

National Pharmaceutical Stockpile Communication Needs Assessment

As a state or local public health communicator, you should contact the project area official that is managing NPS planning under the cooperative agreement to coordinate health communications needs.

Pre-event planning:

- G** Are the disease and drug information prepared in the multiple languages that make up your community?
- G** Are processes in place to create incident-specific messages to tell people who are potentially exposed where they must go for prophylactic medications if they are well, and where they need to go if they are sick?
- G** Are processes in place to ensure public information officers know which dispensing and treatment locations are active?
- G** Are media aware--before an event--of the need for dissemination of NPS-related information and messages?

Your plan should include the following:

- G** Multi-language text of all documents used to inform the public during an emergency.
- G** Storage location of all informational material (including electronic versions);
- G** Methods for reproducing and disseminating informational materials during an emergency;
- G** Specific communication channels, partnerships, and staffing pools that support public information release, reproduction, and dissemination.

To determine how much NPS-related information you will need to provide site locations, consider the following:

- G** Is the agent contagious?
- G** Who should be concerned about exposure?
- G** Who should seek preventive treatment at dispensing sites and who should seek symptomatic treatment at treatment centers?
- G** Directions to and information about dispensing and treatment locations.
 - G** When will the dispensing operation start and what hours will it be open?
 - G** Where is the nearest dispensing site?
 - G** What is the best street access to each dispensing site?

- G Where should the public park at each dispensing site if it drives?
- G What is the best way to get to the dispensing site (walk, use public transportation, drive)?
- G What is the dispensing process?
- G What forms of identification are needed?
- G What information is needed to pick up medications for other family members?
 - Children: weight, age, health information, drug allergies, current medications
 - Adults: health information, drug allergies, current medications.

Information about the drugs the public must receive

The information should include the following:

- G Reasons for using specific drugs or changing drug regimens. Remember cultural and ethnic sensitivities. This will affect the public's acceptance of those drugs.
- G Include the importance of taking medication. This information must stress the importance of taking all of a prescribed regimen (e.g., 60 days of doxycycline for anthrax).
- G Include messages about the importance of adherence.
- G Message to warn patients of the danger of overmedicating.