

**SUMMIT COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH**



**CLOSED
POINT OF DISPENSING SITE
PLANNING WORKBOOK**

2012 version

Introduction

Closed Point of Dispensing Site (CPODS) Planning

As a partner to Summit County Public Health, your organization plays a critical role in our community's public health preparedness activities. Your willingness to operate a closed point of dispensing site or **CPODS** during an emergency for your staff members and their families and to assist our community demonstrates your organization's commitment to the national preparedness initiative. Summit County Public Health will match your commitment with equal dedication by providing the necessary technical assistance, planning tools and resources to help you develop your **CPODS** plan.

The information found in this workbook is supported and validated by a training composed of five modules offered at the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) website <http://closedpodpartners.org>.

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Partnering with Public Health

Imagine This Scenario . . .

Whether by accident or a part of a terrorist attack, a biological agent release puts millions of people across the nation at risk, including those in our community. People need preventive medications immediately, so through the activation of emergency transportation and logistics plans at the federal and state levels, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) delivers supplies from the **SNS** destined for local public health agencies. These life-saving medications are delivered to local public health officials who have activated long-standing and well rehearsed mass prophylaxis plans via “pull and push” methods of dispensing. Most likely given this scenario, local officials will use the traditional “pull” method as its primary dispensing method and encourage the general public, via an extensive public information campaign, to come to identified locations at common areas within the community to receive medications. These locations usually consist of fixed facilities such as schools, arenas, or other public buildings and are most often referred to as open PODS.

SNS - The Strategic National Stockpile

- A national repository of medications and medical supplies to be used for emergency situations such as a bioterrorism attack or natural disaster
- Designed to supplement and re-supply state and local health and medical resources

But, even with extensive preparation, there are long lines at every POD site as thousands of people wait in line for their pills. People are stressed about missing work, trying to calm their children as they endure long waits, and anxiety and tempers are starting to flare. Remember, Summit County is comprised of approximately 541,781 people and everyone may have been exposed, therefore Summit County Public Health will have to provide the necessary medication to the entire population in less than 48 hours.

If this type of scenario were to ever occur, public health officials must be ready to respond. To help meet this 48-hour timeframe, local officials across the nation are working with various organizations within their communities and establishing partnerships to develop innovative alternate dispensing options to enhance the dispensing capability. These alternate options are commonly referred to as “push” methods of dispensing. Medications are “pushed” or delivered to organizations such as private businesses, universities, or large organizations and these organizations in turn provide the medication to their designated population. Your **CPODS** is an example of a push method of dispensing.

Partnering With Public Health

Setting Expectations – What Can You Expect?

Current Planning Efforts

Summit County Public Health has created plans that identify sites and resources that can support public POD operations during a public health emergency. Each site has been evaluated to ensure that it is appropriate for such use, facility use agreements have been developed and signed and plans have been made for all aspects of establishing the POD, including:

- Communicating with the public
- Communicating with emergency responders (police, fire and EMS)
- Transportation of medicines and supplies to each site
- Floor plans and client flow patterns for dispensing at each site
- Security and safety precautions
- Staffing needs including medical professionals and volunteers
- Necessary supplies

Mass prophylaxis is the capability to protect the health of the population through the administration of critical interventions in response to a public health emergency in order to prevent the development of disease among those who are exposed or are potentially exposed to public health threats.

How CPODS Fit into Mass Prophylaxis

CPODS will play an important role in any situation where it is necessary to provide emergency medications to large groups of people. Traditional medical providers, such as hospitals and medical clinics, will likely be overwhelmed during a large-scale public health emergency. The open PODS established to support the public will also be highly stressed in a situation where the entire population needs medication within a short time frame. **CPODS** will help relieve some of the pressure by reaching specific portions of the community. As a result, long lines and public anxiety can be reduced and resources can be used more efficiently.

By partnering with public health and operating a **CPODS**, your staff members and their family members will receive medications at your facility, which reduces the likelihood of having to visit the open PODS. This will provide peace of mind during this crisis because they know that their organization has taken the “extra step” and conducted the necessary coordination and planning prior to an event to provide an alternative method to protect them during an emergency where medications must be dispensed.

