

Point of Dispensing Site (POD)

What You Need to Know:

What is a POD?

A POD (point of dispensing) is a mass dispensing clinic that is capable of providing medications (prophylaxis) or vaccinations to protect the general population from biological threats or epidemics.

What does a POD involve?

A POD involves the following activities:

- Setup and execute a dispensing operation to serve populations before they become symptomatic.
- Locate and coordinate the personnel to staff the dispensing operation.
- Train and organized volunteers to perform dispensing site functions.
- Isolate symptomatic individuals and arrange to transport them to acute care facilities.
- Provide the public with information about community efforts to protect them from the threat.

What are the Goals of a POD?

- To decrease the number of individuals who may get ill.
- To provide information about the disease and the medical treatment (antibiotic or vaccine).
- To provide medication to an exposed population within a given time period. The specifics of the population and the time frame are often event specific.

Is Mass Dispensing Appropriate?

The most important aspect of the mass prophylaxis is whether or not to provide it. Protecting the health of El Dorado County residents is the first priority in any situation. If an epidemiologic investigation reveals an exposure has occurred that may threaten public health, mass prophylaxis or vaccination may be an effective disease control measure. The County Health Officer will decide whether prophylaxis or vaccination is appropriate.

What are some considerations in deciding to provide mass dispensing?

- Several questions must be answered before deciding to provide mass dispensing, including:
- What is the possible cause of illness (etiologic agent)? Is it bacteria, virus, fungi or toxins?
- What evidence is the suspected cause of illness based upon? Signs and symptoms? Confirmed through laboratory testing? As a rule, mass treatment is not considered until laboratory testing has confirmed the etiologic agent. (State and federal public health laboratories may be needed to identify etiologic agents.)
- What are the possible treatment options based on the etiologic agent? If bacterial, which antibiotic is appropriate? If viral, which vaccine is appropriate?
- Is mass dispensing appropriate for the event?

A POD is not...

- A trauma center, emergency room or urgent care center. It will not have the capability to provide medical treatment to patients.
- A shelter. It will not have the capacity to house and feed patients.
- Joint Information Center (JIC)

For more information about the Points of Dispensing (POD) sites and the Strategic National Stockpile Program, call the El Dorado County Public Health Department:

Telephone: (530) 621-6242 or

visit the CDC Website:

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/>



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Healthy Communities