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Rx Response Changes Pharmacy Status Reporting Tool to Improve Post Disaster Access to Medicine

Tool Heralded by Homeland Security Secretary Napolitano for Actions Following Super Storm Sandy will now be Called Rx Open

Washington, D.C. – Rx Response officials have announced a major change in their program’s on-line Pharmacy Status Reporting Tool (PSRT) -- a program that won wide praise for its role in helping emergency managers and citizens find open pharmacies following Super Storm Sandy.

The Pharmacy Status Reporting Tool will now be called **Rx Open** and can be accessed at www.RxOpen.org. The new name and matching web address is designed to make the program easier to remember, a move Rx Response officials believe will significantly increase the tool’s use in future disasters.

Rx Response (www.RxResponse.org) was created by the biopharmaceutical industry in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina to help ensure the continued flow of medicine to patients following major disasters like hurricanes, terrorist attacks or pandemic influenza. Its PSRT was deployed in 11 states following Sandy’s landfall. The tool maps open pharmacies in disaster impacted areas on the Rx Response website. Widespread media coverage of the PSRT following Sandy quadrupled traffic to the online tool. In addition, more than 200 pharmacies in the New York and New Jersey area that were not registered in the PSRT’s database asked to be included for future disasters and have since been added.

Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano phoned Rx Response leaders after Super Storm Sandy to thank officials for the PSRT’s impact.

“We are excited that our technology was able to make such an important difference for emergency managers and the citizens affected by Super Storm Sandy,” said Rx Response Director Erin Mullen, PhD, RPH, CEM. “To make this valuable resource even more accessible in future disasters, we’re excited to introduce Rx Open. We are confident that this easy to remember name, and corresponding web address, will help make it even easier to get medicine to patients in times of emergency.”

In addition to launching Rx Open today, Rx Response officials also introduced *Rx on the Run*, the new name for its Downloadable Prescription Medication Wallet Card. The online tool enables patients to enter information about



prescriptions and contact information for medical providers and print the information on a wallet sized card. This card can serve as a valuable resource if patients are evacuating from a disaster area. The *Rx on the Run* card is available at www.RxResponse.org. As with Rx Open, the renaming of the Prescription Medication Wallet Card was designed to create a more memorable name that is expected to lead more citizens to use the tool.

About the Rx Open (Formerly known as the Pharmacy Status Reporting Tool)

In 2009, following Hurricanes Ike and Gustav, Rx Response developed its first version of the Pharmacy Status Reporting Tool in partnership with the National Council for Prescription Drug Programs (NCPDP), Emdeon/eRx, and Relay Health, companies that manage electronic billing transmissions from pharmacies to insurance processing companies.

At the start of the 2012 hurricane season, Rx Response announced important enhancements to the PSRT, including the addition of a new feedback tool that enabled emergency managers, public health officials and pharmacy staff to provide status updates about open pharmacies in their location. The enhanced tool also enabled pharmacy staff and emergency managers to submit questions to Rx Response staff. Since there could be instances in which pharmacies were transmitting billing data but had limited capabilities due to the impact of the disaster, the ability of personnel on the ground to provide first-hand information about a pharmacy's level of service enabled Rx Response to provide more accurate information about the status of individual pharmacies.

Also in 2012, Walgreens (NYSE, NASDAQ: WAG), became the first U.S. pharmacy chain to provide status reports on its pharmacies directly to Rx Response to ensure more timely reporting on Walgreens stores. This move was helpful during Walgreens' response to Hurricane Sandy.

Rx Response has also modified *Rx Open* reporting function to provide additional information on overall pharmacy services in a disaster impacted area. This includes a county-by-county display of open pharmacies as well as individual pharmacy status.

Pharmacists interested in learning about their pharmacy's participation in the PRST can email Rx Response at admin@rxresponse.org.

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