Point of Dispensing Staff Orientation
Session Overview

- POD basics
- POD management
- POD roles and responsibilities
- Preparing to work at a POD
Learning Objectives

After completing this module, you will be able to describe:

- The purpose of a Point of Dispensing (POD)
- The general structure and operations of public health PODs
- How you can prepare yourself and your family for your working in a POD
POD basics
What Is Mass Dispensing?

- Dispensing a vaccine, antibiotic or other medication quickly to a large group of people.
  - Community members
  - Hospital staff & patients
- Point of Dispensing (POD) – a location where mass dispensing occurs
Why would a POD be activated?

- Usually: To prevent disease in those exposed to an infection but who are not yet sick

- Possible: To treat an infectious disease
  - The treatment offered would be limited to dispensing a specific medication.
What Kinds of Emergencies Might Require a POD?

- Natural disaster
- Influenza pandemic
- Bioterrorism attack
What is the Strategic National Stockpile?

A large CDC-managed stockpile of medicine and medical supplies to protect the American public if there is a public health emergency severe enough to cause local supplies to run out.

You can learn more about the Strategic National Stockpile at http://www.bt.cdc.gov/stockpile
Strategic National Stockpile
Components

- Push Pack/12 Hours

- Vendor Managed Inventory/ 24-36 hours
SNS Responsibilities

- **SNS**
  - Send medications / vaccines
  - Provide technical assistance

- **State and Local governments**
  - Demonstrate need for supplies
  - Receive, stage, store and return supplies
  - Dispense at community PODs

- **Hospitals**
  - Receive, store and return supplies
  - Dispense to at hospital PODs

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May 24, 2006
In January a new infectious disease emerged called “blue spot fever.” At first, the disease seemed to be limited to a few isolated cases. However, as more cases were identified, it became clear that the disease was spreading. By May, the disease appeared in several regions of the eastern United States.

Scientists with the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have determined that blue spot fever spreads easily from person-to-person in respiratory droplets created while coughing or sneezing and is potentially fatal. However, certain medications called “antispotics” seem to provide effective protection if given within a few days of contact with an infected person.
Blue Spot Fever Scenario

The CDC has recommended that everyone living within a 50-mile radius of the identified cases receive the antispotics. Antispotics from the Strategic National Stockpile are sent to Connecticut.

Luckily, there is a sufficient quantity of the medication for everyone to receive it. In order to give medications to everyone designated by the CDC, local health departments/districts have to mobilize large numbers of staff and volunteers to set up local PODs and dispense antispotics.
How Will a POD Be Set Up?

- The layout of a POD is designed to facilitate accurate and rapid dispensing of a specific medication/vaccine
- Basic POD floor plan
- Variation
  - Situation
  - Local circumstances
Where will PODs be located?

PODs locations must be:

- Appropriate size and layout
- Can be secured
- Accessible
The POD planners in your Mass Dispensing Area are concerned that the large number of people expected to come to the POD could cause severe traffic congestion. Therefore, they chose to locate the POD at a school that was right off the highway and away from the center of town. They also made sure that local police officers are available to assist with automobile traffic flow in the surrounding area.

To ensure the safety and security of POD workers and attendees, they chose a site where security officers can control movement into the clinic.
How will a POD be staffed?

- It takes many people to run a POD
  - Number and mix of skills on depends on situation
- Source of staff
  - Public health and hospital staff members
  - Other first responders
  - Volunteers
- Representing many professions, disciplines, agencies, and backgrounds.
POD management
How will POD operations be managed?

- Using the Incident Command System which is part of the National Incident Management System (NIMS).
- In compliance with:
  - with good emergency response practice
  - federal requirements
- Time and crisis tested
Successful dispensing of antispotics to the population within a short period of time requires clear command, control and coordination of human resources and materials.

Therefore, all PODs, including the ones in your Mass Dispensing area, are being managed using the Incident Command System.
Blue Spot Fever Scenario

At the beginning of the Blue Spot POD operation the scene seems a little chaotic.

However, as people settle into their emergency response functional roles and follow the chain of command a smooth rhythm ensues.
POD roles and responsibilities
How Will You Know When and Where to Respond?

- If you are needed, you will be:
  - contacted by a designated person in health department or hospital
  - given specific information about where and when to report

- On site, you will report to the staff sign-in area where you will be given an assignment
How Long Will You Be Working in the POD?

- Shifts are usually 8-12 hours
- The POD will be in operation until the mission has been achieved
What Should You Bring?

- Bring as little as possible
- Bring
  - Photo identification – required
  - POD Go Pak
  - Specific equipment, as requested – e.g. stethoscope
- Food will be provided to you while you work at the POD.
Blue Spot Fever Scenario

At the time of this epidemic, you are called on to work at a POD. Given the large number of people who need prophylaxis you are asked to serve several shifts over a 48 hour period. You commit to serving at the POD. You are told to report to a designated site near the selected POD location at 8:00am. You are told to bring your driver’s license for identification.

When you arrive at the designated site you sign-in and receive an ID badge. Once everyone is signed-in a bus takes you, and the other POD workers, to the POD site.
How Will You Know What to Do When You Arrive at the POD?

