

Senior FDA Official Steps Down Over Announcement to Stall Plan B OTC Approval

Director of FDA's Office of Women's Health Resigns over Agency's Refusal to Approve Plan B OTC.

For immediate release:

Contact: Chrissy Faessen 202-347-7911

August 31, 2005

Washington, DC – American women lost an advocate for women's health and scientific integrity as **Susan F. Wood**, Ph.D., Assistant Commissioner for Women's Health and Director, Office of Women's Health announced her **resignation** today.

Wood's resignation comes after the FDA ignored scientific and medical evidence – again refusing to approve Plan B for over-the-counter use last week. Despite saying that it completed its review of this application, as amended, and concluding that the available scientific data are sufficient to support the safe use of Plan B as an over-the-counter product, the FDA said it would begin another regulatory process, thereby delaying the decision indefinitely. The FDA plans to hold a new 60-day public comment period – with no clear criteria or explicit timetable for a final decision.

Ms. **Wood** sent the following correspondence today to her colleagues and women's health advocates:

“Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I regret to tell you that I am leaving the FDA, and will no longer be serving as the Assistant Commissioner for Women's Health and Director of the FDA Office of Women's Health. The recent decision announced by the Commissioner about emergency contraception, which continues to limit women's access to a product that would reduce unintended pregnancies and reduce abortions is contrary to my core commitment to improving and advancing women's health. I have spent the last 15 years working to ensure that science informs good health policy decisions. I can no longer serve as staff when scientific and clinical evidence, fully evaluated and recommended for approval by the professional staff here, has been overruled. I therefore have submitted my **resignation** effective today.

I will greatly miss working with such an outstanding group of scientists, clinicians and support staff. FDA's staff is of the highest caliber and it has been a privilege to work with you all. I hope to have future opportunities to work with you in a different capacity. “

For press availability for **Susan Wood please contact: Chrissy Faessen at 202-347-7911**