

For Immediate Release

Contact:

Ingrid Dries-Daffner
CA EC Network Coordinator
Pharmacy Access Partnership
614 Grand Avenue, Suite 324
Oakland, CA 94610
iddaffner@phi.org
Tel 510-272-0150

First-Ever California Emergency Contraception Network Launched to Bolster Statewide Unintended Pregnancy Prevention Efforts

*Despite statewide progress, public health concern remains that
half of California pregnancies are unintended*

July 5, 2006 – In an effort to coordinate statewide activities aimed at reducing the rate of unintended pregnancy, more than 50 state advocacy groups, healthcare providers, government agencies and researchers are collaborating to form the first-ever California Emergency Contraception (EC) Network.

The unintended pregnancy rate in California continues to drop and the Alan Guttmacher Institute recently ranked the state number one in the nation for its family planning initiatives. In spite of these findings, approximately half of all pregnancies among California women giving birth are unintended. Furthermore, more than 100,000 teen girls statewide become pregnant each year, ranking California 7th highest nationwide for teen pregnancy. Emergency contraception can help prevent these unintended pregnancies.

Emergency contraception can prevent an unintended pregnancy if taken within 5 days of unprotected sex (i.e. due to condom failure, missed pills or sexual assault). California women may obtain EC through their primary care provider, ob-gyn, in public health clinics and through a pharmacist-initiated prescription, without having to visit their doctor first.

“Advocates are working tirelessly throughout the state to improve emergency contraception information and access as a means of preventing unplanned pregnancy. The California EC Network will bolster these efforts, presenting a united front in our work to ensure comprehensive reproductive health care services for all California women,” stated Mary Wiberg, Executive Director of the California Commission on the Status of Women.

Network goals include increasing community awareness, understanding and access to emergency contraception, sharing models of successful programs throughout the state and ultimately helping improve EC efforts nationally.

The launch of California’s Emergency Contraception Network follows in the footsteps of other statewide Emergency Contraception Networks around the country, such as New York and Massachusetts. The California Emergency Contraception Network is one of the country’s largest coalitions of EC advocates and providers.

###