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For immediate release

ACCESS TO CONTRACEPTION IS A HUMAN RIGHT

May 28 marks the International Day of Action for Women's Health. In 2013, it's important to remember that access to contraception remains limited for women around the world, even in Australia.

"Women should be free to make decisions regarding their reproductive health. To do that, they need access to affordable contraception," said Ms Rita Butera, Executive Director of Women's Health Victoria.

"The availability of affordable contraception is a critical part of preventing unintended pregnancies and should form part of a wider strategy addressing sexual and reproductive health," Ms Butera said.

"There are some areas in Victoria where doctors refuse to prescribe the pill and chemists refuse to sell items like condoms and emergency contraception. In rural areas, this really impacts on women's ability to make decisions about their reproduction."

"Many contraceptive pills aren't available on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme and this means that many women experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage will struggle to meet the cost", Ms Butera said.

"Women should be free to exercise reproductive choice wherever they live, and that involves access to contraception", Ms Butera said.

Women's Health Victoria acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government.

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