



## **Support HB 2879-A and Expand Access to Important, Cost-Saving Medications**

*The Oregon State Pharmacy Association and the Oregon Society of Health-System Pharmacists ask you to support HB 2879-A because it will expand access to important, cost-saving medications by allowing pharmacists to provide self-administered hormonal contraceptives.*

The pharmacist is the most accessible health care professional in the national delivery system, and that is a hallmark of the profession. Their expertise and education means it is common sense to involve them in assuring access to cost-saving, self-diagnostic therapies, while still providing a ready resource for patients. HB 2879-A, approved unanimously by the House Committee on Rules, authorizes pharmacists to provide self-administered hormonal contraceptives in addition to emergency contraceptives.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists supports improved access to contraceptives for women and has advocated for over-the-counter status for oral contraceptives as one strategy to prevent unintended pregnancy. Their studies indicate that women who are at risk for unintended pregnancy would readily access all forms of self-administered birth control from pharmacies - including oral, patch or vaginal ring. Several studies have demonstrated that women can self-screen for contraindications to hormonal therapy. In some cases, women are more likely to identify contraindications than their health care provider.

California has passed similar legislation. The Direct Access study, conducted in select community pharmacies in Washington State, was a pilot project in which pharmacists provided hormonal contraceptives to women through a collaborative drug therapy protocol. A self-administered screening tool and physical assessment of weight and blood pressure were elements of the protocol. Follow up with the patients enrolled in the study was performed by pharmacists at 1, 6 and 12 month intervals.

**195 women** (91% of those screened) were prescribed hormonal contraceptives by pharmacists. After 12 months, 70% of women participating in the study reported continuing use of hormonal contraceptives. **Nearly all the participants expressed willingness to continue seeing their pharmacist prescriber for continued support of contraceptive therapy.**

If HB 2879-A is approved by the Legislature, the State Board of Pharmacy will develop rules governing the practice, in consultation with the Oregon Medical Board, the Oregon State Board of Nursing, and the Oregon Health Authority.

Please support passage of HB 2879-A and help enhance access to cost-saving, self-diagnostic therapies.