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Bio-Pharmaceutical Supply System Activates Rx Response to Address Potential Impact from Hurricane Isaac

Consumers Urged to Visit www.RxResponse.org for Status Reports on Open Pharmacies

Washington, D.C. – Rx Response, an initiative of America’s bio-pharmaceutical supply system to help ensure the continued flow of medicine to patients in a severe public health emergency, has moved to its highest alert status as Hurricane Isaac continues to batter Louisiana and the Gulf Coast.

In addition to elevating to *Engaged* status, Rx Response has activated an enhanced version of its Pharmacy Status Reporting Tool (PSRT). The PSRT is an online program that allows emergency managers and the public to readily locate open pharmacies in communities that have been impacted by severe weather or other events (www.rxresponse.org). The tool was first developed by Rx Response in 2009 and the enhanced version reflects improvements made through a collaborative relationship between Walgreens and Rx Response.

Walgreens recently became the first U.S. pharmacy chain to provide status reports on its pharmacies directly to Rx Response. Previously, the PSRT only monitored electronic billing transmissions from pharmacies to insurance processing companies. When a pharmacy is transmitting electronic billing data, it is presumed open and Rx Response posts the pharmacy’s location on the PSRT’s interactive map on the www.RxResponse.org website. The direct reporting of information about the status of Walgreens pharmacies to Rx Response will enhance the timeliness of the information available to the public and emergency managers.

Early reports of Hurricane Isaac’s impacts on the health care system indicate several hospital evacuations in Louisiana with more expected as the heavy rain from Isaac continues.

In addition to monitoring the PSRT, Rx Response officials are urging citizens who may need to evacuate due to Hurricane Isaac to visit www.RxResponse.org to fill out a printable, wallet-size prescription medication card. The medication card includes information about current medications, medical conditions and contact information for doctors, pharmacists and emergency contacts. This information can prove especially helpful if evacuees need to fill prescriptions at out of town pharmacies.

Rx Response is a single point of contact for the entire bio-pharmaceutical supply system and relies on a robust network that allows federal and state emergency management officials to communicate with Rx Response regarding pharmaceutical needs and other issues which may impact the supply system. The

communications are actively monitored by all segments of the pharmaceutical supply system to ensure the fastest possible resolution.

Rx Response was developed in response to Hurricane Katrina and the threat of pandemic influenza. Its members include:

- American Hospital Association (AHA)
- American Red Cross
- Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO)
- Generic Pharmaceutical Association (GPHA)
- Healthcare Distribution Management Association (HDMA)
- National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS)
- National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA)
- Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA)

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