



ILLINOIS CONTRACEPTIVE ACCESS NOW

ICAN! Newsletter | 1st Edition | March 10, 2021

Announcing the launch of ICAN!

ICAN! is a 5-year initiative to advance reproductive equity in Illinois by partnering with community health centers to improve the quality and coverage of contraceptive care.

ICAN! represents the evolution of [Juno4Me](#)—a digital birth control education and connect-to-care platform which has connected Chicago-area users to high quality, no cost birth control since 2018. By embracing key learnings from this pilot, ICAN! seeks to create an Illinois where every person has the ability to decide if, when, and under what circumstances to be pregnant and parent.

After months of planning, we've assembled an [all-star team](#) of reproductive health and justice advocates and educators, community health practitioners, and experts in public health research and health care finance. We've established critical partnerships with you: the health care providers, community-based organizations, state agencies, and youth and community advisors whose collaboration and insights will make our 2021 demonstration year a success.



Together, we will:

- Build the capacity of community health networks to serve as [Contraceptive Care Quality Hubs](#) where patient-centered contraceptive counseling and quality family planning services are delivered in the context of primary care.
- Optimize a **direct-to-consumer platform** to provide inclusive, youth-informed, comprehensive birth control information as well as direct access to in-person and telehealth care; and
- **Test innovative administrative and regulatory policies** that will close the contraceptive coverage gap in Illinois.

5-Year Goals:

- Build **20+ Contraceptive Care Quality Hubs** that have the ability, demand, and capacity to meet patients' needs for high quality contraceptive care.
- Connect **500,000 patients** to person-centered contraceptive counseling.
- Reduce the contraceptive coverage gap by 50%, with **250,000 individuals** previously uninsured for contraceptive care receiving high-quality care.
- Ensure **cost is not a barrier** for people accessing contraceptive care at a Quality Hub.

Why are you receiving this newsletter?

Because YOU are an important part of this transformative project! We promise not to overwhelm you already full inbox. Instead, we'll send out brief, occasional updates to coordinate our efforts, share our progress, and celebrate our hard work and impact. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to reach out to us with feedback or questions.

With enthusiasm,

The ICAN! team (Katie, Kai, Toni, Kristie, Ray, Meg, Angela, Sameen, Jasmin, and Alena)



Building Contraceptive Care Quality Hubs

ICAN! is partnering with 3 outstanding FQHCs to serve as Contraceptive Care Quality Hubs during our 2021 demonstration year:

[Erie Family Health Centers](#) provides high quality medical, dental, and behavioral healthcare to all in need, regardless of ability to pay. Erie delivers holistic care to approximately 82,000 patients annually through 7 primary care locations, a Teen Health Center, and 5 school-based health centers.

[Near North Health Service Corporation](#) provides medical services, social services, and nutrition education to 37,000 patients annually living in low-income communities on the north, west, and south sides of Chicago through 9 comprehensive health centers and 2 supplemental nutrition sites.

[PCC Community Wellness Center](#) works to improve health outcomes for medically underserved patients by providing high quality, affordable, and accessible primary care. PCC delivers care to nearly 50,000 patients annually through 13 health centers on Chicago's west side and in the near west suburbs. PCC operates a freestanding birth center as well as a school-based health center at Steinmetz College Prep High School.

Over the next several months, all Quality Hub staff will have the opportunity to participate in two foundational webinars to ground them in the key principles of reproductive justice and quality family planning.

- "Reproductive Justice Foundation and Applications," delivered by [Dr. Toni M. Bond](#), a founder of the reproductive justice movement
- "Modern, Patient-Centered Contraception," delivered by [Dr. Caroline Hoke](#), the Chief Clinical Officer at Erie Family Health Centers.