Partnering With Public Health

CPODS provide:

- Ease of access to life-saving medications
- Quick dispensing of medications to your staff members and their families
- Enhanced continuity of operations for the organization

Assignment of Responsibilities

Public Health Responsibilities

Summit County Public Health will work closely with your organization to ensure that you have the necessary information and resources to establish a **CPODS**. As with all preparedness activities, the more we communicate and exercise our response plans now, the better we will respond if an emergency occurs. In the *Legal Reference Tab* of this workbook, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is provided to delineate expected roles and responsibilities.

Summit County Public Health responsibilities:

- Provide pre-event planning and technical assistance, including but not limited to policies, procedures, job aids such as example PODS layouts, fact sheets, dispensing algorithms, forms, and other information necessary to successfully operate a **CPODS**.
- Provide **CPODS** training/education opportunities to identified staff in your organization.
- Provide medication and form templates during an emergency.
- Provide 24-hour emergency contact information for Summit County Public Health.
- Provide your organization with technical assistance, as needed, to effectively run a **CPODS** during a public health emergency.
- Notify your organization of the need to activate your **CPODS** plan.

The challenge for government officials, working with the private sector, nongovernmental organizations, and individual citizens, is to determine the best way to build capabilities for bolstering preparedness ...the “best way” will vary across the nation.

National Preparedness Guidelines

The Dispensing Process

Your Organization's Responsibilities

Summit County Public Health will help you prepare to set up your **CPODS**, but there are steps you must take to ensure the proper plans are in place to establish and operate a **CPODS** efficiently.

Your organization's responsibilities:

- Designate staff to work with Summit County Public Health in planning for the operation of a **CPODS**.
- Provide primary and secondary 24-hour emergency points of contact to ensure timely notification and activation of your **CPODS** during a public health emergency.
- Develop a **CPODS** plan and provide a copy and annual updates to Summit County Public Health.
- Identify **CPODS** locations for your organization.
- Maintain the necessary supplies and equipment needed to operate a **CPODS**.
- Dispense medications following protocols and guidance provided by Summit County Public Health.
- Participate in predetermined and agreed upon training and exercise opportunities in conjunction with Summit County Public Health.

“Our partnership with public health, like our partnerships with other community efforts, is another way we feel connected to the communities we live in.”

*Stasha Wyskiel, Manager
Business Continuity Planning Gap, Inc.*

The Dispensing Process

Understanding the Dispensing Process

Developing a plan to dispense medication to a large number of people at first glance appears to be extremely challenging, especially for those who do not work in public health. Rest assured that Summit County Public Health understands the challenges you face and is committed to assisting you through the process to help you develop a comprehensive, responsive **CPODS** plan that not only supports your organization, but supports our overall community mass dispensing efforts. The remaining information in this workbook focuses on assisting planners with understanding the dispensing process and developing **CPODS** plans.

A report developed by Rand Corporation, “*Recommended Infrastructure Standards for Mass Antibiotic Dispensing*,” addresses functions that should be incorporated into mass dispensing operations during emergency operations where time is of the essence. These functions are regarded as minimal, and include:

- **Directing** clients through the PODS
- **Deciding** which medication to dispense
- **Dispensing** the medication
- **Disseminating** information about the medication

A **CPODS** planning template is provided in the Appendix Template. Many of the forms presented in the template were adapted from the CPODS Partners training series referenced throughout this workbook. Summit County Public Health asks that you use the templates and forms provided in this workbook to develop your **CPODS** plans in an effort to maintain consistency in format of plans throughout the county.

Upon reviewing the template, it will become apparent that the majority of the tasks involved in establishing a **CPODS** support one of these four functions:

DIRECTING – HOW TO GET STAFF MEMBERS TO AND THROUGH THE PODS

- 1) Prior to directing staff members through the PODS, there are numerous pre-event planning activities to accomplish. It is important to remember that time is not on your side and the medication must get into the population as soon as possible.

*Informing your staff members that your organization has established a partnership with public health and will operate a **CPODS** during an emergency, and soliciting volunteers to assist with operating the **CPODS**, is one of those key initial activities.*

Sample information letters are provided in the Appendix Template.

The Dispensing Process

2) Defining Your Dispensing Population

Determining how many people comprise your organization's dispensing population sets the stage for many other planning tasks for your CPODS, such as facility size and design, the number of staff needed to operate the CPODS and the amount of medication received from public health.

