

## The Strategic National Stockpile: Safeguarding Rx Supply Chain Resilience for National Security

### Introduction

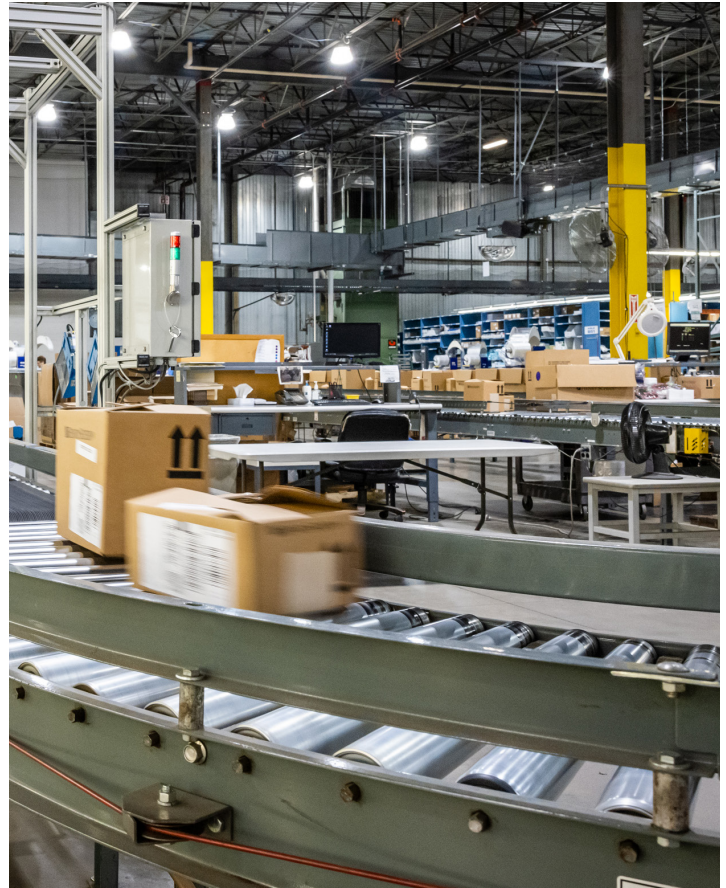
The Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) is critical to protecting public health during catastrophic, high-consequence events. Established in 1999, the SNS is the federal government's largest repository of medical countermeasures (MCM) to respond to a public health emergency. The medical products held in the SNS can be used as a short-term, stopgap buffer for response when the immediate supply of these materials may not be available or sufficient.<sup>1</sup>

Pharmaceutical distributors have historically partnered with the federal government to support the SNS. As logistics experts, distributors tap into their capacity, physical infrastructure and other capabilities to ensure that the SNS can respond to a public health emergency with the rapid deployment of MCMs, if necessary.<sup>2</sup>

### Role and Strategic Value of the SNS

Through the SNS, the federal government acquires and deploys medical countermeasures needed by jurisdictions during public health emergencies. The SNS team plans, stockpiles and works with logistics providers to move MCMs to protect Americans from high-consequence public health emergencies. It is currently not resourced to respond to routine drug shortages or other supply chain disruptions.

The SNS is an important part of the United States' preparedness and response capabilities because it holds MCMs that do not have a commercial market, like the smallpox vaccine. For products where there is a market, distributors can partner with the SNS to rotate and cycle inventory through commercial channels to reduce the risk of products expiring in the SNS.<sup>3</sup>



1. [HHS ASPR Stockpile Responses.](#)
2. Healthcare Distribution Alliance. "PAHPA Background and Opportunities to Enhance Resilience." <https://www.hda.org/getmedia/c77c0197-674d-46cf-a870-8017ac070ae0/PAHPA-Background-and-Opportunities-to-Enhance-Resilience.pdf>.
3. Healthcare Distribution Alliance. "Supply Chain Resilience Assessment Issue Brief Summary." <https://www.hda.org/getmedia/b2d8fb6b-e26f-4773-9c4a-649858abc25f/Supply-Chain-Resilience-Assessment-Summary.pdf>.



## Challenges and Recommendations

Given the current threat environment and recent disease outbreaks, policymakers continue to examine the SNS and evaluate its ability to respond to future public health emergencies. However, the scope is constrained by the currently allocated appropriations and the statutory authorities governing the SNS.<sup>4</sup> As policymakers consider strategies for bolstering the SNS, HDA recommends exploring innovative solutions to ensure adequate technology infrastructure and connectivity between the SNS and partners.<sup>5</sup>

The pharmaceutical distribution industry, which serves as a critical link between **1,200 manufacturers** and **330,000 pharmacies, providers** and other sites of care, stands ready to support the federal government as it bolsters the SNS for the benefit of all Americans.

For more information, visit [HDA.org](https://www.hda.org).

4. Healthcare Distribution Alliance. "Strengthening the SNS Perspectives." Perspectives. 2020. <https://www.hda.org/perspectives/2020/strengthening-the-strategic-national-stockpile-for-the-future/>.

5. Healthcare Distribution Alliance. "Supply Chain Resilience Report." 2024. <https://www.hda.org/getmedia/f8a57f40-49d1-419b-b595-db0ba83c878d/Supply-Chain-Resilience-Report.pdf>.

## About the Healthcare Distribution Alliance

The Healthcare Distribution Alliance (HDA) represents primary pharmaceutical distributors — the vital link between the nation's pharmaceutical manufacturers and pharmacies, hospitals, long-term care facilities, clinics and others nationwide. Since 1876, HDA has helped members navigate regulations and innovations to get the right medicines to the right patients at the right time, safely and efficiently. The HDA Research Foundation, HDA's nonprofit charitable foundation, serves the healthcare industry by providing research and education focused on priority healthcare supply chain issues.