For more information about our work with Quality Hubs, [click here!](#)

Community Engagement



Community Advisory Board

The first meeting of ICAN!'s Community Advisory Board (CAB) was February 16th. The CAB is a diverse cohort of 20 local leaders, half of whom participate in a dedicated [Youth Advisory Board \(YAB\)](#) for individuals ages 16-24. They are charged with:

- Guiding ICAN!'s digital development efforts, ensuring content and user experience are accessible, engaging, and actionable.
- Educating peers on all birth control methods and driving potential users to the digital platform.
- Producing and distributing digital and print consumer-facing assets.
- Leveraging relationships with community-based organizations to establish referral pipelines for the digital platform and Quality Hubs.
- Supporting Quality Hub development by reviewing and providing feedback on training materials and acting as secret shoppers to ensure care is youth-friendly and inclusive.
- Providing feedback and testimony to ensure ICAN!-proposed policies address community needs.

Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)

We are in the process of identifying CBO partners serving clients of reproductive age in our Quality Hub neighborhoods to help connect patients to care. CBO staff will have the opportunity to participate in reproductive justice and quality family planning trainings.

To learn more about ICAN!'s work with CBOs [click here](#).

Youth Education

Did you know that ICAN! provides informative, fun, and engaging birth control education workshops for adolescents and young adults?

We not only educate young people about all of their birth control options but can also directly connect them to youth-friendly contraceptive care at their local Quality Hub! If you work with or know of an organization that would be interested in bringing our workshop to young people, please contact atownsend@alliancechicago.org.

Policy Update

The cornerstone of ICAN!'s policy agenda is a **model Family Planning State Plan Amendment** informed by community partner insights as well as best practices in limited benefits packages beyond family planning coverage. We estimate that in the first year of implementation, the SPA would enable 70,000 low-resource individuals to become eligible for coverage that will include not only contraceptive services and supplies but also associated preventive screenings.

We are thrilled to be working with partners Planned Parenthood Illinois Action and EverThrive Illinois to advocate for this critical step in expanding equitable access to high quality contraceptive care. Stay tuned for progress updates and to learn how to support successful implementation!



Patient Voices

There is no better way to understand our impact than through the testimony of our patients!

"I had tried twice to get an IUD—once through my usual provider (which was too expensive) and once through insurance (which referred me to a gynecologist who disagreed with my choice to get an IUD, told me I was making a bad decision, and did not make me feel comfortable in the slightest). I gave up on trying to get the IUD for a few years, and then I saw Juno4Me referenced in a post on a women's service industry Facebook group during the pandemic. I looked them up, and on top of the fact that they provided services for free (a definite plus since I was unemployed), the website and its description made me feel like my choice would not be discouraged, and that its providers would be safe.

I initially was very nervous to make the appointment because of the thought of the actual procedure. However, from the moment they called me to follow up with my online submission, I had nothing but pleasant experiences. The woman who called to schedule my appointment was lovely and very knowledgeable. They gave reminders along the way. Most importantly, the doctors I dealt with were nice, professional, and made sure to give facts without judgement. Though the procedure itself was painful, the doctor was very reassuring throughout and had a calming presence.

I felt so lucky to have found an organization that would help me get the birth control that I will likely use until I have children."

Cynthia, 30, Logan Square



ICAN! Trivia



Q: How old do you have to be to get birth control in Illinois without a parent's permission?

The first person to respond to ican4all@alliancechicago.org with the subject line "trivia" and the correct answer will **win a \$10 e-gift card to Semicolon Bookstore!**

In the News

As we cross the bridge from Black History Month to Women's History Month, we honor Anarcha, Lucy, and Betsey—enslaved women from plantations near Montgomery, Alabama who, without consent or anesthesia, were experimented on by Dr. J. Marion Sims, known as the "Father of Modern Gynecology". Science, health care, and women everywhere have benefitted from their sacrifices, and yet they have been largely erased from history.

This year, Montgomery-based artists and activists will unveil a public monument that will memorialize Anarcha, Betsey, and Lucy as the "Mothers of Gynecology". The goal is not only to tell these women's stories, but also to "shine a light on ongoing racial disparities in the health care industry today." We can only move forward with creating a more equitable reproductive health care system when we understand the truths about our past.

Visit <https://www.anarchalucybetsey.org/> to learn more.

Other news you can use:

- [Memorandum on Protecting Women's Health at Home and Abroad](#), The White House, January 28, 2021
- [Levonorgestrel vs. Copper Intrauterine Devices for Emergency Contraception](#), New England Journal of Medicine, January 28, 2021

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