

Resolution to End Age Restrictions for Emergency Contraception (EC) Access

WHEREAS the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) states that, “Quality healthcare in family medicine is the achievement of optimal physical and mental health through accessible, safe, cost-effective care that is based on best evidence”¹ and

WHEREAS the AAFP “supports the use of evidence-based and explicitly stated clinical practice guidelines” that are “developed using rigorous evidence-based methodology,”² and

WHEREAS the AAFP opposes all discrimination in any form, including but not limited to, that on the basis of . . . age,”³ and

WHEREAS the current age restriction on the over-the-counter sale of emergency contraception (EC) has been repeatedly shown to have no medical basis and

WHEREAS scientific evidence indicates that adolescents are capable of understanding the appropriate use of emergency contraception^{4 5} and that the availability of emergency contraception is not linked to increased sexual activity or sexual risk-taking^{6 7 8 9} and

WHEREAS emergency contraception has a limited effectiveness window, so it is extremely important that patients be able to access this medication without unnecessary delay, and

WHEREAS numerous professional bodies, including the American Academy of Pediatrics¹⁰, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists¹¹, the Society of Adolescent Health and Medicine¹², the Association of Reproductive Health Professionals¹³, and the American Public Health Association¹⁴ have issued statements recognizing that EC is safe and effective for all females of reproductive age, and should be approved for over-the-counter access without age restriction, now be it

RESOLVED that the __AFP will advocate for emergency contraception to be available over-the-counter to all women of reproductive age, and be it further

RESOLVED that the __AFP will instruct its delegates to present this resolution to the AAFP Congress of Delegates.

¹ American Academy of Family Physicians. “Quality Healthcare in Family Medicine.” 2000. 2011 COD. <http://www.aafp.org/online/en/home/policy/policies/f/qualcare.html>

² American Academy of Family Physicians Statement of Policy on Clinical Practice Guidelines. 1994, updated 2008 <http://www.aafp.org/online/en/home/policy/policies/c/clinicalpractguidelines.html>

³ American Academy of Family Physicians. “Patient Discrimination.” Policy Statement. 1996. 2010 COD. <http://www.aafp.org/online/en/home/policy/policies/d/discrimination.html>

⁴ Raymond E, Engle K, Tolley E, Ricciotti N, Arnold M, Park S. Comprehension of a prototype emergency contraception package label by female adolescents. *Contraception*. 2009;79:199-205.

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- ⁵ Cremer M, Holland E, Adams B, Klausner D, Nichols S, Ram R, Alonzo T. Adolescent comprehension of emergency contraception in New York City. *Obstetrics and Gynecology*. 2009;113(4): 840-844
- ⁶ Harper CC, Cheong M, Rocc CH, Darney PD, Raine TR. The effect of increased access to emergency contraception among young adolescents. *Obstetrics & Gynecology* 2005;106(3): 483-9
- ⁷ Raine T, et al. Emergency Contraception: Advance Provision in a Young, High Risk Clinic Population. *Obstetrics and Gynecology* 2000; 96: 1-7.
- ⁸ Belzer M, Yoshida E, Tejirian T, Tucker D, Chung K, Sanchez K. Advanced supply of emergency contraception for adolescent mothers increased utilization without reducing condom or primary contraception use. Research Presentations. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 2003; 32: 122-12
- ⁹ Gold, MA, Wolford JE, Smith KA, Parker Am. The effects of advance provision of emergency contraception on adolescent women's sexual and contraceptive behaviors. *Journal of Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology*. 2004 Apr;17(2): 87-96
- ¹⁰ American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Adolescence. Policy Statement: Emergency Contraception. *Pediatrics*. 2005;116(4):1026-1035.
<http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;116/4/1026#SEC16>
- ¹¹ American Academy of Pediatrics, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and Society of Adolescent Health and Medicine. (2011) Medical Groups Denounce HHS Decision on Access to Emergency Contraception: Move Defies Strong Evidence that Emergency Contraception is a Safe, Effective Tool to Prevent Unintended Pregnancy. [Press Release]
<http://www.acog.org/~media/News%20Releases/20111207Release.ashx>
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ Association of Reproductive Health Professionals. Position Statement on Contraceptive Access. Approved by Policy Committee May 2008, revised September 2009. <http://www.arhp.org/About-Us/Position-Statements#4a>
- ¹⁴ American Public Health Association. Support of Public Education about Emergency Contraception and Reduction or Elimination of Barriers to Access. Policy Date: 11/18/2003 Policy Number: 200315
<http://www.apha.org/advocacy/policy/policysearch/default.htm?id=1252>