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Sharon Hodgson MP
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15 November 2017

Dear Elizabeth,

We write further to our letter of 21st July 2017 to express our disappointment at Boots' failure to provide women with affordable emergency contraception as promised.

We welcomed Boots' announcement on 21st July that you would be looking to source less expensive emergency hormonal contraception medicines for your customers, and your statement on 31st August that you had been "working hard with the manufacturer to increase supply" of a cheaper alternative and as a result would be "able to offer this across all stores in October 2017." We were dismayed, therefore, to learn that you have failed to live up to this clear commitment to women.

We understand that, in response to media requests, Boots issued a statement on 31st October in which you cited "supply chain delays" as the reason for your inability to roll out the affordable alternative across your nearly 2,500 stores as promised. In August you said the cheaper pill was available in 38 stores and 69 stores according to your latest statement this week. Yet, there is no clear commitment for the cheaper product to be available across all of your stores.

Given that the vast majority of your competitors have been offering women a more affordable product for a number of months, it is difficult to understand why Boots – our leading high street pharmacy, who states they have a commitment to women's health and wellbeing – have been unable to do so.

As you are undoubtedly aware, over the Christmas period many women struggle to access contraceptive services and their usual family planning method. As a result, the British Pregnancy Advisory Service, bpas, reports that they see an increased number of women facing an unplanned pregnancy following the festive season. Clearly,



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pharmacy access to emergency contraception is of an even greater importance in December and January – which we are fast approaching.

We are deeply concerned that Boots are either unable or unwilling to deliver on your pledge. If you are, as you state, experiencing difficulties sourcing a new generic emergency contraceptive, we ask that you in the meantime consider reducing the price of the generic EHC that you currently stock.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Sharon Hodgson MP

Member of Parliament for Washington & Sunderland West
Shadow Minister for Public Health

Ruth Smeeth MP
Laura Pidcock MP
Anna Turley MP
Mary Creagh MP
Julie Elliott MP
Stella Creasy MP
Thangam Debbonaire MP
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