



National Infrastructure Protection Plan
NIPP Challenge

Building Disaster Resiliency in the Public Sector by Leveraging Critical Healthcare Supply Chain Information

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

The nation's healthcare supply chain undergoes significant strain when there are disruptions to U.S. critical infrastructure. The supply chain depends upon private medical-surgical distributors who deliver supplies to 300,000 points-of-care, including hospitals, nursing homes, and other medical facilities. Due to limited suitable storage space in healthcare facilities, the needed health care products are usually sourced from local distribution centers, which typically make daily deliveries. As a result, any interruption of deliveries could cause significant shortages at these healthcare facilities. Currently, there is no mapping framework or formal method of communication that public agencies can use to identify where the nation's distribution centers are located and what supplies are available. This lack of information limits the ability of public and private partners to respond quickly to disasters by re-routing or prioritizing delivery of healthcare products.

The Health Industry Distributors Association (HIDA) ties closely to the Healthcare and Public Health Sector, for which the Department of Health and Human Services is designated as the Sector Specific Agency and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) is the primary coordinating agency. The need for a map of healthcare product distribution centers has been acknowledged. Now that the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) has moved to ASPR, the need for a mapping capability is even more pronounced to enable public and private partnerships that can coordinate distribution of health care products during an emergency.

METHODOLOGY

This project developed a mapping tool to assist ASPR in achieving its readiness and response needs by enabling them to coordinate more effectively with the distribution centers during a crisis or shortage. The tool was designed as a password protected, online, interactive tool accessible to relevant public sector agencies. Throughout its development, HIDA conducted workshops and webinars for ASPR to train them on the use of tool. Over a period of six months, HIDA conducted phone interviews with its member companies to collect information and data required for the tool. The project team conducted interviews as well to explore how other public sector organizations may utilize the tool.



Source: FEMA Photo Library

RESULT

The project team developed the online mapping platform and customized the tool based on the needs discovered during the information gathering phase. The data collected by participating distribution companies represents over 80 percent of the national distribution market and over 250 individual distribution centers. Moving forward, HIDA will maintain the mapping tool and underlying data will be updated on a quarterly basis. The data collected for the mapping tool includes 21 distribution center attributes such as 40 types of needles, 15 variations of IV solutions, product numbers, product descriptions, and annual monthly average of quantity, etc. The project team will continue to engage with HIDA members to increase the number of distribution centers identified on the mapping tool and include additional sets of data on healthcare supplies.



Source: FEMA Photo Library