



## Mass Dispensing and the Cities Readiness Initiative

### What is the Cities Readiness Initiative?

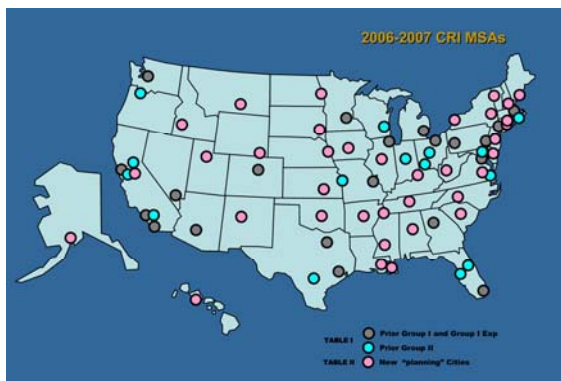
If there were a widespread release of anthrax, local governments, with the help of state and federal officials, would need to dispense medication (within 48 hours to prevent disease) to a very large number of people.

The Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI) is a federally funded effort to increase the capacity of major U.S. cities and metropolitan areas to effectively deliver medicines and medical supplies during a large-scale public health emergency caused by infectious agent infections.

The initiative aims to provide a consistent nationwide approach to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a large-scale public health emergency.



Strategic National Stockpile



### Which cities have CRIs?





The map on the left shows all the major cities that have CRIs. Over half of the US population lives within a CRI jurisdiction. To find the CRI location nearest you, visit <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/cri/facts.asp>

### How will the medication be dispensed to the public?

Jurisdictions may establish Points of Dispensing (PODs) to get medications to the public. PODs are temporary clinics set up to dispense quickly medications or vaccines to many people. For example, if there were a widespread anthrax attack, members of the public who have been exposed but who are not sick would be told to come to a POD to receive prophylactic medication. In this situation, demand for antibiotics would exceed local supplies. For this reason, the large amount of medication needed would come from a national stockpile called the Strategic National Stockpile. You can find out more about the SNS by going to the CDC's SNS website at <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/stockpile/>.

## Are there any other ways that medications might be dispensed during a public health emergency?

PODs are the traditional method of providing prophylactic medication in CRI. However, other methods are being explored. Some of these methods include:

-  **Postal Plan: Home delivery of antibiotics by the United States Postal Service (USPS).** The Postal Plan was designed as a way of reducing the surge of people attending PODs. With this strategy, mail carriers will deliver antibiotics to the homes in affected zip codes. The USPS option is entirely voluntary for the employees of the USPS and only available to the jurisdictions with an approved USPS Dispensing Plan.
-  **Pre-deployment of medications to community-based caches.** Antibiotics could be sent ahead of time to be stored in community-based caches. These might include churches, schools, large employers, or fraternal organizations.
-  **Pre-event dispensing to first responders.** Pre-event dispensing to first responders could mean that critical personnel and/or volunteers will be given a supply of antibiotics as soon as they are identified and trained.
-  **Pre-event placement of medications in households.** A pilot study is currently testing whether a supply of antibiotics (to be reserved for a declared public health emergency) could be placed in households prior to an event. The study will test whether household members follow instructions on proper storage, maintenance, and the use of antibiotics only in a declared emergency. The results of the study will be reported in late 2007.

### Sources:

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Public Q&A about the Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI). <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/cri/qa.asp>
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Key Facts about the Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI). <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/cri/facts.asp>
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Strategic National Stockpile. <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/stockpile/>



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