When determining the appropriate population number, consider others who are critical to operations, in addition to staff members. During any emergency, public health officials realize that people are most concerned with the health, safety and protection of their loved ones. Family members will form the support structure that allows your staff members to continue normal operations to the extent necessary or allowable as the community endures and recovers from a public health emergency. For this reason, we recommend that you plan to provide medications to your staff members' families as well. *This is referred to as the "Head of Household" model, meaning your staff members will be able to obtain enough medication from your CPODS for themselves and their designated family members, as long as they are accounted for on the necessary forms, such as the NAPH (Name Address Phone Health History) form.*

The Appendix Template provides a formula to assist in establishing the baseline population for planning purposes.

3) PODS Throughput

Directing also requires you to determine your **CPODS** throughput which is based on your designated population, the number of dispensing staff available, your dispensing flow and the time available to dispense medication. Keep in mind that operations at your **CPODS** fit into the larger scheme of Summit County Public Health's mass dispensing campaign; therefore, it is extremely important that your organization establish a throughput that supports the time available to dispense. You can find more information on developing throughput targets and designing the layout of your **CPODS** to support your targets in the Appendix Template.

The Dispensing Process

DECIDING – DETERMINING WHICH MEDICATION IS APPROPRIATE TO DISPENSE

1) Patient Information

Prior to receiving medication at a PODS, regardless of whether it is an open PODS or **CPODS**, federal and state laws require certain information for each person receiving medication be completed and provided at the PODS. The medical community understands in situations where time is of the essence applicable emergency powers afforded to the Governor, related to mass dispensing, will most likely be enacted. Summit County Public Health will provide **Name, Age, Phone Number, Personal History** (NAPH) forms that support the minimal data that needs to be collected during this type of emergency; a sample is provided in the Tab section. These forms must be completed and turned in at the PODS prior to receiving medication. *A major advantage of being a CPODS is that Summit County Public Health can make these forms available pre-event to help improve throughput goals.*

2) Which Medication is Appropriate?

At this time, the SNS antibiotic prophylactic medications Summit County would receive in response to a public health emergency are Doxycycline and Ciprofloxacin. The Ohio Department of Health has informed Summit County to expect shipments to consist of 80% Doxycycline and 20% Ciprofloxacin. Determining which medication is appropriate for each individual is based on the information provided on the NAPH form. The NAPH form has a series of questions that are answered either ‘yes’ or ‘no’ by the individual. The person screening the NAPH form will refer to a chart that accompanies the NAPH form and provides an easy algorithm to determine which antibiotic to dispense based on the individual’s answers. Your public health liaison from Summit County Public Health can provide guidance and training on screening process.

3) Dispensing – The Process of Handing the Medication Over to the Client

- *Head of Household Policy* – Ohio Department of Health guidance states that the head of household may obtain medication for up to twenty individuals, contingent upon a completed NAPH form for each of those individuals for whom medication is being obtained.
- *Dispensing Policy* – **CPODS** follow a non-medical model of dispensing in a streamlined approach. The emphasis with this model is to give medicine to people in the quickest time possible. Non-medical models typically utilize non-medical personnel to dispense in emergency situations.

The Dispensing Process

4) Disseminating – Providing the Necessary Information/Education Forms and Follow-Up Information

- *Drug Information and Instructions* - The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requires that each person who receives medication at your **CPODS** also receive information about the medication they are taking, dosage instructions and who to call or what to do if they experience adverse reactions to the medication. This information will be provided to you from your public health liaison.
- *Other Important Information* – It is important to provide accurate and complete information to your staff members. Let your staff members know why and how the **CPODS** would be established, and how the medication dispensing process will work. This will provide your staff with confidence in the overall approach, and is an opportunity to present accurate and reassuring information before and during the emergency. In addition to information about the medication, it is important to let people know about possible threatening agents. In a public health emergency, it is very important that people are informed of the true nature of the threat. They need to know the answers to questions like:
 - How do I know if I have been exposed?
 - What are the symptoms?
 - Is the disease contagious? If so, what do I need to do to protect myself and my family?
 - What are the long-term implications?

Your public health liaison will explain how this information will also be part of Summit County Public Health's public information campaign. They will also provide fact sheets to disseminate to your staff. Samples are provided in the ***Information Sheet Tab***.

