TLP:WHITE

Healthcare Ready Partner Playbook

Table of Contents

Overview of Healthcare Ready

Healthcare Ready is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that works to ensure patient access to healthcare in times of disaster and disease outbreaks. The organization accomplishes this by leveraging strong relationships with government, nonprofit, and healthcare supply chains to build and enhance the resilience of communities before, during, and after events.

Founded by healthcare trade associations and members of the pharmaceutical supply chain, including PhRMA, NACDS, HDA, AAM, BIO, and the American Red Cross in 2007 in response to the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, our position at the intersection of sectors and status as an independent nonprofit equips us with a unique network to support and strengthen entities engaged in public health and healthcare crises. We sit as the bridge between the public and private sectors – sharing information and best practices, connecting needs to resources, and fostering collaboration.

Healthcare Ready has a proven track record of efficiently routing requests for assistance and information during emergencies. As a nonprofit with a wide network, we are able to do this quickly, when time matters. Both during emergencies and in between, we use our critical content expertise and strategic partnering capabilities to strengthen preparedness, information sharing, and recovery.

This playbook is intended to be a resource to help our partners understand how to engage with us during emergencies and how we can support response efforts.

Phase 1
- Support restoration of supply chain operations

Phase 2
- Inventory healthcare systems and ensure that healthcare operations can resume operations

Phase 3
- Connect patients and communities still disconnected from care with restored healthcare services
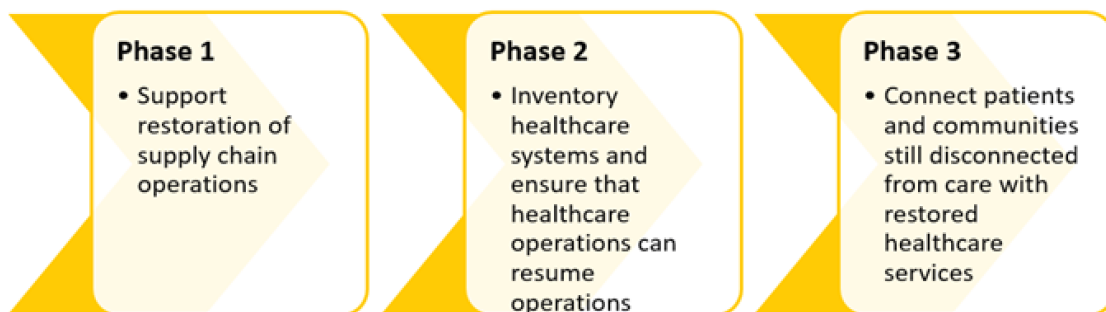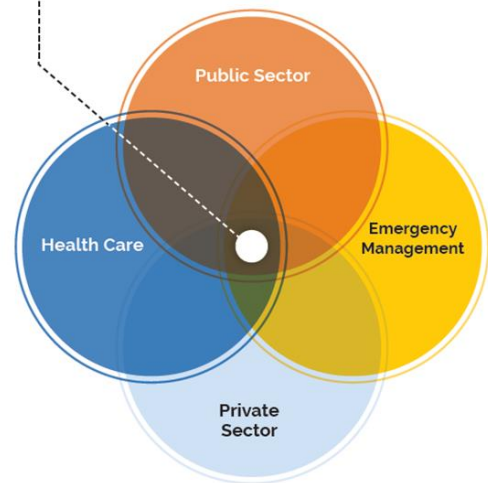
Figure 1. Healthcare Ready's phased approach to disaster response support

Response Levels

How Healthcare Ready and the Support Team (ST) respond to an event will depend upon an event's severity and, correspondingly, Healthcare Ready's status. There are three public levels to Healthcare Ready's status: Standby, Alert, and Engaged.

- **Standby**: on a daily basis, Healthcare Ready maintains readiness on a Standby status. This indicates a time when there is no event imminent or when an event threatens but does not yet look likely.
- **Alert**: when an event looks likely to threaten public health and potentially disrupt the normal supply chain. Healthcare Ready can move to this status as deemed necessary by the Executive Director or Support Team Leader. This status roughly corresponds with the "Analysis" phase of the crisis response process.
- **Engaged**: when an event is threatening public health and may disrupt the normal supply chain. Healthcare Ready will not move to Engaged status without confirmation from the Board. This status corresponds with the "Response" phase of the crisis response process.

