



September 24, 2009

The Honorable Charlie Crist
Governor of Florida
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0001

Dear Governor Crist:

The H1N1 influenza pandemic promises to test severely the capacity of the healthcare system to deliver the right medicines to the right patients at the right time. The Healthcare Distribution Management Association (HDMA) and its healthcare distributor members across the country meet this challenge on a daily basis. We wish to provide you a brief summary of the capabilities of distributors and provide essential distributor company contact information for distributors in your state to better prepare you for this flu season.

We all learned from our experience with the H1N1 outbreak this spring that the need for enhanced information sharing between the public and private sector is critical. Public health officials, healthcare practitioners, manufacturers and distributors alike need timely information about how and where H1N1 is spreading—and how the supply chain is responding.

To meet this need, HDMA members are supporting the efforts of the CDC, state and local health officials and pharmaceutical manufacturers to ensure that antiviral drugs and related medical products such as facemasks and respirators are available to meet pharmacy, physician and hospital demand.

Distributors are the vital link in the healthcare supply channel. For decades, distributors have efficiently delivered millions of healthcare products every day, saving an estimated \$32 billion per year in healthcare costs. Our members routinely meet demand during times of need such as natural disasters, seasonal influenza outbreaks and other public health emergencies.

H1N1 Information Resources

State Distributor Contacts: In the event that you have questions regarding supply and demand issues, we have attached for your reference a list of HDMA Distributor Member contacts. The information is listed by both state and distributor company. HDMA distributor members doing business in your state are prepared to answer questions regarding distributor capabilities your agency may have as they relate to your state's emergency preparedness efforts.



You will also find a one-page document that will provide background on the capabilities of HDMA distributor member companies.

Centralized H1N1 Vaccine Distribution: On August 10, the CDC announced its expansion of its existing contract with McKesson Corporation, an HDMA member, to include centralized distribution of the H1N1 flu vaccine. McKesson will distribute H1N1 vaccine to as many as 90,000 sites across the country, making it the largest public health initiative in the CDC's history.

It is important to differentiate between the distribution of antiviral drugs and the distribution of the H1N1 flu vaccine. As noted, McKesson is the sole distributor of H1N1 vaccine. Antiviral medicines such as Tamiflu[®] and Relenza[®], which are commercially available and distributed by most HDMA members, are prescribed to treat certain influenza viruses *after* a diagnosis.

HDMA members are in close, continuous contact with the CDC and state public health departments regarding the commercial availability of antivirals. Some HDMA members also help store and deliver state stockpile inventories as necessary to meet public health requirements.

RxResponse: HDMA is a coordinating member of RxResponse, a public/private supply chain alliance dedicated to supporting the continued provision of critical medicines to patients during severe public health emergencies. We encourage members of your agency to participate in RxResponse if they do not already do so.

HDMA distributor members will continue to work with public health officials and their supply chain partners to ensure a coordinated response to this serious public health issue. Please visit our Web site for related information and updates on H1N1 at www.healthcaredistribution.org. Should you have further questions, please contact Thomas Phan at 703-885-0235.

Thank you for your time and attention. We stand ready to work with you. Please do not hesitate to let us know how we can help.

Sincerely,

John M. Gray
President and CEO, HDMA