CAMPUS ORGANIZING AND EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION

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Every community owes its existence and strength to the generations before them, around the world, who contributed their hopes, dreams, and energy into making the history that led to this moment. Some were brought here against their will, some were drawn to migrate from their homes in hope of a better life, and some have lived on this land for more generations than can be counted. Truth and acknowledgment are critical in building mutual respect and connections across all barriers of heritage and difference.

We believe it is important to create dialogue to honor those that have been historically and systemically disenfranchised. So, we acknowledge the truth that is often buried: We are on the ancestral lands of the Piscataway People, who were among the first in the Western Hemisphere. We are on indigenous land that was stolen from the Piscataway People by European colonists. We pay respects to Piscataway elders and ancestors. Please take a moment to consider the many legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that bring us together here today.

Adapted from UMD MICA, stamp.umd.edu/mica

More info at native-land.ca
WHAT IS EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION?
WHAT IS ORAL EC?

- EC = Emergency Contraception
- Also known as “the morning after pill” or the brand name, Plan B®
- EC contains levonorgestrel, a safe and synthetic hormone which prevents pregnancy
- Prevents or delays ovulation, preventing pregnancy after unprotected sex
- Should be taken up to 72 hours after unprotected sexual intercourse
  - Ella is prescribed and can be taken up to five days after unprotected sex
WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF EC?

- Over the counter EC: does not require a prescription
  - Plan B, Preventeza, generics
  - Can be taken up to 72 hours after unprotected sex, but are most effective within first 12 hours
  - Usually has a weight limit around 175 lbs
- Ella: requires a prescription
  - Can be taken up to 5 days after unprotected sex
  - No weight limit
- Paragard (copper) IUD: requires insertion by a licensed medical professional
  - Can act as a form of emergency contraception
  - Is also a LARC (Long Acting Reversible Contraceptive); can last up to 12 years
  - Must be inserted within 5 days after unprotected sex
MYTHS ABOUT EC

Myth 1: **Emergency Contraception is the same as Medication Abortion**

- FALSE! Emergency Contraception is designed to delay or prevent ovulation, preventing pregnancy
- Medication Abortion is administered when a pregnancy already exists
- Emergency Contraception does not work on existing pregnancies
- Medication Abortion can be taken up to 10 weeks of pregnancy
- Medication Abortion consists of two pills:
  - Mifepristone
  - Misoprostol
MYTHS ABOUT EC

Myth 2: I can only take EC three (or another arbitrary number) times in my life

- FALSE! EC will not damage your reproductive organs!
- EC is completely safe and can be taken as many times as necessary
- There is no limit to the amount of times you can take EC!
- Why is it not considered a regular birth control?
  - EC can have some side effects that can cause discomfort
    - Periods can become heavy or irregular
    - Cramping and nausea are common side effects
MYTHS ABOUT EC

Myth 3: You have to be a woman who’s 18 or older to purchase EC.

• FALSE! In Maryland, anyone of any age or gender can purchase EC.
  
  • The FDA approved forms of EC such as Plan B® for over-the-counter sale in 2006, so like aspirin or Tylenol, you don’t need to show ID or be a certain gender to purchase EC.
WHERE CAN YOU GET EC?

- Over the counter EC can be purchased at any pharmacy
- CVS, Walgreens, local chain grocery stores
- Over the counter EC can also be purchased at some University Health Centers
- Ella must be obtained through prescription
- Paragard IUDs must be inserted by a physician
BARRIERS TO ACCESSIBILITY
Financial

• The biggest barrier to accessibility is the cost of EC
• A single pill can cost between $30-$75 depending on where you live
• Ella is more expensive
• For a college student, someone unemployed, or a minor, $50 can be a massive amount of money
There is a negative stigma that surrounds Emergency Contraception
• “If you need EC you’re irresponsible”
• Slut shaming
• People purchasing EC have noted that they felt judged by the pharmacist, the cashier, and/or their peers for purchasing EC
Access!