- Job Action Sheet
- Just-in-time training
Job Action Sheet

- Job title
- Job mission
- To whom you report
- Tasks to perform
Just-in-time Training

- The training delivered at the time of an incident
- Focused on providing the knowledge and skills you need to fill your role
How Will You be Assigned a Role?

- Incident Commander or designee will assign a role based on
  - Your skills
  - Needs of the operation
- You may be re-assigned as the needs of the operation change
Blue Spot Fever Scenario

When you and the other POD workers arrive at the POD site you are given just-in-time training as a group. The training includes information on Blue Spot Fever and the set up and organization of the POD including arrangements for security, food and breaks.

You are a registered nurse. You have received training on being a smallpox vaccinator. However, at this POD medication, not vaccine, is being dispensed. You are assigned to work as a Triage Officer and given a job action sheet for the role. Your supervisor is the Triage Unit Leader.
After the group training session, you go to the Triage Unit. Your supervisor gives you and the other Triage Officers just-in-time training on your role as described in your job action sheet.

You review the form you will be using to perform triage. You don’t understand one of the questions. You ask your supervisor and she explains the question to you.
How Will You be Protected?

All appropriate precautions will be taken to protect POD workers.

- Vaccination or medication being dispensed before the POD opens
- Supply and training on appropriate personal protective equipment
- Safety officer always present
- Facilities for food & rest
Dealing with stress

Working at a POD may be a stressful

- Monitor self and others for signs of stress and fatigue
- POD attendees and co-workers may vent anger. Don’t take it too personally.
- Mental health workers will be available on site.

Report any serious problems to supervisor
What are signs of stress and fatigue?

- Lack of concentration
- Increased number of non-critical errors
- Critical errors
- Irritability
- Worry
- Feeling ill
Before the clinic is open you, and the other POD workers, are given antispotics.

It appears that the organism that causes Blue Spot Fever can be spread by respiratory droplets from coughs or sneezes. POD workers who interact closely with members of the public have been told to wear masks.
Blue Spot Fever Scenario

You notice that some of the triage officers are wearing their masks on the top of their heads rather than over their nose and mouth. You suggest that they wear it properly but they continue to wear them on their heads. You tell your unit leader. The Safety Officer is informed about the situation and stops the movement of patients to Triage until the Triage Officers put on their masks.

Later on you notice that a fellow Triage Officer is making critical errors and appears to be experiencing extreme anxiety. You tell your Unit Leader who arranges for that Triage Officer to have a break and meet with a Mental/Behavioral Health Specialist.
What Are Ethical Guidelines for Working in a POD?

- Treat members of the public with fairness and respect
  - Courtesy
  - Confidentiality
  - No favoritism or discrimination
- Don’t spread rumors
- Honor your commitment to work at a POD until the mission is complete. Your fellow staff members and the public are relying on you.
What Do You Do When It's Time to Leave?

- Your supervisor will tell you when your shift is complete.
- When leaving your supervisor may ask you to:
  - brief him/her
  - turn in a report or equipment
- Always check out at the staff desk any time you leave a POD.
What Do You Do When It's Time to Leave?

- Your supervisor will also tell you when the mission is complete and your service is no longer needed.
- You will be asked to participate in a debriefing called a ‘hot wash’.
After 4 days you are told that the POD is shutting down. It has achieved its mission of providing antispotics to the members of your community and therefore saving lives.

You participate in a hotwash so that lessons can be learned from the strengths and weaknesses of the operation. You are thanked for your service to your community.
Preparing to work at a POD
How Can I Be Ready to Serve?

1. Have a family preparedness plan
2. Participate in available training & exercises
3. Be prepared to work under the Incident Command System
4. Be sure your employer has your current contact information
5. Prepare a POD go pack
The Connecticut Guide to Emergency Preparedness is available to help you prepare a family preparedness plan.

- Communication with household members
- Care for dependent elders, children and pets
- Home security
- Household medication needs
- Transportation needs
POD Go Pack

- Photo identification
- List of Contact number for your family
- Medications
- Personal hygiene items (hand sanitizer, toothbrush, toothpaste)
- If deployed away from home
  - Pillows / blankets
  - Clothing
  - First aid supplies
  - Cell phone charger
Where Can You Get Additional Training?

- Consult your POD trainer
- TRAINConnecticut
  - Online library of courses
  - [http://ct.train.org](http://ct.train.org)
  - CT training plan for POD workers
Conclusion

1. A POD is established to dispense a vaccine, antibiotic or other medication quickly to a large group of people usually to prevent disease.

2. The clinic flow is intended to maximize movement through the POD.

3. PODs are managed using the Incident Command System.
Conclusions

4. Each POD worker will be assigned a specific role which will be described in a Job Action Sheet

5. Safety of POD workers is paramount

6. Plan and train now to be an effective POD worker
Acknowledgements

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Acknowledgements (cont.)

Additional material included in the course came from:

- FEMA IS Course Material Download: IS-100 Introduction to Incident Command System, I-100.
- FEMA IS Course Material Download: IS-100 Introduction to Incident Command System, I-100. http://www.training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is100lst.asp
- POD training materials from the Connecticut Health Departments/Districts of Manchester, Ledge Light and Eastern Highlands.
- Virginia Department of Health, Emergency Preparedness and Response Programs. Unit 1 – Dispensing / Vaccination Site Training
Questions