These three levels are the public manifestation of what Healthcare Ready and the ST will do behind the scenes as an event becomes likely to occur, occurs, or has occurred. These public levels should not be confused with the ST activities during an incident: Analysis, Response, and Evaluation.

When We Activate

Healthcare Ready stands ready to activate whenever there is a potential wide-spread impact to healthcare supply chains and/or community well-being. Activation is determined on a case-by-case basis; here are examples of some of the triggers that are considered before activation:

- Disaster declaration by a Governor or the President;
- Declaration of a Public Health Emergency by the Secretary of Health and Human Services;
- Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Threat Advisory Red/Severe Classification;
- Health and well-being of a significant number of persons is materially threatened or affected; or
- Local, regional, national, or global healthcare infrastructure is significantly compromised

Emergency Operations Center

When Healthcare Ready is at "**Engaged**" status, we activate our Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and provide support through information sharing, coordination, and responding to and routing requests for assistance and information to partners and patients. Healthcare Ready has activated its EOC for more than 70 different natural disasters, infectious disease outbreaks, and man-made catastrophes over the course of ten years. We have developed and maintain relationships with private sector healthcare – including manufacturers, distributors, health systems, and pharmacies – and more than 75 NGOs across all 50 US states and territories. We additionally maintain up to date Emergency Support Function 8 (ESF-8) and emergency management contacts in all states, territories, and major metropolitan area. The EOC also activates Rx Open, which maps the operating status of pharmacies across the United States, when appropriate.

EOC Support Team Structure

During an activation, Healthcare Ready staff will operate the EOC, with titles and duties as follows. Additional (surge) staff are hired during events as needed.

Title	Duties
Executive Director (ST Leader)	• Team tactical response direction • Liaison between ST and Board, federal government partners
Programs Manager (ST Deputy Leader)	• Assistance to ST Leader • Team tactical response guidance • Liaison between ST and members
Program Analyst(s) (Support Team – RFI Analyst)	• RFA/RFI collection, routing and analysis
Business Manager (Support Team – Admin/Logistics Support)	• Administration and logistics support
Surge Staff (Support Team Analysts)	• Additional RFA/RFI analysis • Data management and analysis • Information collection, reporting, and sharing • Private sector coordination • Logistics coordination (if necessary)

Contacting Healthcare Ready

Requests for information and assistance can be sent to Healthcare Ready and the EOC via:

- **Email**: alerts@healthcareready.org
- **Hotline**: 1-866-247-2694
- **Twitter:** @HC_Ready
- **Facebook**: Healthcare Ready
- **LinkedIn:** Healthcare Ready

Types of Assistance Provided by the EOC

During events, our EOC directly aids patients and partners by responding to and/or routing requests for information (RFIs) and requests for assistance (RFAs). Examples of the range of assistance provided include:

Type of Request	Examples
Request for Information	• Sharing facility (pharmacy, emergency care center, etc.) operating status • Answering requests relating to potential impacts to healthcare system, infrastructure, power, etc. • Updates about infrastructure damage, power and communications restoration, etc.
Request for Assistance	• Assisting patients with replacing prescriptions • Organizing emergency transport and evacuation of patients • Coordination of private sector and public sector entities to repair issues in the healthcare supply chain

| | • Establishing medical supplies (e.g. insulin, oxygen, syringes) deliveries/shipments |
| | • Securing surge medical professional support |

RFIs and RFAs can be submitted through our Alerts email account or through the Hotline. Support Team analysts route and track RFIs/RFAs dynamically through a live spreadsheet.

How We Share Information

Healthcare Ready is an exceptionally strong support partner across a range of communications efforts and needs, including situational awareness, training development and delivery, and risk communications. Healthcare Ready is able to use our position and network to enhance and fortify the situational awareness of partners as well. As a **Department of Homeland Security-designated Information Sharing and Analysis Center (ISAC),** we are able to collect, analyze, and aggregate (de-identifying as needed) information from the private sector in a protected fashion. We are also a **member of the HPH Sector Coordinating Council leadership,** representing pharmacy and supply chain interests and perspectives.