- Many pharmacies will claim that they will have EC in stock, but will keep it behind the counter so customers are forced to ask more people
  - Customers who’ve encountered a lot of stigma may be discouraged from purchasing EC
- Out of stock!
  - Some pharmacies won’t restock their EC when they run out
  - This is a big issue for sexual & reproductive healthcare deserts
  - If there is only one place to get EC and they are out of stock, where do you get it?
BARRIERS TO ACCESSIBILITY ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES: TOWSON UNIVERSITY

• Only place to get EC is the Towson University Health Center
  
• Hours of the Towson University Health Center: Monday – Friday, 8:00-5:00
  
• Can only get EC by appointment
  
• With insurance, EC costs $18-$20, without insurance upwards of $30
  
• Does not provide Paragard IUD insertions

• Towson University is generally sex/reproductive health positive
  
• Multiple sex positive events were held
  • Sex in the Dark
  • I <3 Female Orgasm
  
• Every dorm and building had a bowl of condoms
  
• The Health Center always had information about birth control options, STD testing, and various sexual & reproductive health services
BARRIERS TO ACCESSIBILITY ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES: UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND COLLEGE PARK

• UMD is also sex-positive
  • Free condoms available at the Health Center & for distribution
  • Free STI/HIV testing once a month
  • Transgender care available at Health Center
  • Sex Week in April
  • Lots of contraceptive options through the Health Center, including IUDs

• Multiple locations to purchase EC
  • University Health Center (Ella is available with a prescription)
  • Stamp Student Union
  • Commons Shop
  • North Campus Convenience Store
  • 24 Shop (24/7 EC access)
  • Generic EC: bought for $10, sold for $15
BARRIERS TO ACCESSIBILITY ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES: HBCUS AND CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES

• Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Catholic Universities have notoriously limited sexual & reproductive healthcare services for students

• Most do not provide EC at all – even in their health centers
  • Forces students to leave campus to get EC

• Not providing EC on campus doesn’t make the need for it to go away, it instead puts unnecessary stress on people trying to access it

• In many instances, condoms are not given out on campus, including the health centers

• No other form of healthcare is restricted like sexual & reproductive healthcare
  • Largely due to stigma
HOW CAN EC BE MADE MORE ACCESSIBLE
CAMPUS ORGANIZING

• Find your allies—they probably already have a member base
  • Campus Democrats
  • Feminist groups
  • LGBTQ+ groups
  • National Organization of Women (NOW) chapters, American Association of University Women (AAUW) chapters
  • Universities usually have a list or database of student organizations
    • Attend General Body Meetings (GBMs), contact Executive Board (E-board)
  • Religiously affiliated campuses may have rules against pro-choice on-campus organizations
“Intersectional” is a term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in the 90’s

- Originally mean analyzing systems of power through multiple lenses at once: feminist, antiracist, anti-ableist, queer, etc.
- Used often today as a buzz word
- Avoid being intersectional just in theory
  - By only reaching out to people you know, you may be excluding important allies and other marginalized groups
    - Reproductive justice originated with black women, who are often most impacted
    - Undocumented individuals may have trouble accessing healthcare—fear of deportation
  - When planning events, think: does this space/building have accessible entrances? Are there elevators? Do my slides have good contrast and an easily readable font? How can I provide closed captions in my webinars?
NON-GENDERED & PRO-CHOICE LANGUAGE

- Sexual and reproductive healthcare is for everyone
- The language you use is a sign of who you’re including in your organizing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use:</th>
<th>Instead of:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency contraception (EC)</td>
<td>Plan B©, the morning after pill, or just “EC” without clarification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abortion care</td>
<td>Abortion, termination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medication abortion</td>
<td>Mifepristone, misoprostol, or Mifeprex without clarification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregnant people/individuals</td>
<td>Pregnant women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incarcerated people/individuals</td>
<td>Incarcerated women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Later abortion</td>
<td>Late-term abortion, “partial birth” (anti-choice phrase), third-trimester abortion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sexual and reproductive health (SRH)</td>
<td>Women’s health</td>
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HOW CAN YOU DO CAMPUS OR COMMUNITY ORGANIZING?

