



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 16, 2007
Sonia Ossorio
President, NOW-NYC
212.627.9895

NOW-NYC CALLS ON PHARMACIES TO LOWER PRICE OF EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION

Prices Skyrocketed After Over-The-Counter Sales Went Into Effect

NEW YORK, August 16, 2007 – The price of Emergency Contraception, commonly referred to as “Plan B,” at New York City pharmacies has reached an alarming peak, prompting NOW-NYC to call on pharmacy chains, including CVS, Duane Reade and Walgreens, to reduce their inflated costs.

NOW-NYC’s Reproductive Rights Committee crisscrossed the five boroughs and found prices as high as \$50 at some local pharmacies, and a recent study conducted by the New York City Council found the average price of “Plan B” at New York City pharmacies is \$41.84, which is higher than the price at which it was sold by prescription only.

“Making Emergency Contraception available over the counter is critical in reducing unintended pregnancies,” said Sonia Ossorio, president of NOW-NYC. “But this hard-fought battle to make EC accessible is defeated when the price is out of reach for many girls and women. Pharmacies must lower their costs.”

Indeed, nearly 17 million women nationwide are in need of subsidized contraceptive services. Financial obstacles pose a real threat to low-income women’s ability to obtain “Plan B,” the immediate consequences of which may include unwanted pregnancies and abortions.

Emergency Contraception can prevent pregnancy if taken within 72 hours of unprotected sex. Preventing pregnancy from occurring, it is not the same thing as RU486, or the “abortion pill,” which can be used to terminate a pregnancy.

The City Council study found that 94% of 155 pharmacies surveyed make Emergency Contraception available over the counter, in accordance with the Food and Drug Administration’s approval for sale. To read the New York City Council’s study, please visit http://www.nyccouncil.info/pdf_files/reports/ec%20report%20final.pdf

The National Organization for Women is the nation’s largest organization working to advance women’s rights and improve women’s lives. The New York City Chapter of NOW, founded in 1966, is the largest chapter in the country with 7,000 members locally and 35,000 statewide. NOW-NYC works to protect women’s reproductive choices, end violence against women and eliminate sex discrimination in our schools, workplaces, and the justice system in New York.

###