



What is the public health issue?

In the event of a catastrophic public health emergency, large segments of the population may need to receive prophylaxis quickly. In densely populated areas this becomes a daunting task that must be executed with great efficiency. To address this vulnerability, the Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI) provides direct assistance to twenty cities and the District of Columbia (National Capital Region) to build the response capacity needed to provide prophylaxis to 100 percent of their populations within a 48-hour period.

CRI is a pilot project designed to demonstrate the best ways to accomplish this response objective. Appropriately, multiple local, state, and federal agencies will participate to ensure individual agency response plans are unified enabling a well-orchestrated response. CRI is being spearheaded and mutually supported by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Homeland Security. Other federal agencies participating in the initiative include the Department of Justice (DOJ), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Veteran's Administration (VA), and the United States Postal Service (USPS).

What has CDC accomplished?

CDC has awarded funding to support this initiative through the bioterrorism preparedness cooperative agreement program administered by OTPER's Division of State and Local Readiness. Funding recipients include: Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Houston, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, Minneapolis, New York City, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, and the District of Columbia. The Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) is also supporting this initiative by providing on-going technical support to ensure SNS pharmaceuticals and medical supplies are received and dispensed efficiently and effectively. In addition, SNS has:

- Participated in executive briefings for each project.
- Completed base-line readiness assessments for each project.
- Hosted a CRI conference designed to provide projects and other participants with a rich learning experience featuring a number of preparedness subject matter experts.

What are the next steps?

The next phase of the CRI project will involve significant outreach and training. The focus of these efforts will be to:

- Develop and deliver training.
- Provide on-going technical assistance.
- Assess individual project progress at 90 and 180-day intervals.
- Close preparedness gaps and boost overall response capacity.
- Establish a listserve to facilitate networking among the projects.