsop, Columbia, Curry, Grant, Baker, Morrow, Polk and Umatilla

### **Organizational Background**

Founded in 1977, NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon has been the political arm of Oregon's Pro-Choice movement and an affiliate of NARAL Pro-Choice America.

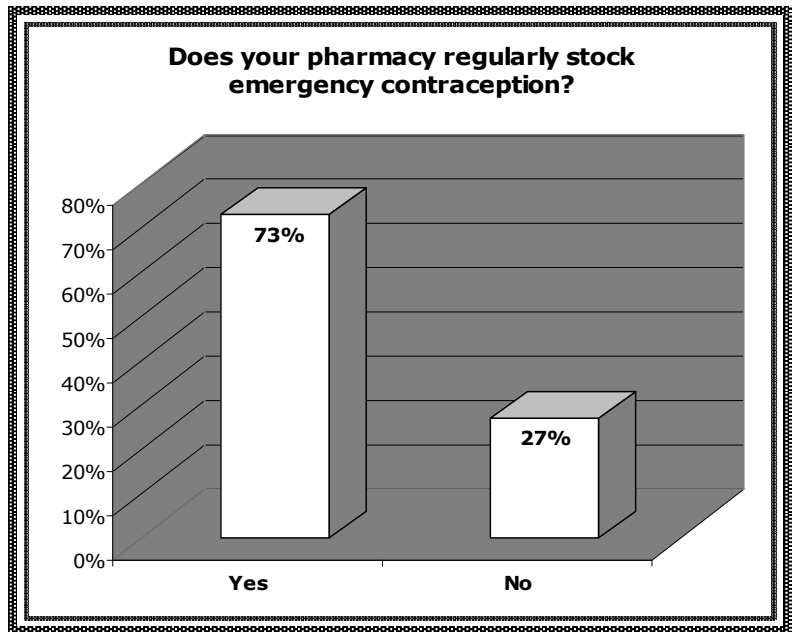
Our mission is to develop and sustain a constituency which effectively uses the political process to guarantee every woman the right to make personal decisions regarding the full range of reproductive choices, including preventing unintended pregnancy, bearing healthy children, and choosing legal abortion.

## EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION PHARMACIST SURVEY RESULTS

The Oregon Emergency Contraception Pharmacist Survey discovered wide support among pharmacists for stocking and dispensing birth control, including emergency contraception.

- Over 70% of pharmacists reported that they regularly stock emergency contraception.
- A small majority (52%) of respondents indicated that they would support legislation allowing women to access emergency contraception without a prescription.

- The top reasons cited by retail pharmacists as to why they do not stock emergency contraception:
  1. Moral objection
  2. Corporate policy
  3. They work at a non-retail pharmacy and such prescriptions are out of their business scope.
  4. No customer demand

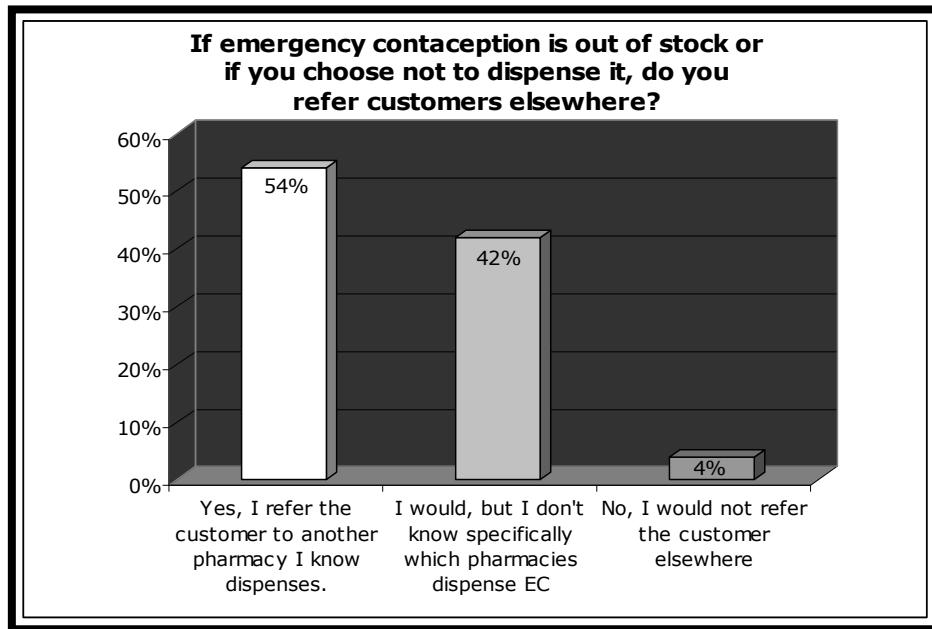


Some responses include:

