

Planning Aid: First Steps in Planning for Closed Point of Dispensing Operations

Purpose: To outline critical steps to take at the beginning of the planning phase for closed point of dispensing (POD) operations in a health care organization.

1 Determine the groups you will include in your dispensing and administration operations.

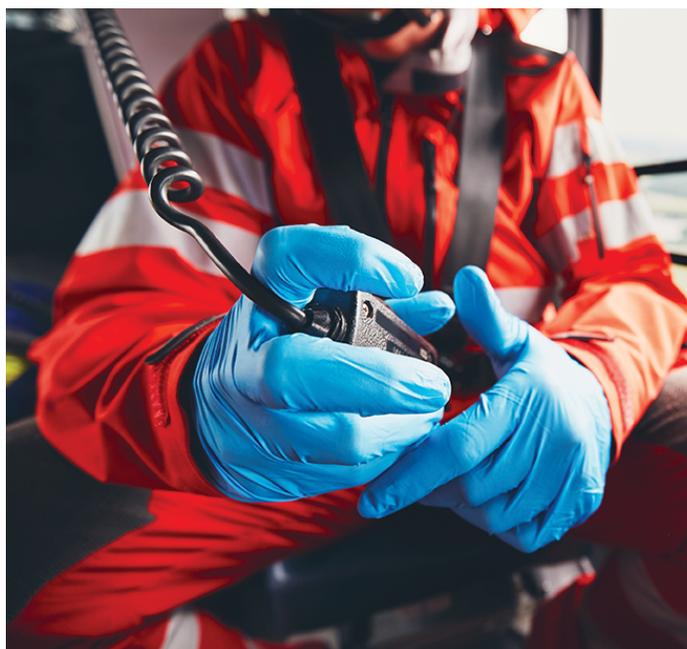
Which groups will you dispense or administer medical countermeasures (MCM) to?

- Patients
- Employees
- Families of patients, employees, first responders, and volunteers
- First responders
- Volunteers

If a decision is made to provide MCMs only to patients and employees, you will want to talk to local public health officials to determine who will be responsible for dispensing to first responders, such as fire departments, police, and emergency medical services (EMS). Since these groups often interact with personnel in health care facilities, they will want to know how they will receive their MCMs. Also, determine whether limits will be placed on the household size to which you will dispense or administer MCMs, if you include family members.

2 Consider the public perception of becoming a closed point of dispensing (POD).

Health care organizations often serve the entire community without exceptions. Consider how becoming a closed POD might affect the way the community perceives your organization. Will limiting the population you dispense MCMs to negatively affect public perception? Discuss these issues with your planning team, including public relations or public affairs representatives, leadership, and public health departments. Brainstorm strategies for handling perception issues. The Fact Sheet for Healthcare Leadership contains information to help you with this discussion.



3 Ensure leadership supports the planning for becoming a closed POD.

Having leadership's support for closed POD planning ensures that staff members are dedicated to planning, setting up, and operating a closed POD during an emergency. Engage your leaders in the decision-making process whenever possible. Doing so ensures that your leaders will enforce dispensing restrictions should MCMs become prioritized by public health. The Becoming a Closed POD Partner fact sheet may be helpful when talking to your organization's leadership about closed POD planning.