



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**News Release**

**LINDA LINGLE**  
GOVERNOR

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**DOH COMBINES NATIONAL STOCKPILE EXERCISE WITH REAL-LIFE  
ANTIVIRAL MEDICATION DISTRIBUTION FOR INFLUENZA**

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) will distribute antiviral medication to all neighbor islands and prepare hospitals and community health centers statewide for emergency distribution with a full-scale, multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional emergency response exercise today (Wednesday, Sept. 2). Planned almost three months ago, the exercise will demonstrate the state's capacity to widely distribute antiviral stockpile assets, a portion of which was received from the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) to support the state's response to the ongoing influenza pandemic.

"Preparing for a pandemic or other public health emergency requires our state to be able to expedite distribution of medication and medical supplies during a disaster. Today's exercise fulfills two goals: It pre-positions an initial supply of antiviral medication and medical supplies in all counties at the start of this flu season, and it prepares hospitals and clinics for receipt of supplies in the event of an actual emergency situation," said Health Director Chiyome Fukino, M.D. "Public health emergencies rarely wait for a convenient time, and we see this as an opportunity to test ourselves in challenging circumstances."

Hawai'i's current antiviral stockpile, approximately 210,000 courses of antivirals, includes approximately 40,000 courses acquired from the SNS on May 1, 2009. The SNS holds Hawai'i's remaining antiviral allocation – approximately 120,000 courses. Approximately 10,000 courses will be distributed today (Wednesday, Sept. 2) to neighbor island district health offices and community health centers on Lana'i and Moloka'i.

The SNS is a federal program with the capacity to deploy caches of certain medications and medical supplies to every state within 12 hours of a request from each respective Governor in the case of a bioterrorist attack or public health emergency. Each state is required to ensure it can transport and deliver antiviral medications statewide in the event of a pandemic, bioterrorism attack, or natural disaster.

“It takes an enormous amount of coordination among our various partners to successfully implement these critical operations,” said State Epidemiologist Sarah Park, M.D. “From the receipt and storage of assets and the coordination of staging distribution warehouse operations, to the Coast Guard planes and AirMed Hawai‘i transports as well as all the intermediary transporters delivering supplies throughout the islands, this exercise will truly test our capacity to distribute antiviral medications statewide in response to real or functional shortages that may occur during a pandemic influenza emergency.”

The exercise will involve multiple levels of government and private entities responding collaboratively to a biological disease outbreak. Under the exercise’s scenario, the commercial supply system is inadequate and antiviral medications in the SNS must be distributed to pre-designated hospitals and community clinics throughout the state. Although faux medications will be distributed to these sites, DOH will take advantage of the exercise operations to pre-position some real antivirals from the state’s stockpile on Oahu in the DOH District Health Offices (DHOs) on the neighbor islands so that they may be more readily available on the neighbor islands when needed.

Agencies and organizations involved include DOH Disease Outbreak Control Division (DOCD); Maui, Kaua‘i, and Hawai‘i county DHOs; the Healthcare Association of Hawai‘i (HAH); the Hawai‘i Primary Care Association; the contracted RSSD vendor Courier Corporation of Hawai‘i; AirMed Hawai‘i; and the U.S. Coast Guard.

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Note to news media: video of Hawai‘i AirMed loading of stockpile shipments for transport may be arranged.

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