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## Checklist 7. National Pharmaceutical Stockpile Communication Needs Assessment

As a state or local public health communicator, you should contact the project area official managing NPS planning under the cooperative agreement to coordinate health communications needs.

Pre-event planning:

- Is the disease and drug information prepared in the multiple languages spoken by your community?
- Are processes in place to create incident-specific messages that tell people who are potentially exposed where they must go for prophylactic medications if they are well, and where they need to go if they are sick?
- Are processes in place to ensure that public information officers know which dispensing and treatment locations are *active*?
- Are media aware—before an event—of the need to disseminate NPS-related information and messages?

Your plan should include the following:

- Multilanguage text of all documents used to inform the public during an emergency
- Storage location(s) of all informational material (including electronic versions)
- Methods for reproducing and disseminating informational materials during an emergency
- Specific communication channels, partnerships, and staffing pools that support public information release, reproduction, and dissemination

To determine how much NPS-related information you will need to provide to site locations, consider the following:

- Is the agent contagious?
- Who should be concerned about exposure?
- Who should seek preventive treatment at dispensing sites and who should seek symptomatic treatment at treatment centers?
- Directions to and information about dispensing and treatment locations.
  - When will the dispensing operation start and what hours will it be open?
  - Where is the nearest dispensing site?

- What is the best street access to each dispensing site?
- Where should those who drive park at each dispensing site?
- What is the best way to get to the dispensing site (e.g., walk, use public transportation, drive)?
- What is the dispensing process?
- What forms of identification are needed?
- What information must someone have in order to pick up medications for family members?  
Children: weight, age, health information, drug allergies, current medications  
Adults: health information, drug allergies, current medications.

### Information about the drugs the public must take

The information should include the following:

- Reasons for using specific drugs or changing drug regimens. Remember that cultural and ethnic sensitivities will affect the public's acceptance of those drugs.
- The importance of taking the medication. This information must stress the importance of taking all of a prescribed drugs (e.g., 60 days of doxycycline for anthrax).
- Messages about the importance of adherence.
- Message to warn patients of the danger of overmedicating.