

Pharmacy in Emergency Preparedness and Response

From increasingly recognizing pharmacists as essential first responders to developing novel initiatives, pharmacy and health preparedness stakeholders have made impressive strides in protecting patients' access to medications. Today, more than ever before, pharmacies are "more than just a place to pick up medicines." They are an invaluable resource for public health information, healthcare services, and more, year-round and during an emergency.



Pharmacy and pharmacists: essential for preparedness and response

- ➔ One of the most trusted and accessible healthcare professionals
- ➔ Located in every state, county and city in the US
- ➔ Important accessible source of healthcare information and services, such as vaccines

The number of community pharmacies in the US in 2015¹: **67K+**

Percentage of American adults on one more prescriptions²: **59%**

Percentage of Americans that live within 5 miles of a retail pharmacy³: **89%**

How are the abilities of pharmacists expanding?

Collaborative Practice Agreements (CPAs): CPAs create a formal relationship between a pharmacist and prescriber that allows the pharmacist to provide services and perform functions related to patient care beyond the pharmacist's typical scope of practice.

Statewide Protocols: Statewide protocols are issued by an authorized state regulatory body and specify the conditions under which a pharmacist is authorized to prescribe specific medications.

Standing Orders: Standing orders refer to medical treatment orders developed by an authorized prescriber that may be carried out by another healthcare professional – such as a pharmacist – when certain conditions have been met.

How expanded abilities of pharmacists are helping preparedness.

CPAs allow pharmacists to authorize prescription refills.

Statewide protocols allow pharmacists to administer influenza vaccines in community pharmacies and prescribe hormonal contraceptives/ smoking cessation.

Standing orders allow pharmacists to dispensing naloxone for drug overdose cases.



Protecting patient access to medications is essential, but can face serious challenges for a variety of reasons.

Across events, pharmacy stakeholders can be confronted with a wide array of issues in protecting patient access to medications. While many of these challenges are outside of pharmacists' ability to address, it is important to capture the environment in which they and their partners operate.

Legal and Regulatory Challenges

Varying Emergency Prescription Refill Laws: and regulations governing emergency prescription refill vary markedly across states. They can differ on both the circumstances under which pharmacists can issue an emergency refill, and the amount they may refill.

Insurance Coverage: While a majority of insurance plans include preparedness provisions, coverage can vary significantly and patient awareness of coverage can be limited. It can also be challenging to align desired preparedness initiatives with insurance plans.

Challenges During An Emergency

DURING A NATURAL DISASTER

- **Awareness of changes in practice regulations:** Tracking suspended or relaxed regulations governing pharmacy practice. (e.g. allowing for extended emergency refills)
- **Identifying cross-sector and other external contacts:** Establishing emergency contacts before events is time-consuming
- **Patient education of available resources and preparedness action**
- **Information sharing and communicating with patients:** Telecommunications laws tightly regulate when and what companies may text to consumers
- **Identifying and refilling lost or damaged medication**

DURING A DISEASE OUTBREAK OR PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

- **Capitalizing on the potential of pharmacies and pharmacists:** -Fully utilizing pharmacists scopes of practice and pharmacy assets in plans
- **Public-private sector coordination for dispensing:** Clearly establishing how private sector assets can be using in public dispensing campaigns

Resources for patients, healthcare, and public health

PHARMACY GUIDANCE



National Council on Prescription Drug Programs (NCPDP) Emergency Preparedness Protocol

Planning document that provides guidance to the pharmacy industry on resources available during a declared emergency.

The Pharmacy Disaster Support Center

Helps independent pharmacies strengthen their disaster preparedness, response and recovery procedures

PATIENT RESOURCES



Flu On Call

In the event of a severe pandemic, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has developed a national network of phone lines, Flu on Call®, that can be used to provide information and triage callers. Callers will be assessed by healthcare providers via phone and given information as well as directed to appropriate care sites, e.g. hospital, clinic, etc.

Rx on the Run

A wallet-sized card patients can fill out and print to track medication and provider information.

MAPS



HealthMap Vaccine Finder

A free, online service that allows users to search for locations that offer immunizations, including pharmacies, clinics and health departments.

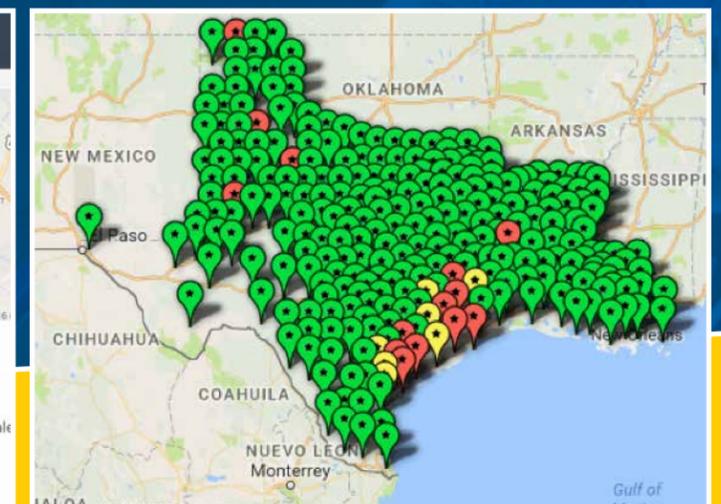
Rx Open

A free map that helps patients and responders find nearby open pharmacies during an emergency by displaying the location and contact information of open pharmacies in impacted areas

VACCINE FINDER



RX OPEN



Toolkits

- ➔ **ASTHO's Template MOU and Implementation Toolkit** provides resources for public health departments and pharmacies for coordinating efforts to establish a pandemic vaccination campaign
- ➔ **The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)** maintains and routinely updates a Pharmacy Partnerships Toolkit as part of its **NACCHO Toolbox**, a free online collection of local public health tools produced by members of the public health community.
- ➔ **HHS ASPR's Technical Resources, Assistance Center, and Information Exchange (TRACIE)** is an online resource database for healthcare stakeholders. The Pharmacy Topic Collection can help healthcare providers prepare for and respond to shortages and other pharmaceutical-related challenges that may arise during and after a disaster.

References

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- 3 National Association of Chain Drug Stores Issue Brief, March 2015 http://www.nacds.org/pdfs/government/ProviderStatus_Issue_Brief.pdf
- 4 State of Emergency Preparedness for U.S. Health Insurance Plans, The American Journal of Managed Care, June 2015 <http://www.ajmc.com/journals/issue/2015/2015-vol21-n1/state-of-emergency-preparedness-for-us-health-insurance-plans>

