

# Closed POD Program: How-To Guide



## Things you will need to do

- Create an emergency operations team that identifies the major roles of POD operations
- Assign screening and dispensing tasks
- Outline staffing needs to dispense medications
- Choose a dispensing site that's large enough and easily accessible
- Design a floor plan
- Identify employees who are authorized to pick up medications
- Designate a secure storage area for medications
- Create a plan for the reproduction of printed materials

## Steps to becoming a Closed POD Partner

- 1** Communicate your interest by contacting your Local Health Department to participate in a screening session to determine eligibility
- 2** Enroll in our Closed POD program by completing a letter of commitment
- 3** Attend scheduled planning and training sessions
- 4** Create a medication distribution plan

### About us

Oakland County is part of the Cities Readiness Initiative — A federal program that helps metropolitan areas increase their capacity to deliver medicine and medical supplies during a large-scale public health emergency. Collaboration between public health agencies, such as Oakland County Health Division and the private sector, is a crucial part of our department's planning efforts.

*"Our most valuable lesson is that we build stronger relationships with our Federal, State, and local agencies including Oakland County Health Division. Working alongside other Oakland County Long Term Care facilities is exciting and has helped the LTC community support each other."*

**Jeanne Smith, Woodward Hills Nursing Center**



## Emergency Medication Dispensing

# PLANNING FOR A PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

## AT A GLANCE

### What is a POD?

A POD, short for point of dispensing, is a location where medications are dispensed to the public.

### Why are PODs necessary?

Dispensing medications is a vital aspect of the response measures taken during a public health emergency.

### What is the difference between Closed and Open PODS?

#### Open POD

- OPEN to the public, meant to serve everyone
- Primary means of getting medication to the public
- Staffed by the Local Health Department (LHD)
- At various locations throughout the community allowing for large crowds

#### Closed POD

- NOT OPEN to the public
- Operated for a specific population (example: employees, their families, and clients)
- Operated by a private business/organization
- Staffed by employees at your organization

*"Oakland County Community Mental Health Authority recently partnered and coordinated with its service provider network and the Oakland County Health Division in regard to the development of Closed PODs. This significant effort was met with excitement and diligent work across the provider network. Everyone involved was mindful that in order to effectively serve people in need of mental health services and our community as a whole during a crisis situation, our staff and their families must be protected by receiving proper medications quickly."*

**Oakland County Community Mental Health Authority**



Closed POD partners accepting awards based on outstanding achievements, including successful monthly communications tests, completion of Closed POD plans, and participation in a full-scale exercise.

## STEP ONE

### Activating a Closed POD

After an emergency that requires mass distribution of medications from the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS), your LHD will notify your organization to alert you that your Closed POD should be activated. Your LHD will refer to the Closed POD information that your organization submitted to contact the designated employees at your agency.

*Remember: Update all 24/7 emergency contact information on a regular basis!*

## STEP TWO

### Delivery of Medication

Your organization will be notified by your LHD about where and when medications are available for pickup. Your organization can provide security when transporting medications. At the time of the event, single copies of client screening forms and disease and medication fact sheets will be available from your LHD for mass production at your facility.

*Remember: The amount of medication your organization receives is based on the pre-designated number that you indicate upon developing your Closed POD Plans*

## STEP THREE

### Dispensing Medication

Your organization will need to set up its distribution operation. This includes:

- Gathering the necessary supplies and materials needed for activation of your Closed POD
- Informing employees how they can acquire medication for themselves and their families
- Screening for contraindications and dispensing medications

### Your dispensing plan

Your organization's dispensing plan should include:

- Contact information for key personnel and a liaison at your LHD
- A tally of employees and their family members
- Copies of screening forms and other printed materials that need to be provided in foreign languages
- A list of supplies needed to activate your POD
- A communication plan for distributing information before, during, and after an emergency
- An outline describing how your organization plans to receive and distribute medications
- Procedures for follow-up with your LHD when the emergency is declared over

*Remember: To tally the amount of medications needed for your facility, use the Head of Household (HOH) method. HOH assumes that each staff member is the head of a household averaged to 4.5 individuals. For example, an organization with 38 employees would receive 171 bottles of medication (38 x 4.5 = 171).*

## STEP FOUR

### Post POD Deactivation

Your organization should provide your LHD with the following information:

- Updates of your dispensing operations
- Completed client screening forms
- Any unused medications

*"The Closed Pod exercise demonstrated how important it is to have a comprehensive plan in place and then practice it! Our plan functioned smoothly and provided us with a realistic preview of a potential real situation. It feels great to be prepared!"*

**Jeanne Miller, Director of Specialized Services for Youth, Oakland Family Services**

*"The message it sends to your employees is a morale booster because it gives the message that you care what happens to them as well as your residents. If there was a disaster, you would be prepared to also care for them and take care of their needs and their family needs, so it's great for staff participation!"*

**Janet Lieder, Bortz Healthcare of Oakland**

## Why should you become a Closed POD?

- Ensures hard-to-reach or at-risk populations receive medication in a timely manner
- Compliments facility Emergency Preparedness Plans
- Is beneficial to employee health and safety
- Helps organizations maintain Continuity of Operations and aids in becoming more resilient during and after an emergency
- Exhibits commitment to the community
- Provides a valuable service to employees and others
- Creates partnerships with local and federal agencies
- Large groups of people can be reached faster, protecting those who may have been exposed