Preparing Your Business for Public Health Emergencies

V. Developing a CPODS Plan

Now that you have a common understanding of point of dispensing site operations, it is time to develop your **CPODS** plan. Your organization is most likely already engaged in continuity planning to ensure it is prepared for disruptive events. It is likely you will have to activate various aspects of your continuity plan when you establish your **CPODS**. The following information will provide key planning considerations to develop actionable items to help you with this process.

PROTECT YOUR ASSETS — PREPARE YOUR STAFF MEMBERS

- 1) **Identify staff within your organization that will assist with the planning and preparation process and *involve them early*.**
- 2) **Appoint a planning committee.** Consider including human resource personnel, continuity managers, medical advisors, logistics specialists, security staff and your local public health liaison.
- 3) **Determine your dispensing population.** Decide whether you will accommodate employees' families in your preparedness effort, and identify beforehand how you will define household, dependents or family. Then determine how many total staff and family members will be served so that you will be able to estimate the amount of medication needed at the time of a public health emergency. In some instances and depending on the type of organization, you may want to include contractors or clients in your dispensing population.



ORGANIZE YOUR STAFF

Determine Staffing Needs. As you develop your staffing plan for the **CPODS** based on your organizational structure, consider the following:

- Security needs and capabilities - Consider your current security resources and capabilities to determine if additional security will be needed in an emergency to protect your facility and staff. Staff members attending the **CPODS** will need to feel safe to do so.

Preparing Your Business for Public Health Emergencies

- **CPODS Operations Staff** – The number of staff volunteers needed to staff your **CPODS** will be determined by a variety of factors such as the size of your dispensing population, your desired throughput and the design of your **CPODS** floor plan. As a **CPODS** you have the advantage of coordinating some functions prior to an emergency. For example, if you disseminate the patient information forms online for staff to download and complete prior to arriving at the **CPODS**, you will reduce the number of staff needed to cover registration. If you provide an intense education campaign about your involvement with public health and ensure your staff members understand that if they are sick, they should report to a hospital or treatment facility and not come to the **CPODS**, you will decrease the number of staff needed to conduct the triage function.
- **Recruiting Staff** – Mass dispensing operations rely heavily on volunteers. *It is important that you solicit volunteers within your organization to help staff your CPODS.* Summit County Public Health will look to your organization to meet the necessary staffing requirements to support your throughput goals.

Preparing Your Business for Public Health Emergencies

PREPARE YOUR FACILITY - PREPARING YOUR FACILITY AHEAD OF TIME IS ESSENTIAL

- 1) **Identify a Dispensing Location.** In order to dispense medications to a large number of people in a relatively short time, you may need to identify ahead of time a particular location (primary and alternate are recommended) that is capable of certain accommodations. This area should be fairly large and open, preferably a large meeting room or cafeteria. Some key factors to consider include:
 - Separate entrance and exit
 - Easily identifiable by all employees
 - Place to secure medications and supplies
 - Accommodations for people with disabilities
 - Accommodation of tables, chairs and large numbers of people
 - Moving people through the PODS in only one direction to avoid confusion and crossovers

- 2) **Identify/Purchase/Store Necessary Supplies.** A list of recommended supplies is available in the Appendix Template.

- 3) **Develop Your Procedures.** The planning committee should develop procedures directly related to **CPODS** operations, in collaboration with Summit County Public Health. Procedures will need to be developed specifically related to the activation, set-up, operation and deactivation of the dispensing site.

- 4) **Determine How Medications Will Be Received.** Your public health liaison will provide insight on how your organization should prepare to obtain medication. *Summit County Public Health does not maintain the resources necessary to deliver medications to your location; therefore, it will be your responsibility to provide means of pickup, transportation, and delivery of medication to your facility.* You will need to identify individuals authorized to accept, sign for, and deliver materials to your facility and you will need to provide that information to Summit County Public Health. Security personnel should be on-hand at all times when the medications are on the premises and while being transported. You should also plan for material handling equipment (MHE) to assist with off-loading and moving medication into your facility. Additionally, your public health liaison will provide training on how to track the inventory you receive and dispense.

