

From: [Marilyn Whitney](#)
To: [E-OHPSCA2713.EBSA](#)
Subject: preventative healthcare
Date: Thursday, September 29, 2011 9:29:09 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

The Contraception Mandate by the Department of Health and Human Services is an inappropriate move on several levels.

I am a board-certified family physician with 23 years experience in caring for all aspects of care including obstetrics and women's health. Contraception in no way can be reasonably considered to be part of preventative health. Pregnancy is not an illness or disease to be screened for or managed like abdominal aneurysm or diabetes mellitus type 2. Therefore contraception cannot be appropriately included in any recommendation for preventative health measures. For example, the U.S. Preventative Services Task Force has NEVER listed pregnancy as a condition to be screened for and prevented. Clearly there are guidelines for maintaining a healthy pregnancy, but pregnancy is not a disease requiring prevention.

In addition, mandating that all health plans provide any and all contraceptive services as zero cost to the patient is also ill-advised. Such a move is not only a financially foolish move, but conveys an inappropriate message to the consumer and taxpayer. Why is contraception different than any other service? You cannot logically support that position.

Finally, there are numerous healthplans, employers and healthcare providers that have severe concerns about the ethics of providing such medications and procedures. Your proposed exceptions are clearly meaningless. The First Amendment rights under the Constitution are being thwarted by your proposal. Very real protections for the conscience of **all** employers, insurers, and policy issuers with moral, ethical, or religious objections to providing any and all methods of contraception and pregnancy termination. This nation was founded on religious freedoms regardless of what you want to believe. The First Amendment is the most important.

I have taken care of women for more than two decades. I trained for many years and have their real best interests at heart, If I am prevented from taking excellent care of my patients by misguided mandates from governmental officials with an political agenda, then I will not take care of them any more. The family physician shortage will only get worse when you lose some of your best.

Marilyn Whitney, MD
Diplomate ABFP