Dissemination of information increases visibility across our network and encourages collaboration. Our email distribution list has over 1,800 healthcare, public health, and emergency management stakeholders. In 2017 we distributed 45 situation reports and end of day reports to an audience of over 400 emergency managers, public health officials, NGO partners, and other ESF-8 partners.

Sit-Reps
•Vital updates on challenges and resources
•Shared daily with ESF-8

Event-specific Web Pages
•Amplify messages
•Share resources

Coordination Calls
•Expedited information sharing
•Introduce partners & foster collaboration

Social Media
•Amplify messages and share resources
•Connect partners to resources

Training & Convenings
•Just-in-time training
•Cross-sector collaboration

Figure 2. Healthcare Ready communications platforms used during activations

The Traffic Light Protocol System

Healthcare Ready uses the [Traffic Light Protocol (TLP)](#) system, as defined by the United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team, to classify the information we share during activations. All notifications from us will have a TLP designation at the top or bottom of the message. TLP was created in order to facilitate greater sharing of information. TLP is a set of designations used to ensure that sensitive information is shared with the appropriate audience. It employs four colors to indicate expected sharing boundaries to be applied by the recipient(s).

TLP provides a simple and intuitive schema for indicating when and how sensitive information can be shared, facilitating more frequent and effective collaboration. TLP is not a "control marking" or classification scheme. TLP was not designed to handle licensing terms, handling and encryption rules, and restrictions on action or instrumentation of information. TLP labels and their definitions are not intended to have any effect on freedom of information or "sunshine" laws in any jurisdiction. *Source:* [US-CERT website](#).

TLP Status Summary:

Color	When should it be used?	How may it be shared?
TLP:RED	When information cannot be effectively acted upon by additional parties, and could lead to impacts on a party's privacy, reputation, or operations if misused. I.e., a request from a specific company	Recipients may not share TLP:RED information with any parties outside of the specific exchange, meeting, or conversation in which it was originally disclosed
TLP:AMBER	When information requires support to be effectively acted upon, yet carries risks to privacy, reputation, or operations if shared outside of the organizations involved I.e.., a list of facility needs for a hospital	Recipients may only share TLP:AMBER information with members of their own organization, and with clients or customers who need to know the information to protect themselves or prevent further harm. Sources are at liberty to specify additional intended limits of the sharing: these must be adhered to
TLP:GREEN	When information is useful for the awareness of all participating organizations as well as with peers within the broader community or sector. I.e., a report posted publicly on the HcR site	Recipients may share TLP:GREEN information with peers and partner organizations within their sector or community, but not via publicly accessible channels
TLP:WHITE	When information carries minimal or no foreseeable risk of misuse, in accordance with applicable rules and procedures for public release I.e., news articles or blog posts	Subject to standard copyright rules, TLP:WHITE information may be distributed without restriction

Situation Reports

Whenever Healthcare Ready's activation status is either **Alert** or **Engaged**, Healthcare Ready will regularly publish situation reports, or sit-reps, to be shared with the public. Sit-reps are generally sent out at the end of each day. While content varies depending on the event, sample information may include:

- Crisis Criteria
- Patient Needs
- Public Authority in Charge
- Alternate Medical Treatment Site Openings
- Human Health Impact
- Affected Counties/Regions
- Pandemic Influenza Characteristics
- Pharmaceutical Product Shortfalls

- Port/Airport Closures
- Personnel Needs in Affected Regions
- Public Health/Critical Infrastructure Updates
- Licensing/Fuel/Credentialing Issues
- Government Status
- Facts/Assumptions/Objectives
- Event Duration

Sit-reps are shared with relevant Healthcare Ready subscribers automatically via email but can also be found event-specific webpages on the HcR website during activations.

Sign up to receive state-specifc sit-reps on our website at: https://www.healthcareready.org/contact-us

Figure 3. The header of each sit-rep includes activation status

End of Day Reports

In contrast to situation reports, which are publicly available, end of day reports (EODs) are available only to Healthcare Ready members and our trusted partners. EODs include more sensitive and more detailed information than sit-reps, such as where and by whom HcR has specifically been asked for assistance or information. EODs also include other information about HcR activities, such as updates on relevant partnership work (e.g., search trend analysis with Google during Hurricane Maria). EODs are sent directly to members and trusted partners.

