

GPOs Are Helping America's Hospitals and Local Communities Respond to Natural Disasters and Other Emergency Events



Natural disasters and other emergency events put enormous stress on hospitals, healthcare providers, and the communities they serve. These events wreak havoc on the supply chain, increasing the number of urgent cases, interfering with supply lines, and jeopardizing patient access to care. As the sourcing partners to American hospitals and healthcare providers, traditional healthcare group purchasing organizations (GPOs) have a unique line of sight over all aspects of the supply chain, which allows us to:

- **Work with healthcare providers** to create preparedness plans and ensure uninterrupted patient care;
- To source **alternate supplies of products** in shortage and respond nimbly to help hospitals and other sites of care **treat a surge in patients**;
- And to work with suppliers, distributors, government agencies, and disaster agencies to **coordinate response**, **manage additional demand**, and **help solve logistical challenges**.

GPOs in Action: Emergency Preparedness & Disaster Response



Hurricane Helene

After severe rainfall shut down IV fluid production at Baxter International's North Cove, North Carolina facility during Hurricane Helene, GPOs shared information on IV fluid supply and offered guidance to providers on best practices for inventory management, conservation protocols, and alternative clinical strategies.



California Wildfires

Wildfires, such as those seen recently in California, have affected both GPO member hospitals and the staff themselves, some of whom have lost their homes. When fires occur, GPOs work with staffing contract suppliers to provide rapid solutions while deploying enough human capital to keep hospitals operable. GPOs also work to secure any needed protective equipment, such as face masks to prevent smoke inhalation injury.



COVID-19 Pandemic

During the COVID-19 pandemic, GPOs worked to expand access to critical medical supplies and fill supply gaps by launching programs to invest in domestic and geographically diverse manufacturers. GPOs served as a significant line of defense for providers and patients, providing extensive vetting to help prevent purchases of counterfeit or inferior medical products. GPOs also worked with suppliers to identify and mitigate supply disruptions, and with the HHS Strategic National Stockpile (SNS), FDA, Congress, the Administration, and all policymakers to inform responses.



Mass Casualty Events

In the event of shootings and other mass casualty events, GPOs work with partners to coordinate and deploy response efforts. GPOs have sourced critical blood and blood products to help member facilities treat a surge in patients in the aftermath of public safety emergencies.

For more information, visit www.supplychainassociation.org.