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Lessons Learned Information Sharing

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LESSON LEARNED

Points of Dispensing: Securing Medications

SUMMARY

Point of dispensing (POD) managers should consider arranging PODs so that the site and medications within it are secure throughout operations.

DESCRIPTION

The Bay Area Super Urban Area Security Initiative sponsored a series of three functional exercises (FE) in the spring of 2009: a public information officer virtual FE on March 19, a POD FE on March 19, and a receipt, stage, and storage warehouse FE on April 10. These exercises tested the Bay Area's public information and warning, medical supplies management and distribution, and mass prophylaxis capabilities during a public health event requiring the deployment of Strategic National Stockpile assets and the mass dispensing of antibiotic prophylaxis. The scenario for each FE was an aerosolized anthrax release that infected 35,000 individuals, which would result in an estimated 1,400 fatalities, 2,500 illnesses, and 2,500 hospitalizations during the first week. In total, 159 players from 47 state, local, and private sector agencies participated in the three FEs.

The Bay Area Super Urban Area Security Initiative (SUASI) is comprised of the cities of San Francisco, Oakland, and San Jose, 10 counties, more than 100 incorporated cities, and a number of special districts, transportation agencies, and several airports. The Bay Area SUASI serves 7 million people.

During the POD FE, exercise participants established two separate PODs in the Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum. In planning the POD layouts, exercise planners were limited by the available space, which was an artificiality of the exercise. The planners did not address security considerations when adapting to the space available. Further, the FE did not incorporate security personnel.

Personnel at both PODs stored medications on table tops, which made them difficult to secure. The PODs' layouts and lack of security personnel left each of the PODs vulnerable to security breaches and left medications unsecured. Further, the layout of the PODs would have made it difficult to isolate a security breach if one had occurred.

The after-action report (AAR) recommends that POD managers review plans for POD layouts to ensure that security is taken into consideration in the basic design. The AAR further recommends that POD managers consider establishing basic security principles to be observed in an ideal POD layout and identify alternative plans for use when faced with an uncompromising space.

POD managers should consider arranging PODs so that the site and medications within it are secure throughout operations.

CITATION

Bay Area Super Urban Security Initiative. *Bay Area Mass Prophylaxis Exercise 2009 After-Action Report/Improvement Plan*. 25 Jun 2009.

<https://www.llis.dhs.gov/docdetails/details.do?contentID=38039>

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