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## PRACTICE NOTE

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### Influenza Antiviral Deployment: The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services' Securing of Temporary Pharmaceutical Distributor's Licenses

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#### PRACTICE

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (MDHSS) obtained temporary pharmaceutical distributor's licenses for personnel transporting influenza antiviral medications. This ensured that MDHSS's antiviral distribution operations complied with the state's pharmaceutical distribution laws.

#### DESCRIPTION

The 2009 H1N1 pandemic began in the spring of 2009 when Mexico experienced an unusually high number of respiratory illnesses. By mid-April, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported confirmed cases of H1N1 in several US states. On May 26, the CDC's Division of the Strategic National Stockpile (DSNS) announced that it would release one-quarter of the antiviral drugs, personal protective equipment (PPE), and respiratory protection devices in the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) to help states respond to the outbreak.

MDHSS activated its SNS plan immediately following the CDC's announcement. On April 25, DSNS notified the MDHSS SNS program manager that federal assets would be deployed to Missouri and inquired as to where and when MDHSS would establish a receipt, store, and stage (RSS) site. Over the next 5 days, MDHSS activated an RSS site and 3 regional distribution sites (RDS) to distribute its federally subsidized antiviral supply of 600,000 courses of Tamiflu and Relenza. MDHSS distributed these state assets to all 115 county and city health departments by May 1. On May 2, MDHSS received SNS pediatric antivirals and PPE from DSNS. MDHSS utilized the RSS site and 3 RDSs to distribute the pediatric supplies to the entire state by May 6.

During the antiviral distribution process, an attorney raised concerns that each local public health agency (LPHA) would need a temporary pharmaceutical distributor's license since it was transporting medications. Missouri statutes require that wholesale distributors of prescription drugs must be licensed by the Missouri Board of Pharmacy. The SNS program manager contacted the Board and obtained temporary licenses for LPHA distributors, which would be valid for one year. The Board waived all related fees for obtaining the licenses. MDHSS plans to continue to work with the Board and with LPHAs to ensure that distributor's licenses are in place for future SNS asset and antiviral deployments. MDHSS will coordinate with the Board and LPHAs to examine the renewal of distributor's licenses and to explore alternative licensing options during SNS distribution.

**CITATION**

Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services. *Missouri Strategic National Stockpile H1N1 Response After-Action Report*. 31 Aug 2009.

<https://www.llis.dhs.gov/docdetails/details.do?contentID=39243>

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