

Emergency Preparedness

PHARMACEUTICAL DISTRIBUTORS: DELIVERING CRITICAL HEALTHCARE WHEN DISASTERS STRIKE

When natural disasters or other emergencies strike, every minute counts in delivering critical medical supplies to communities affected by a crisis. As a critical link in keeping pharmacies, hospitals and other healthcare providers' inventories stocked in times of emergencies, HDA's primary pharmaceutical distributor members must be able to quickly deliver pharmaceuticals during a declared state of emergency.

Pharmaceutical distributors' vehicles are often denied access to critical care areas during emergencies in part because they are not considered essential personnel by local, state or federal officials enforcing emergency restrictions. To ensure the delivery of lifesaving medications during times of potential crisis, HDA supports the inclusion of member employees and vehicles as "essential personnel" in state of emergency declarations, documents and/or statutes. Such a classification would ensure that HDA member employees have similar access to roads as emergency vehicles.

A VITAL TRADING PARTNER

Pharmaceutical distributors work efficiently behind the scenes to ensure the continued flow of medicines in times of emergency:

- Many hospitals and pharmacies manage their inventory with "just-in-time" modeling; they place their orders daily and require on-time delivery in order to maintain their vital inventory of necessary medical products. Pharmaceutical distribution centers contain an extensive inventory of pharmaceutical products and medical supplies, which allows hospitals and pharmacies with limited shelf space to receive these daily deliveries.
- Pharmaceutical distributors make deliveries to alleviate product shortages due to normal usage, and also can restock based upon the unexpected needs that have arisen due to an emergency. By allowing distributor vehicles access to hospitals, pharmacies, long-term care centers, etc., after a declared emergency, state-based policymakers are helping to alleviate potential drug shortages and delays in care.
- HDA distributor members use extensive planning and employ trained personnel on different emergency scenarios to ensure an optimal response. Our members are consistently prepared, and have deep logistics expertise to make deliveries during and after an emergency — as long as they have access to areas included in the state of emergency.

As an integral component of the healthcare supply chain, HDA members are committed to ensuring access to needed medicines and supplies during states of emergency or natural disasters. Through these efforts, HDA and its primary pharmaceutical distributor members can help to alleviate drug shortages and provide continual access to pharmaceutical products and medical supplies during times of critical need.

HDA is the national association representing primary healthcare distributors, the vital link between the nation's pharmaceutical manufacturers and healthcare providers. Each business day, HDA member companies ensure that over 15 million prescription medicines and healthcare products are delivered safely and efficiently to more than 200,000 pharmacies, hospitals, long-term care facilities, clinics and others nationwide. HDA and its members work daily to provide value and achieve cost savings, an estimated \$42 billion each year to our nation's healthcare system.