



EC Pharmacy Access Program: Information for Pharmacists

Massachusetts (MA) law allows pharmacists to be specially trained to dispense a wider range of more effective and affordable Emergency Contraception (EC) products to women without a prescription under a standing order from a physician. EC is a safe and effective way to prevent pregnancy up to 5 days after unprotected sex but is most effective when used as soon as possible. EC is not the abortion pill (mifepristone or RU-486). You can help women back up their birth control with EC!

Why should pharmacists become specially trained to provide pharmacy access to EC if it's available over-the-counter (OTC)?

Despite OTC availability, EC remains difficult for many women to access. Becoming specially-trained means that:

- ✓ You can help **all** women directly access EC on demand at the pharmacy, including women who can't otherwise purchase more highly effective methods because of age, ID, or prescription requirements.
- ✓ You can help MassHealth members and other partially insured women access their preferred EC method when a prescription is required for contraceptive coverage or cost-savings. Because EC provided under a standing order by a specially-trained pharmacist constitutes a prescription, you can help women who would otherwise need to pay out of pocket for OTC products access affordable (generic or prescription) methods at the pharmacy counter.
- ✓ You can help women privately and confidentially access their preferred method of EC at the pharmacy counter. Less than half of surveyed pharmacies stock EC on store shelves, and many pharmacies that do stock it in a glass case or anti-theft package that must be unlocked by a store employee.

Signing up to participate is as easy as 1-2-3!

1 Complete an accredited online training program through:

- Northeastern University at www.rxce.neu.edu. Click the "Home Study (Online) Programs" link and set up a free account to enroll or
- MCPHS University at www.mcphsce.org. Log in or set up a free account to enroll.

2 Obtain a standing order from a physician

- Obtain a model standing order online at www.mass.gov/emergencycontraception.
- Find a physician to sign the order, or contact the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Family Planning Program for help locating one at pharmacy.dph-ec@state.ma.us.

3 Submit the order with the Board of Registration in Pharmacy and register your pharmacy online

- Send a copy of your signed standing order by email to pharmacy.dph-ec@state.ma.us to file your order and list your pharmacy access program online at www.mass.gov/emergencycontraception.

You are ready to dispense!

How can I find out more about the Pharmacy Access Program in Massachusetts?

- Visit www.mass.gov/emergencycontraception or
- Contact the **MDPH Family Planning Program** at pharmacy.dph-ec@state.ma.us or **617-624-6060**

