

*Title:* Dispensing Medications Pursuant to  
Standing Orders During Public Health Emergencies

Policy No. I.A.11

Approved: 05-05-2010

Revised:

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1. The Board entertained a request from the Office of Public Health (OPH) in the Dept. of Health and Hospitals (DHH), seeking recognition of standing orders as valid prescriptions during public health emergencies.
  2. The OPH representative reminded the members of their May 2009 review and approval of a plan for the packaging and labeling of certain medications intended for mass dispensing during emergency declarations [Board Policy I.A.8]. He reminded the members that current plans called for the use of Point-of-Dispensing Sites (PODS) to be established and located in strategic sites in affected areas. DHH would be responsible for the operation of the PODS, wherein the medications would be dispensed without charge to anyone requesting it. The State Health Officer had authored a standing order to be used for the dispensing of medications at the PODS.
  3. DHH had acknowledged that some citizens may choose to contact their own healthcare practitioner to obtain a prescription and then visit their local pharmacy to purchase the prophylactic medication. To prevent the necessity for large numbers of prescribers being contacted and then communicating such prescriptions to the pharmacies, the State Health Officer had suggested the propriety of using the same standing order to authorize community pharmacies to dispense the prophylactic medications.
  4. The members took note of contemporary pharmacy practice standards wherein standing orders were commonly used in hospitals and other organized healthcare system venues, but not in community pharmacy settings. Pursuant to their further review and discussion, the members adopted the following resolution after a unanimous vote in the affirmative:  
**Resolved**, that the Board make the following determinations:
    - During a State of Emergency declared by the Governor of the State of Louisiana, the public health is best served by the efficient communication of medical orders and prescriptions for medications needed by the citizens; and further,
    - In the event of such an emergency caused by the release of anthrax, the Standing Order for Dispensing of Prophylactic Antibiotics for Anthrax issued by the State Health Officer shall constitute a valid medical order and prescription sufficient to authorize a pharmacist in a pharmacy to dispense the medications cited therein.