



Dear Strategic National Stockpile Coordinators:

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is a valued federal partner in health care delivery and emergency management coordination. VA operates the nation's largest integrated healthcare system, and through its health care network American veterans are able to receive medical care and social services in more than 1300 facilities nationwide. VA also has a broad-scale comprehensive emergency management system that has been a major component of the Federal medical response to events like Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. In both its health care and emergency management capacities, VA serves a critical role in our communities.

In the event of a public health emergency, VA will continue its mission to serve our nation. In 2001, VA developed its All Hazards Emergency Cache program. These caches of drugs and medical supplies are available to treat veterans, VA staff and others seeking care in response to natural or manmade disasters for an estimated three day period for most types of foreseen emergencies. Depending on the type of disaster, its scale, and local community pre-planning, VA could require additional supplies to care for its veteran patient population or be able to contribute to care of non-veteran community members.

Accordingly, as a critical component of our Nation's health care system we are requesting you ensure that VA facilities are included in your state and/or local Strategic National Stockpile distribution plans.

Additionally, VA would also like to work with the public health sector to construct an agreement whereby its existing health care infrastructure could be utilized as a closed Point of Dispensing (POD) to service veterans, veterans' family members, and VA staff and their family members. Utilizing VA and its current client services system could greatly enhance local response capabilities. Coordination between local public health officials and VA staff prior to a major event will be the key to saving lives.

As you continue to develop your treatment center distribution and mass prophylaxis plans, please reach out and include the VA medical facilities in your communities. By working together, we can ensure that the resources and infrastructure are available to respond to the entire population—veterans and non-veterans alike.

We have included for your reference a listing of VA local Points of Contact who have as part of their duties the mission to coordinate emergency planning with other Federal agencies.



Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)
Atlanta GA 30333

If you have questions about these local emergency management contacts for VA, please contact Richard Callis, Deputy Chief Consultant for Plans and Operations, VA Emergency Management Strategic Health Care Group (304-264-4821 or richard.callis@va.gov). We have also included a list of VA's Pharmacy Managers, sorted by state. If you have questions about these local pharmacy contacts, please contact Robert Grasso, PharmD, Chief, Emergency Pharmacy Services (708-786-7872 or robert.grasso@va.gov).

Regards,

Greg Burel, Director
Division of Strategic National Stockpile
Coordinating Office of Terrorism Preparedness and Emergency Response
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention