



## **Pharmaceutical Stockpile Distribution for suburban Cook County**

### **Overview**

The mission of the Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) is to protect and promote health and to prevent illness, disability, and premature death among all residents of suburban Cook County. As the local health authority, CCDPH has been designated the lead agency within Cook County government responsible for requesting, managing, and distributing preventive medications during a large-scale natural or man-made public health emergency such as a communicable disease outbreak (e.g., pandemic influenza) or bioterrorist event.

During a response to a public health emergency, CCDPH may initiate the activation of its Pharmaceutical Stockpile Distribution (PSD) plan. With authorization from the Cook County Board President and a designated group of top-level Cook County administrators, CCDPH may request medications from the Illinois Pharmaceutical Stockpile (IPS) and/or the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS), which are managed by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), respectively.

This document highlights some of the agency's efforts to plan and prepare its communities for public health emergencies. It also provides an overview of the CCDPH PSD plan, summarizing the major steps by which Cook County will access and distribute state and federal stockpiles of emergency medicines and medical supplies.

### **Planning**

In the aftermath of the fall 2001 terrorist attacks, CCDPH created the Community Preparedness and Coordination Unit (CPCU) to strengthen the agency's and its partners' abilities to detect and respond to public health emergencies. To protect the health of nearly 2.3 million people across the jurisdictional borders of 125 self-governed municipalities, CPCU has developed and continues to build upon collaborative relationships with its Cook County partners, municipal leaders and first responders, community volunteer groups, and numerous other agencies. These partnerships are essential for broadening local emergency preparedness efforts to address very critical public health concerns.

Adhering to CDC and IDPH guidance, CPCU has written the Pharmaceutical Stockpile Distribution plan to outline the process by which Cook County and its partners will request, acquire and dispense mass amounts of preventive medications to the public.

Given the geographical composition of suburban Cook County and limited resources, CCDPH has partnered with municipal first responders and community volunteer groups to staff and operate local Points of Dispensing (POD) sites --- places where the public will receive medications. As the municipal first responders' primary resource for public health guidance and to support local planning efforts, CPCU has assigned Emergency Response Coordinators (ERC) to the North, West (or Central), and South regions of suburban Cook County. Each ERC provides technical assistance to local planning teams in developing their PSD plans for the public. In partnership with CPCU, these PSD planning teams are the local experts in setting-up, activating, and operating their respective community's POD.

**Response** If a public health emergency is so great that local medical supplies are depleted, CDC will send the Strategic National Stockpile to the State of Illinois, following the request and approval process. The State will then deliver the medications to a predetermined and undisclosed site located in CCDPH's jurisdiction, known as the Cook County Primary Drop Site. In addition to this location, additional sites have been identified throughout suburban Cook County to serve as Regional Drop Sites. These sites are used to coordinate the management and delivery of medications throughout the jurisdiction.

Depending on the scope and scale of the event and in order to provide the public with medications in an efficient and effective manner, the dispensing process may take place in phases. CCDPH may begin by dispensing preventive medicines to Cook County and municipal first responders, critical infrastructure personnel and their families to prepare them for assisting CCDPH with public dispensing. By protecting first responders and critical infrastructure personnel, they are equipped to maintain essential government functions; while simultaneously meeting the emergency needs of the constituency within their community.

In order to have the capacity to dispense to CCDPH's jurisdiction, 50 PODs have been identified. As determined by surveillance (disease monitoring data), specific sites would be activated and opened by CCDPH and/or the local PSD planning team(s). Operations would continue as deemed necessary.

The CCDPH CPCU annually exercises with its partners various components of the PSD plan and continuously works to address gaps and improve the current plan.

**Resources** For additional information about mass dispensing or the Strategic National Stockpile, please refer to the websites below:

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

**Cook County Department of Public Health**

[www.cookcountypublichealth.org](http://www.cookcountypublichealth.org)

**Illinois Department of Public Health**

[www.idph.state.il.us](http://www.idph.state.il.us)

**University of Albany, Center for Public Health Preparedness**

[www.ualbanycphp.org/](http://www.ualbanycphp.org/)