Quickguide to Sit-reps and EOD Reports

Report Characteristics	Situation Report	End of Day Report
Information availability	• Available to the public	• Available only to members and trusted partners
TLP designation	• Green or Amber (TLP White version available on event webpage)	• Red (TLP Green version made available on event webpage)
Frequency	• Daily	• Daily

Rx Open

Rx Open is Healthcare Ready's **free**, online, interactive map of open pharmacies in disaster areas. The application is turned on during disasters and is used by many different people for many different purposes, for example:

- **Government officials and first responders** use Rx Open to coordinate response and recovery efforts.
- **Relief agencies** rely on Rx Open to ensure people in shelters have access to pharmacies.
- **The public** use the application to locate open pharmacies.

Healthcare Ready will **turn the map on at the request of public sector partners**. Often, for events with notice, we will turn it on preemptively. Rx Open is comprised of two separate maps:

The Individual Pharmacy Map is used to provide pharmacy status in a region when Healthcare Ready activates for a response (or is requested to activate the map by a local government). Clicking on a pharmacy provides contact information and open/closed status.	**The County Overview Map** displays a high level view of how each county within an affected region's pharmacies are impacted by an emergency. Users can click on a county to see a pharmacy status summary.
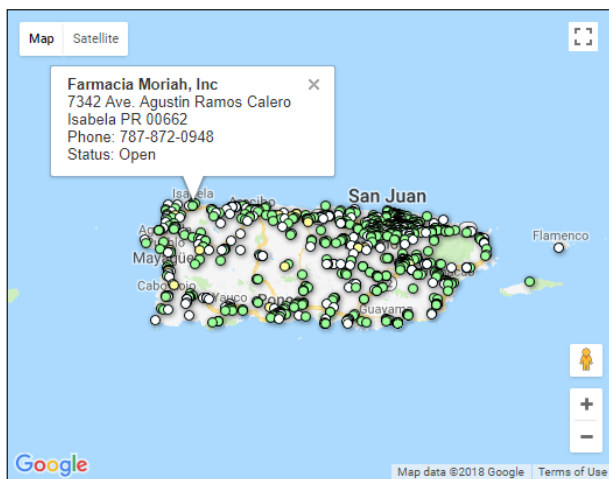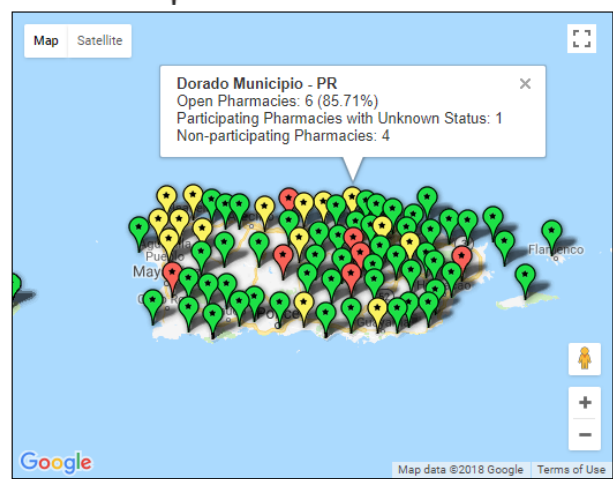
Healthcare Ready also performs analysis using Rx Open and its data both during and after an event in order to track pharmacy recovery.

