

Healthcare group purchasing organizations (GPOs) provide critical support in emergencies like the coronavirus.

Emergency events and public health crises like the coronavirus put enormous stress on hospitals, other healthcare providers and the communities they serve. These occurrences wreak havoc with the supply chain and dramatically increase the number of urgent cases. As the sourcing partners to virtually all American hospitals, nursing homes, surgery centers, and clinics, **GPOs work alongside healthcare providers** to combat these difficult challenges and help patients.

GPO Response is Driven by a Unique Line of Sight Over the Entire Healthcare Supply Chain

GPOs have a unique line of sight over all aspects of the healthcare supply chain, which allows us to work with **healthcare providers** to create preparedness plans to ensure uninterrupted patient care; to source alternate supplies of products in shortage; and to respond nimbly to help hospitals and nursing homes treat a surge in patients. GPOs work with **suppliers** to ensure they can meet additional demand; with **distributors** and other health systems to move supplies to affected areas; with **government agencies** to coordinate response; and with **Red Cross and other disaster agencies** to secure warehouse space for supplies and solve transportation, fuel and logistics challenges.

GPOs Help Hospitals Prepare, Respond and Rebuild

Coronavirus Pandemic

- Public health threats like the coronavirus place enormous stress on the entire healthcare system.
- GPOs are working to track relevant data, surveying provider members to gain an accurate understanding of supplies on hand and estimate future needs, and working with suppliers to identify and mitigate supply disruptions and shortages.
- GPOs are also working closely with the HHS Strategic National Stockpile (SNS), FDA, Congress, the Administration, and all policymakers to inform responses.

California Wildfires

- The 2017 California wildfires affected both GPO member hospitals and the staff themselves, many of whom lost their homes.
- GPOs worked with staffing contract suppliers to provide rapid solutions, allowing the impacted staff to focus on their families, while deploying enough human capital to keep hospitals operable.
- GPOs secured face masks for patients, families, and staff at the hospitals to prevent smoke inhalation injury.

Hurricane Harvey

- During the August 2017 flooding of Hurricane Harvey, a Texas hospital system reached out to its GPO because local blood banks were unable to fulfill blood and platelet order requests.
- The hospital system had located alternate sources to fill the orders but had no way of getting the supplies.
- Five hours, one chartered plane, 160 units of blood and 12 platelets later, the medical team had what they needed.
- In fact, the GPO chartered three different flights to the area - one had to be shipped directly via Blackhawk helicopter to avoid the flooding.

Las Vegas Shooting

- In the aftermath of the shooting, GPOs worked with two partners to source blood and blood products in the Las Vegas region.
- Partners were standing by to deploy orders needed for the volume of trauma patients at the GPO member facilities.

For more information:

- supplychainassociation.org

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About HSCA

The Healthcare Supply Chain Association (HSCA) represents the nation's leading healthcare group purchasing organizations (GPOs), which are critical cost-savings partners to America's hospitals, nursing homes, nursing home pharmacies, clinics, home healthcare providers and surgery centers. GPOs deliver billions in savings annually to healthcare providers, Medicare and Medicaid, and taxpayers.

HSCA and its member GPOs are committed to delivering the best products at the best value to healthcare providers, to increasing competition and innovation in the market, and to being supply chain leaders in transparency and accountability.