- "We stock it, but only dispense it to patients coming in to the Emergency Department."
- "[We are] a Catholic institution, we don't even carry birth control pills."
- "Owners of [our] corporation do not wish to provide EC."
- "No call for such."
- "We are a mail-order facility and would not meet time constraints for administration."
- "A fertilized egg is a life from conception on!"

Just over half of pharmacists (54%) reported that, if their pharmacy does not have emergency contraception available, they would refer customers to another local pharmacy. Others said they would refer, but are not aware of which areas pharmacies stock emergency contraception and which do not.

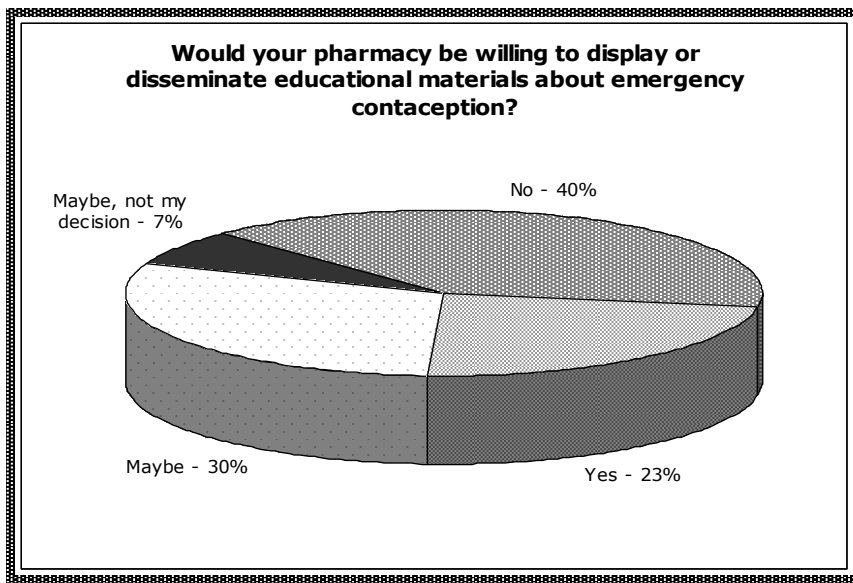
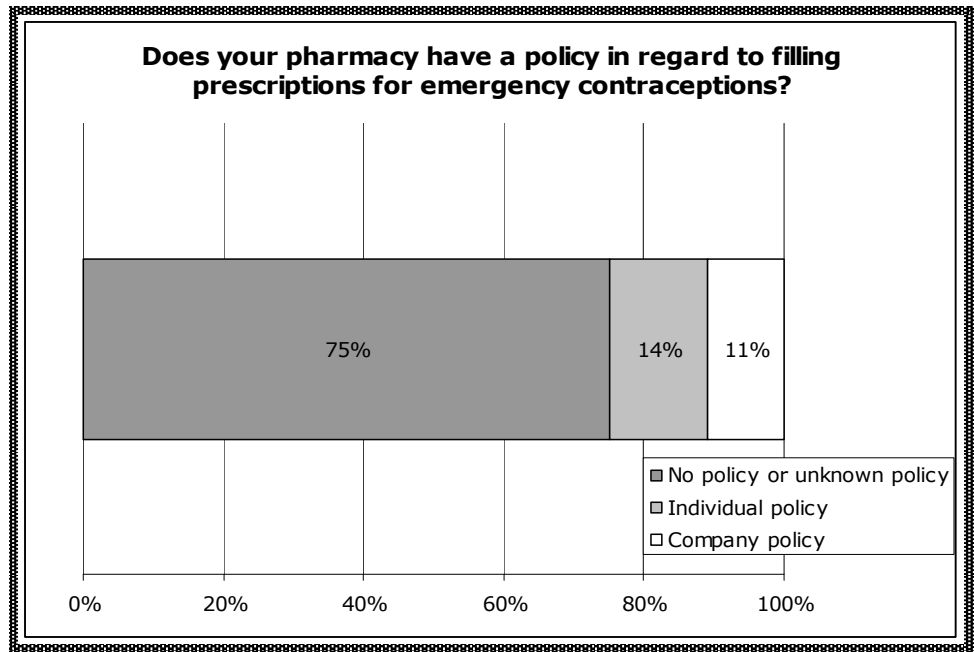
A small number of pharmacists reported that they would actively block women's access to emergency contraception by both refusing to dispense emergency contraception and refusing to refer her to another pharmacy.