Figure 4. Rx Open County Overview map view of Puerto Rico in September 2017 versus December 2017
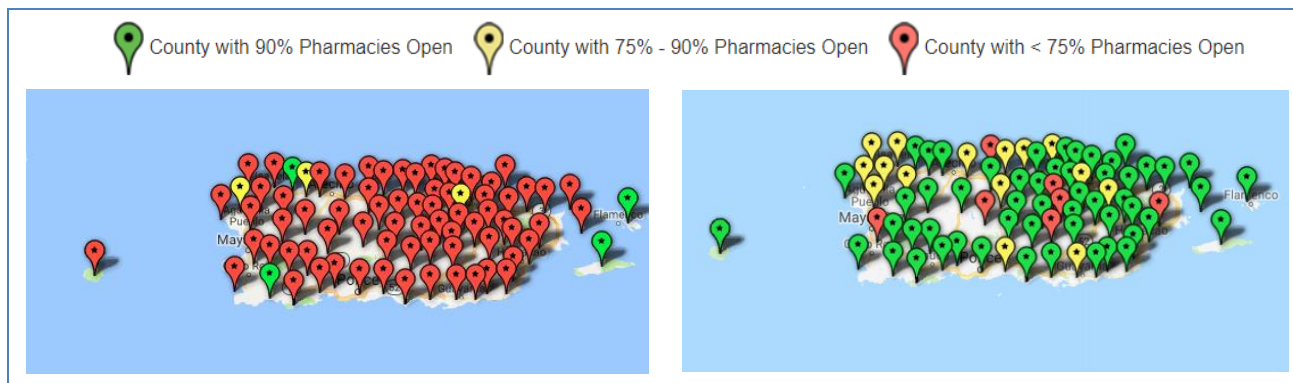
Our Activities Throughout All Phases of Activation

Healthcare Ready's activities change depending on the phase of activation. Before activation begins, HcR's activities can be characterized as analysis- and preparedness messaging sharing-based. Then, when activated, HcR coordinates responses to the event, responds to requests for information and assistance, and develops and shares information in the form of sit-reps and EODs. Finally, once the event has concluded, Healthcare Ready will assess and evaluate its response during the event.
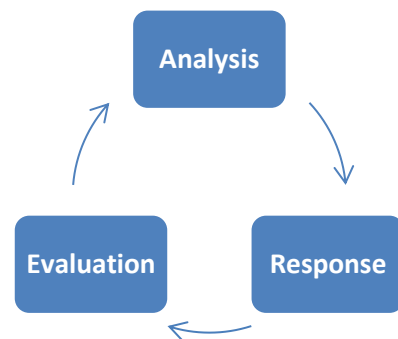
More in-depth descriptions of these phases of activiation – Analysis, Response, and Evaluation – can be found below.

Figure 5. HcR phases of activation

Analysis

During the Analysis phase, Healthcare Ready identifies and tracks potential threats and impacts to healthcare. Key activities during this phase include:

- **Sharing health preparedness messaging**: For events with notice, we help amplify resources and actions our partners and patients should take.
  - > *Presciption Preparedness*: Using [Rx on the Run](#), patients can print a personalized wallet card that documents their prescriptions and other important medical information in case they are displaced during an emergency.
  - > *Emergency Refills*: When a state of emergency is declared, patients can get advance refills of their

prescription – we help amplify information like this through social media and our sit-reps.

> *Sit-reps and EODs*: Sit-reps (and EODs, for large-scale events) are released regularly before and during an event to improve our partners and patients preparedness and awareness.

- **Tracking anticipated impacts to healthcare infrastructure**: By working closely with critical infrastructure owners and operators (pharmacies, supply chain components, ancillary care facility representatives), we help anticipate impacts and pre-empt challenges with information sharing.

- **Rx Open**: Often, we will turn on Rx Open for an event with notice before landfall in order to gain baseline data. Even before the map is turned on, we amplify it within our network so that partners and patients know where to go before or after an event hits.

'Ground truthing' Requests

Our holistic view of healthcare operations and established relationships across sectors allow us to quickly determine the "ground truth" of situations and requests. In providing support to partners during a crisis, we ensure requests are current and determining the most appropriate resource to meet them.

Response

Once activated, Healthcare Ready moves into the Response phase, during which we track and route requests for information and assistance and disseminate up-to-date information about the situation. Key activities during the Response phase include:

- **Participating in coordination calls**: As a trusted non-profit, Healthcare Ready participates in a number of working groups and coordination calls. These calls give us a holistic view of healthcare operations during events and allow us to communicate challenges our partners face across the spectrum of the healthcare system. Examples of the calls HcR participates in include:
  > **FEMA National Business Emergency Operations Center (NBEOC)** coordination calls;
  > **Healthcare and Public Health (HPH) Sector** coordinating calls;
  > Patient group coorindation calls;
  > Supply chain coordination calls, and;
  > State ESF-8 calls

- **Request for information (RFI) and request for assistance (RFA) tracking**: RFIs and RFAs sent to our EOC via email, phone, or in-person are all carefully tracked in our RFI/RFA tracker. Below is a summary of the RFIs and RFAs we responded to during the 2017 hurricane season.