Preparing Your Business for Public Health Emergencies

- 5) **Determine What to Do with Leftover Medication.** It is possible that there will be some medications left over after all of your staff and their family members have attended the CPODS. Procedures should be developed to account for how medication will be returned to Summit County Public Health.
- 6) **Handling Emergencies.** Include procedures for handling emergencies that could potentially happen during the dispensing process, such as medical emergencies or security breaches (call 911 or handle on site?).

PROVIDE EDUCATION/INFORMATION/TRAINING

Provide staff with as much information about dispensing site operations as possible. Much of this can be done pre-event. A well-trained staff will be essential to ensure your designated population receives medication in a timely manner, thereby promoting continuity of operations for your organization and meeting public health's dispensing time goal.

1. **Education and Training Resources.** Several education and training resources are currently available for PODS operations. These include free online training at:
 - **University of Albany School of Public Health**
Mass Dispensing: A Primer for Community Leaders
<http://www.ualbanycphp.org/learning/default.cfm>
 - **National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)-**
CPODS Partners- <http://closedpodpartners.org>
2. **Summit County Public Health will provide training and assistance on the following topics:**
 - Incidents that may require PODS activation
 - PODS activation and medication procurement
 - PODS design and throughput
 - PODS positions and responsibility
 - Demobilization and medication return

Preparing Your Business for Public Health Emergencies

EXERCISE YOUR PLAN

Exercising plans helps to identify any problems that can be rectified before an emergency occurs. Consider conducting such exercises jointly with your local public health agency to further strengthen your collaboration. We recommend conducting annual internal training for your **CPODS** staff, specifically addressing the following three key areas:

- PODS activation
- Medication receipt and dispensing procedures
- PODS staff roles/responsibilities

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of a CPODS?

To provide life saving preventative medications to a designated population of people and their family members during a public health emergency.

What are the requirements for becoming a CPODS?

In Summit County, most entities are eligible to become a **CPODS**. To become a CPODS the entity must sign the MOA and develop an operational plan specific to the entity with Summit County Public Health assistance.

How much is it going to cost?

Medications and training are **free** of charge.

Will there be training provided?

Yes. Summit County Public Health will provide training in the areas of Incident Command, PODS Activation, PODS Design and Throughput, PODS Positions and Position Responsibility, Demobilization and Medication Return.

When would we be asked to dispense medications at our own facility?

The only time Summit County Public Health would ask organizations to dispense medications to staff and their families would be if there is a great risk to the entire population and preventive medications needed to be taken immediately.

Who operates the CPODS?

Staff members within your organization will operate the **CPODS**.

Will people be allowed to pick up medications for their families?

In accordance with ODH guidance, staff members may act as the head of household and pickup medication for up to twenty individuals if the appropriate NAPH forms have been completed.

Frequently Asked Questions

How will medication be packaged?

The medication will be packaged for individual use and will be taken orally. Appropriate dosage instructions will accompany each bottle of medication.

Who needs to take the medication?

Under this type of emergency, the entire population within a community will need to take the medication. This includes adults and children. Appropriate dosage instructions will accompany each bottle of medication that is dispensed at the **CPODS**.

What about pets?

The medications provided at the **CPODS** are for humans only. Staff members with pets should contact their veterinarians for more information about the risk to their pet and any preventive measures they can take to help protect the health of their pet.

Is it possible that our organization will need to operate a CPODS after-hours, during the weekend, or on a holiday?

Yes. Public health emergencies can occur at any time. It is essential that your organization be prepared to operate a **CPODS** during non-working hours since your staff members health will be at risk if medications are delayed.

In Conclusion

Summit County Public Health would like to thank you for taking the time to review this workbook to help you develop your **CPODS** plan.

By developing long-lasting relationships with the private sector, government agencies will be more adept and prepared to respond to a potential public health emergency. We appreciate your cooperation.

References and Resources

Other Resources

Rand Corporation

http://www.rand.org/pubs/technical_reports/TR553/

Center For Disease Control and Prevention Emergency Preparedness & Response

www.bt.cdc.gov

Federal Emergency Management Agency Independent Study Courses

www.training.fema.gov/IS/crslst.asp

National Response Framework Resource Center

<http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nrf/>

Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act

<http://www.phe.gov/preparedness/legal/prepact/Pages/default.aspx>

Ready.GOV - Ready Business

<http://www.ready.gov/business>

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