- Form an idea of what access to EC and SRH is like for students on your campus
- Contact staff and administration who make decisions about healthcare on campus
  - Bring your ideas to the table about expanding access to EC
    - Have a clear idea of why and how access to EC can be improved
    - Health Center, Student Union, Dining Services staff/admin

If that doesn’t work:

- Petitioning
  - Online or in-person petitioning
  - If in-person, requires people to staff a table throughout days/weeks
- Social media campaigns and awareness
  - In partnership with other students and organizations
WHAT CAMPUS ORGANIZING HAVE WE DONE

• Started the ReproHotline of Towson with NARAL ProChoice Maryland
  • Insta: @ReproHotlineofTowson
• Was important to find a way to give out EC completely free: financial and stigma
• Drew inspiration from Michyah Thomas of Hampton University
HOW DID THE REPROHOTLINE HAPPEN?

- Worked with NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland
- Received an extremely generous donation of EC from Vagisil
- Outreach was extremely important
  - I made a post on my personal Instagram (@luvnsupportwomxn) that said I was planning on starting a peer to peer delivery service for EC
  - Started a group chat with anyone who expressed interest
- Held two in person meetings discussing what we would be doing and how we were able to do it
  - Split up the volunteers into different groups: social media, administration, and delivery
  - Started making ReproPacks – EC, condoms, and information pamphlets that spanned all areas of sexual and reproductive health knowledge and resources
- Once the packs were complete, I distributed them to the volunteers
- We began getting requests within a day of posting our phone number!
OUTREACH

- Main form of outreach was through Instagram
- Used it as a platform for sexual and reproductive education
- Included a list of the current abortion providers in Maryland
- Various posts about the different kinds of birth control
- Gave people another channel for requesting EC
HOW DID WE DO?

- Within the first semester of being active (3-month period) we gave out 70 packs of EC
- EC costs $50 → saved the Towson community $3,500 by giving it away
- Expanded to giving out pregnancy tests
  - Fun fact: the pregnancy tests from the Dollar Store ($1!) are the same level of quality as those that cost upwards of $10 in pharmacies
- Will continue to post on Instagram, give out EC, condoms, and birth control, and provide vital information to a vulnerable population
USING LOCAL NEWS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

- Universities’ donors read campus and local newspapers
- Negative press can affect a university’s donor base
- Use this to your advantage!
- Reach out to campus and local news outlets about your upcoming events
  - Campus and local news outlets especially love covering protests & rallies
  - Ask if they want to cover your event
- Remember to specify when something you say is off the record
  - If you say during an interview that something is off the record, they can’t publish that information
IF YOU NEED EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION – INDIVIDUALS

• Call or text NARAL ProChoice Maryland at 410-575-3766 and we can organize a time for pick up/curb side drop off
• Follow us on Instagram and twitter @prochoicemd for more information
• Go to our website (prochoicemd.org) → events → our EC COVID-19 plan
IF YOU NEED EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION – ORGANIZATIONS

- Email Kim Sauer – NARAL ProChoice Maryland’s Emergency Contraception Campaign Manager
  - kim@prochoice.md
- Any kind of organization can pick up EC!
RESOURCES

• Learn more about all aspects of reproductive justice
  • prochocemd.org
• Donate to support our work
  • prochocemd.org/fund-the-movement/
• Sign up for our listserv and stay up to date on what we’re working on
  • https://secure.everyaction.com/4ErSg6B_HkKqiuM5h1l1yQ2
• Need help paying for an abortion?
  • baltimoreabortionfund.org
REFERENCES


• EC Fact Sheet: https://www.womenshealth.gov/files/fact-sheet-emergency-contraception.pdf

• Emergency Contraception: https://prochoicemd.org/choices/emergency-contraception/

• Emergency Contraception: https://www.womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/emergency-contraception

ANY QUESTIONS?

Thank you for listening in!