Sample responses include:

- "I believe every pharmacist has an obligation to dispense EC, without regard to his/her own feelings/beliefs regarding the use of such items."
- "If they aren't responsible to begin with, I can't see rewarding anyone for not being responsible."
- "I believe that it is important to provide EC to patients. Pharmacists are here to educate and answer patient questions, not to pass judgment and impose their moralities onto others. I support... EC going OTC to increase its availability to women."
- "Even if I did not work in a Catholic institution, I would not support the sale of EC, and I personally would not fill it."

Survey results indicate that many Oregon pharmacies have no written policy on the rights of women to access emergency contraception or other physician-prescribed medications, or the pharmacists employed are unaware of them. Nearly 15% of pharmacists responded that they refuse to stock or dispense emergency contraception based solely on personal moral objections.



- Despite widespread support for emergency contraception among Oregon pharmacists, and stated support for legislation allowing it to be dispensed without a prescription, many pharmacists were hesitant to disseminate educational materials about emergency contraception to their customers, or display it in their pharmacy.

The survey results indicate wide-ranging support for emergency contraception within the pharmacy community. The ability for women to access emergency contraception safely and efficiently within her own community is a cornerstone in promoting women’s reproductive health. Furthermore, the survey results demonstrate that pharmacists, like the majority of Oregonians; believe that people have the right to access all safe and legal prescriptions. Blocking access and creating unnecessary red tape, imposes moral barriers on the private, medical decisions of citizens.



# NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon

## PHARMACIST'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Your preferred method of contact

Your Title/Credentials: \_\_\_\_\_ (e-mail, phone, fax, mail, etc.):

Pharmacy Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Pharmacy's Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Your preferred time to be contacted: \_\_\_\_\_

Pharmacy's Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Please answer the questions below, following the instructions as provided.

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1. Does your pharmacy regularly stock emergency contraception, such as Plan B? (Circle one)

Yes                  No

2. If your pharmacy does not stock emergency contraception, why? (Please explain.)

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Does your pharmacy have a policy in regard to filling prescriptions for emergency contraception?  
(Check one)

- \_\_\_ Yes, there is a company-wide policy everyone must follow.
- \_\_\_ Yes, the policy is that the individual pharmacist may decide whether to fill the prescription.
- \_\_\_ No, there is no formal policy.
- \_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4. If your pharmacy has a policy, please explain it below. If there are conditions or restrictions regarding filling the prescription, list them below. If the policy is written, please enclose a photocopy with this questionnaire.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. If emergency contraception is out of stock or if you choose not to dispense emergency contraception ("EC"), do you refer customers elsewhere? (Please check one of the answers below.)

Yes, I refer the customer to another pharmacy I know dispenses EC, such as \_\_\_\_\_ (name).

I would, but I don't know specifically which pharmacies dispense EC.

No. I would not refer the customer elsewhere.

6. Would your pharmacy be willing to display or disseminate educational materials about emergency contraception? (Circle one)

Yes

No

Maybe

7. Approximately how many prescriptions per month does your pharmacy fill for emergency contraception? \_\_\_\_\_ (Please state number of prescriptions per month)

8. What is your retail price for emergency contraception? \$\_\_\_\_\_ (State retail price)

9. Are you willing to be contacted about supporting legislation to make emergency contraception available by direct dispensation in Oregon? (Note that "direct dispensation" through pharmacies is not the same as over-the-counter access.) (Circle one)

Yes

No

10. If you have any comments, opinions, or questions regarding emergency contraception, please write them below:

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Thank you for taking the time to answer this questionnaire. Please return the questionnaire to NARAL Pro-Choice Oregon using the enclosed envelope. If you have any question, or if you would like to take action to promote improved access to emergency contraception, please contact Treasure Mackley, Field Director, at (503) 223-4510, extension 14.