

Preparedness can reduce the impact of adverse events on the healthcare supply chain.

Planning can also improve efficiency and help first responders address challenges.



HEALTH INDUSTRY DISTRIBUTORS ASSOCIATION  
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## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLANNING KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE HEALTHCARE SUPPLY CHAIN

For healthcare providers and those who distribute medical-surgical products, preparedness initiatives must address a variety of scenarios from natural disasters and biological events to pandemic concerns. The checklists below encompass a range of issues such as employee safety, logistics, and business continuity.

### Communication

- Establish points of contact inside your organization and with external partners
- Acquire radios, satellite phones
- Communicate your preparedness policies and operating procedures (internally and externally)
- Have multiple phone listings, e-mails, and points of contact for staff
- Set patient communication protocols for staff, patient, and suppliers
- Build relationships with emergency workers you will communicate and coordinate with during an event
- Discuss/exchange preparedness plans with business partners and others prior to an event
- Participate in industry, government, and customer planning committees. Obtain notes and minutes from such meetings if participation is not possible

### Logistics

- Determine which disasters can impact your area including floods, tornadoes, earthquakes, etc.
- Plan for fuel, utility, and labor shortages
- Plan for a phased response to an event
- Note timing issues (routine computer checks or shut-downs) that may affect emergency preparations
- Conduct or participate in emergency drills
- Secure extra or alternate space for staging areas and operations
- Address security
- Assess transportation, shipping, and traffic issues
- Consider unconventional housing and transportation during an event (e.g. RVs)
- Plan for rapid, new customer/patient set-up

### Business Planning (Internal)

- Establish a disaster response/exposure control plan
- Appoint a preparedness coordinator or team for relevant disaster scenarios
- Share information, post plans in public places, meet to discuss protocols
- Determine which employees are at risk
- Consider equipment, protective gear, and other precautions for infection control/disaster response
- Conduct worker training
- Consider legal, liability, and insurance issues
- At executive levels, identify top back-up personnel and share passwords, keys, data as appropriate
- Pursue telecommuting and alternate site work options for office staff and others
- Identify alternative staffing measures such as phased staffing/shifts
- Address compensation and benefits issues during and after an event
- Back up data in multiple formats and places

### Business Planning (External)

- Establish remote customer/patient access
- Determine other medical facilities' chains of command
- Assess and adapt to the altered resources of your supply chain partners
- Anticipate workflow interruptions across industries (power, sanitation, transportation)
- Enable transparency
- Identify key points of contact among state and local medical and/or emergency planning groups

## Inventory and Distribution

- Increase inventory as appropriate
- Proactively address unit of measure issues
- Anticipate traditional and non-traditional needs and requests (e.g. non-med/surg products, batteries, etc.)
- Keep a customer order/sales history that can be used as a reference point during an event
- Know your ordering process and note any revisions for emergency scenarios
- Plan for the right personnel in the right place
- Determine how you can assist non-traditional customers such as civic groups, churches, shelters

## Government Relations

- Keep current on pandemic, disaster, and anti-terrorism funding allocations
- Stay abreast of pre- and post-event protocol and guidelines for pandemics, disasters, etc.
- Learn government strategies to mitigate the impact of emergency events
- Assess your role in mitigation strategies
- Identify applicable scenario-specific emergency plans and guides developed by government agencies and departments
- Keep current on global actions and strategies such as international pandemic tracking and response plans

## Additional Resources

### Pandemics:

- U.S. Government at [www.Flu.gov](http://www.Flu.gov)
- Department of Health and Human Services at [www.hhs.gov/nvpo](http://www.hhs.gov/nvpo)
- World Health Organization (WHO) at [www.who.int/influenza/preparedness/en](http://www.who.int/influenza/preparedness/en)
- *Preparing for Pandemics and Pandemic Operation Guide* at [www.HIDA.org/Prepare](http://www.HIDA.org/Prepare)
- Center for Disease Control at <http://emergency.cdc.gov>

### Natural Disasters:

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)
- National Weather Service/The National Hurricane Center at [www.nws.noaa.gov](http://www.nws.noaa.gov) or for local information visit [www.nws.noaa.gov/stormready/contact.htm](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/stormready/contact.htm)
- US Small Business Administration at <http://www.sba.gov>
- *Dealing with Disasters—Hurricane Katrina and Beyond: Lessons Learned in Medical Distribution* at [www.HIDA.org/Prepare](http://www.HIDA.org/Prepare)

### Biological Events:

- Department of Homeland Security (DHS) at [www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov) or [www.ready.gov/biological-threats](http://www.ready.gov/biological-threats)
- FDA at [www.fda.gov/EmergencyPreparedness](http://www.fda.gov/EmergencyPreparedness)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Emerging Infectious Diseases Journal*, at [wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid](http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid)
- DHS, Chemical and Biological Defense Information Analysis Center under Homeland Defense and Security at [https://www.hdiac.org/cbrn\\_defense](https://www.hdiac.org/cbrn_defense)

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