



Healthcare Distribution Alliance

PATIENTS MOVE US.

March 19, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
The White House
Office of the President
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Michael R. Pence
The White House
Office of the Vice President
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President and Mr. Vice President:

On behalf of the Healthcare Distribution Alliance (HDA), I offer this letter as an indication that the nation's primary pharmaceutical distributors are committed to assisting the country in its response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

HDA represents 36 of the nation's primary pharmaceutical wholesale distributors. HDA members are working around-the-clock to safely and efficiently ship pharmaceutical and medical products to pharmacies, hospitals and other healthcare providers nationwide. Each day, HDA members ship approximately 15 million medications and healthcare products. Over 92 percent of all medications shipped in the United States arrive at their dispensing location from a primary pharmaceutical distributor.

As the healthcare distribution industry responds to this unprecedented event, we are proactively positioning the industry to leverage our prior emergency response experience and expertise to support the entire supply chain. Our members have mobilized all available resources to ensure that healthcare providers across the country are receiving the medicines and medical supplies they need to respond to the pandemic. HDA members also are working collaboratively with federal, state and local officials to ensure that any challenges or obstacles confronting the safe and efficient delivery of these products are addressed proactively. Finally, HDA is a founding member of Healthcare Ready and is working closely with their team to coordinate distributor response.

While we have been able to address acute challenges confronting the supply chain thus far, we are expecting additional pressures in the days and weeks ahead. To address these challenges as expeditiously as possible, we request your guidance and direction regarding specific concerns that could impact the supply chain's ability to remain resilient during this extraordinary response effort.

Emergency designation for pharmaceutical distributors as Critical Infrastructure

Designating pharmaceutical distributors as critical infrastructure will significantly improve our capacity to remain operational during what is becoming an increasingly unpredictable situation. Primary pharmaceutical distributors must have seamless coordination and collaboration with state and local officials to ensure product delivery. State and local response protocols that limit access to certain areas or require mandatory closure of certain facilities could

cause significant disruption to response efforts. For these reasons, we hereby request critical infrastructure designation to address the following areas of concern:

- Emergency access and reentry to quarantine areas: Maintaining access to critical medical supplies is essential during a public health emergency or disaster designation. To facilitate the transport and distribution of essential medical goods, employees at distribution centers need affirmative access to areas where local or state authorities are otherwise restricting movement. This will assure that our distribution centers remain operational and staffed to ensure continuity of operations and timely delivery of medical products to pharmacies, hospitals and other areas of critical need.
- Access to available cleaning and sanitation resources: To maintain our distribution center operations, healthcare distributors have instituted enhanced sanitization measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Some suppliers of needed cleaning and sanitation products have notified distributors that they will not service distribution facilities because they are not a hospital or designated critical response agency. Distributors are critical to ensuring required supplies are delivered each day to healthcare facilities. Without ensuring continuous access to distributors' shipments, healthcare facilities would not be able to adequately respond to patient need.
- Uniform federal guidance from the CDC on containment and mitigation procedures in the event of an exposed/infected employee at a distribution center. This guidance would ensure compliance with state and local protocols. HDA members maintain a national distribution network. This network calls for a blanket guidance that ensures continuity of compliance while ensuring adequate access to medication and healthcare supplies for the customers HDA members serve each day.

Conclusion

The unprecedented challenge posed by the COVID-19 pandemic will require a collaborative response from the public and private sector. HDA and its members are committed to supporting our supply chain partners as well as federal and state authorities to do everything possible to ensure continuous operations during the response effort.

Thank you for your leadership during this challenging period. Please let us know if we can answer any questions or provide any additional information.

Sincerely,



Chester "Chip" Davis, Jr.
President and Chief Executive Officer
Healthcare Distribution Alliance

cc: The Honorable Alex Azar, Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services