Requests for assistance – by the numbers		
Harvey	Irma	Maria
500+ patient RFAs triaged	25 medical supply requests	70+ supply chain-related RFAs
32 medical supply requests	20 requests for O2 in shelters	25 medical supply requests
25 pharmacy status RFAs	15 prescription assistance	18 donation transportation
5 airlift delivery RFAs	6 supply chain-related RFAs	4 patient evacuation requests
600+ total requests	**50+ total requests**	**170+ total requests**

- **Triage individual patient requests**: HcR works with the appropriate partners to verify patient need for assistance and then route patient requests.

- **Donation coordination**: We help coordinate and facilitate donations by connecting private sector resources to public sector needs. We also share information on and promote the use of medicine assistance programs.

- **Medical needs shelters:** HcR helps coordinate resources for medical needs shelters by working closely with NGOs on the ground and local coordinators.

- **Tracking emergency declarations and sharing information with partners**: Communicating policy changes is a persistent challenge during emergencies. We recognize our partners do not always have the bandwidth to track changes in emergency declarations, emergency orders, or executive actions.

- **Communicating prescription assistance programs**: We continue to communicate information about federal prescription assistance programs, like the Emergency Prescription Assistance Program, and those of private sector partners during events.

Evaluation

Once an event has concluded, Healthcare Ready and the Support Team will assess the response of the organization. This assessment is an important part of HcR's continuous improvement process. The primary activities for HcR during this phase include:

- **Participating in after-action meetings:** We participate in meetings with key stakeholders to review event activities and strategize about recovery and resilience moving forward.

- **Helping inform recovery plans and strategies:** We remain involved with recovery processes after an event has concluded, and offer expertise to federal agencies and the private sector on how to recover and rebuild the healthcare system.

- **Identifying lessons learned:** Finally, HcR will determine the lessons learned from an event. We will identify what worked well, opportunities for improvement, and our next steps to improve our effectiveness during another event and in the interim.

Useful Plans and Resources

Healthcare and Public Health Sector Specific Plan

The Healthcare and Public Health Sector-Specific Plan (HPH SSP) is a Department of Homeland Security (DHS) resource designed to guide the Sector's internal and collaborative, cross-sector efforts to enhance the security and resilience of HPH critical infrastructure to all-hazards across its physical, cyber, and human dimensions. The SSP tailors the strategic guidance provided in the National Infrastructure Protection Plan 2013 (NIPP 2013) to the unique operating conditions and risk landscape of the vast and complex HPH Sector. The HPH Sector Coordinating Council (SCC) and Government Coordinating Council (GCC) jointly developed the goals, priorities, and activities included in the SSP to reflect the overall strategic direction for the HPH Sector.

HcR serves on the sub-sector leadership for the Medical Materiel Coordination Group and the Pharmaceuticals sub-sectors.

National Infrastructure Protection Plan

The National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP): Partnering for Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience is the DHS plan outlining how government and private sector participants in the critical infrastructure community work together to manage risks and achieve security and resilience outcomes. It provides the foundation for an integrated and collaborative approach to achieve the vision of: "[a] Nation in which physical and cyber critical infrastructure remain secure and resilient, with vulnerabilities reduced, consequences minimized, threats identified and disrupted, and response and recovery hastened."

More information on NIPP and supplements to the plan can be found on the NIPP website.

National Response Framework

The [National Response Framework](#) (NRF) is FEMA's guide to how the U.S. responds to all types of disasters and emergencies. It is built on scalable, flexible, and adaptable concepts identified in the National Incident Management System to align key roles and responsibilities across the Nation.

Emergency Support Function Annexes: The NRF [Emergency Support Function (ESF)](#) Annexes describe the Federal coordinating structures that group resources and capabilities into function areas that are most frequently needed in a national response.

