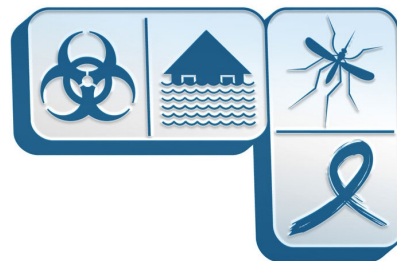




INVEST IN HEALTH, BUILD A SAFER FUTURE

World Health Day



2007

## THREATS TO HEALTH KNOW NO BORDERS THE ROLE OF THE PHARMACIST

Pharmacists are the most accessible health care professional and must be well prepared to respond to emergency situations. These emergencies can range from epidemics and pandemics to manmade and natural disasters. By focusing on knowledge, preparation and communication, pharmacists will have the tools to immediately and effectively respond in times of crisis.

Through the FIP Statement of Professional Standards outlining the role of the Pharmacist in Crisis Management, including manmade and natural disasters and pandemics, as well as through continued dedication to advancing the skills and knowledge of the pharmacist and the acknowledgement thereof, FIP is committed to helping pharmacists contribute to the health and security of their communities the world over.

Please read further for information on how pharmacists may best be prepared to act in times of crisis and disaster.

# PANDEMICS AND EPIDEMICS

## What to Know:

- An epidemic is defined as an “outbreak of contagious disease that spreads rapidly in a community during a given period of time”, whereas a pandemic affects a whole region, continent or the world.
- Many countries have developed or are developing response plans in the event of a pandemic, specifically in response to the potential threat of the H5N1 virus
- Vaccinations against the H5N1 virus have been developed and are undergoing clinical trials
- Countries are in various stages of preparedness in terms of strategic planning, response plans and antiviral stockpiles

## How to Prepare:

- Familiarise yourself with pandemic planning procedures for your country and region, if available
- Determine the availability of and procedure for acquiring vaccinations and antivirals
- Become involved in vaccination programs in your community, especially targeting high risk populations
- Emphasise non-pharmacological interventions (eg. hand washing, water sources) in the prevention of infectious diseases

## What to Communicate:

- Counsel patients on non-pharmacologic strategies and proper use of medication
- Document and monitor efficacy, resistance and adverse events resulting from vaccination or antiviral administration
- Report increases or changes in disease patterns to other health care professionals and appropriate local health authorities
- Assist in triage and referral of patients when necessary

# NATURAL AND MANMADE DISASTERS

## What to Know:

- Natural disasters have claimed over 3 million lives, adversely affected over 800 million people's lives and cost untold billions of dollars world-wide over the past 20 years (FIP)
- Terrorism, revolution and genocide have resulted in manmade disasters in many areas of the world (FIP)

## How to Prepare:

- Become familiar with natural disasters that have occurred or have the potential to occur in your area (earthquakes, hurricanes, cyclones, floods, volcanoes, etc)
- Understand and familiarise yourself with the social, political and military conflicts in your region
- Familiarise yourself with local and national emergency response protocols and emergency response teams
- Become involved in selecting medicines and related supplies for stockpiles
- Become involved in emergency preparedness programs including plans for acquisition and distribution of medication in the event of a disaster
- Ensure security and appropriate storage conditions in temporary pharmacies and medicinal distribution centres (FIP)
- Anticipate the shift in disease or injury pattern and match the necessary supply of medicines and medical supplies accordingly (FIP)

## What to Communicate:

- In the event of an emergency, communication with local emergency response teams, health care professionals and local authorities is vital
- Communicate with wholesalers and manufacturers to ensure adequate stock of supplies
- Educate patients on proper use of medicines and advise them of the availability and accessibility of their medication during the emergency
- Ensure adequate documentation of pharmacy activities, inventory and patient records

## READ HOW FELLOW PHARMACISTS ARE RESPONDING TO THREATS TO HEALTH AND SECURITY

- Pharmacists' experience following Hurricane Katrina:  
[http://www.dmatca4.org/pages/katrina/sohmer\\_rph.htm](http://www.dmatca4.org/pages/katrina/sohmer_rph.htm)  
[http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/418335\\_2](http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/418335_2)
- Pharmacists' experience following the 2004 tsunami:  
[http://www.forces.gc.ca/health/news\\_pubs/engraph/Bulletin\\_Feb05\\_DART\\_e.asp](http://www.forces.gc.ca/health/news_pubs/engraph/Bulletin_Feb05_DART_e.asp)  
<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/JPRS-68CR8S?OpenDocument>
- The Pharmacist's Role In an Age of Bioterrorism and Other Emerging Public Health Threats:  
<http://depts.washington.edu/pha/news-archives/news-stergachis.html>
- Disaster Preparedness and Pharmacy(US):  
[http://www.uspharmacist.com/index.asp?show=article&page=8\\_12\\_17.htm](http://www.uspharmacist.com/index.asp?show=article&page=8_12_17.htm)
- Pharmacists and Preparing for a Pandemic:  
[http://www.pharmacists.ca/content/cpjpdfs/july\\_august06/CPhAPerspective.pdf](http://www.pharmacists.ca/content/cpjpdfs/july_august06/CPhAPerspective.pdf)  
<http://www.pharmj.org.uk/Editorial/20070127/vision/vision.html>
- World Health Organization World Health Day:  
<http://www.who.int/world-health-day/2007/en/index.html>
- WHO pandemic planning:  
<http://www.who.int/csr/disease/influenza/pandemic/en/>
- FIP Statement of Professional Standards on The Role of Pharmacists in Crisis Management: Including Manmade and Natural Disasters  
[http://www.fip.org/www2/uploads/database\\_file.php?id=275&table\\_id=](http://www.fip.org/www2/uploads/database_file.php?id=275&table_id=)

For more information please visit [www.fip.org](http://www.fip.org),  
or contact the FIP Secretariat at [info@fip.org](mailto:info@fip.org)