The 15 ESFs are:

ESF	Title
1	Transporation
2	Communications
3	Public Works and Engineering
4	Firefighting
5	Information and Planning
6	Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Temporary Housing and Human Services
7	Logistics Management and Resource Support
8	Public Health and Medical Services
9	Search and Rescue
10	Oil and Hazardous Materials Response
11	Agriculture and Natural Resources
12	Energy
13	Public Safety and Security
14	Long-Term Community Recovery (Superseded by National Disaster Recovery Framework)
15	External Affairs

The Hospital Preparedness Program and Critical Healthcare Infrastructure

The Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) supports the building of healthcare capabilities as described in the Healthcare Preparedness Capabilities: National Guidance for Healthcare System Preparedness plan. To fortify preparedness, HPP develops regional healthcare coalitions (HCCs) made up of assests, facilities, and people that compose critical healthcare and public health infrastructure.

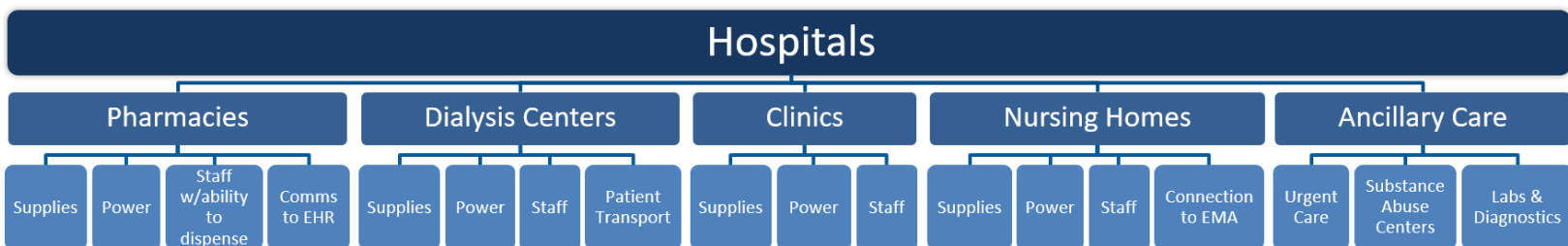**Figure 6.** Critical healthcare infrastructure

Figure 7. Summary of critical healthcare infrastructure components

Assets

Supply Chain (Product, Distribution), Medical Material

Facilities

Hospitals, Clinics, Ancillary Care (Pharmacies, Dialysis Centers, Urgent Care, etc.)

People

Providers, Facility Staff, etc.

Network and Partners

As an organization dedicated to issues of preparedness and response, specifically as they related to public-private collaboration, we maintain a wide network of partners in all sectors. The graphics below depict key relationships in each sector.

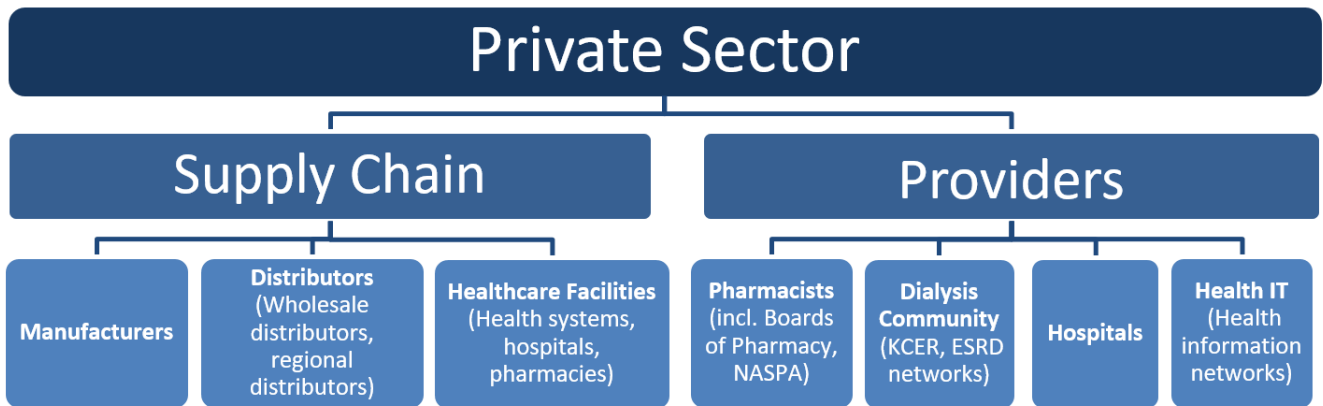**Figure 8.** Healthcare Ready's private sector network

Figure 9. Healthcare Ready's public sector network