

POD Manager

A Point of Dispensing (also known as a POD) is a location that the Yolo County Health Department can activate in an emergency to distribute medications to the population of Yolo County. The "Gold Standard" for this task is 200,000 people in 48 hours. The Yolo County Health Department has developed this on-line training class for you to learn how to manage a Yolo County Health Department POD. A good Manager can pull many different kinds of volunteers together to function as one unit. This Class will focus on keeping the POD running. Requesting supplies, managing fatigue, activation, and de-activation are a few of the subjects you will be focusing on.

Lesson 1: The Overall Picture

Objectives

By The End Of This Course You Should Be Able To:

Manage POD staff

Understand how a POD gets information

Open a POD

Perform a shift change at a POD

Close a POD

What is a POD Manager?

Definition: The staff member who coordinates with the All-POD Coordinator, staff at the facility, and staff at the POD to make sure that the POD functions.

The POD Manager oversees basic functionality of the POD. They communicate information from their staff at the POD directly with the All-POD Coordinator for the County. The All-POD Coordinator will most likely be a representative of the Health Department. The contact information for the All-POD Coordinator will be distributed to every POD Manager at the time of their Just-In-Time training.

To better understand the functions of workers in the POD you can think of staff in the POD like this:

Staff at the POD would be equivalent to Line Workers at an assembly plant

Command Staff at the POD would be equivalent to Supervisors at the plant

The POD Manager would be equivalent to the plant Manager or Owner

POD Managers will be contacted upon activation and told to report to a specific location. At this location you will be given information regarding the health situation as well as an outline of your job description and expected responsibilities. This is known as a "Just-In-Time Training". Later in this class we will discuss how to perform a "Just in Time Training" for the rest of the staff at your POD. Be sure to take notes so that you have information to give to your staff.

The Overall Picture

A POD is one portion of a much larger emergency response plan.

While it is true that each POD is important and must function effectively, it is only one piece of a much larger plan. Just as one puzzle piece cannot possibly show you a whole picture – one POD cannot get medications to the entire population of Yolo County in the “Gold Standard” time (48 hours). Every POD needs to function on its own, carry out its function, and keep in touch with the Coordinating Office so that the process can be tracked countywide.

The Overall Picture looks something like this:

Medications come to the County via plane or truck from various sources and agencies.

These medications are inventoried and re-packaged into smaller units (if necessary).

Staff and Volunteers are notified that PODs will be opened. POD managers are contacted and given the location where they are expected to report.

Facility administrators are notified to open their buildings.

Medications and supplies are delivered to sites throughout the County.

Those who will serve the first shift at all of the PODs will be called to a location and given instructions.

Once they are briefed, POD managers will be assigned to their POD facility and leave for their assignments. (The county will be responsible for assigning staff to work at your POD.)

The POD manager will be responsible for Just-In-time training and assigning Command Staff Roles.

General POD staff and volunteers can sign in and await their assignments.

Responsibilities

Make sure the POD keeps running!

Communicate with All-POD Coordinator from the Health Department. This includes throughput (patient flow through the clinic), supply and staffing level, etc.

Work with facility staff to open and close the POD

Work with Command Staff to supervise various work areas

Oversee staff briefings

Oversee activation, shift changes, and de-activation

Act as point of contact outside the POD with partner agencies

If you are the activation POD manager (first shift) you will oversee staff and interact with the contacts for the facility to open the POD. While the POD is running you will be providing information to the All-POD Coordinator, conducting briefings with your Command staff, overseeing shift changes, and acting as the point of contact for agencies outside of the Health Department. Once the All-POD Coordinator makes the decision to close the POD site, the POD manager for the last shift will be overseeing the de-activation of the POD.

In some instances the Activation and De-activation POD Manager may be the same person. This usually happens in the case of a one day clinic.

Being a POD Manager is an exercise in delegation!

NEVER TRY TO RUN AROUND AND DO EVERYTHING YOURSELF!!!

Working with the EOC & DOC

The Emergency Operations Center and the Departmental Operations Center work together to provide expertise and support to all of the PODs as well as the rest of the emergency response. The All-POD Coordinator (the person you report to) will be staffed at one of these locations. Just as the staff at the POD goes through shift changes so do the staff at the EOC and DOC. It is important that you always ask for the All-POD Coordinator when you call the number you are given during the “Just-In-Time” training. Ask for this person by title not name as different staff may rotate through this role.

The All-POD Coordinator may ask you to regularly check in or simply ask you to call them when you need something. It is up to you, as the POD manager to make the best judgment calls about how to effectively run your POD and accomplish the goals of the emergency response.

The All-POD Coordinator is your point of contact for all questions and concerns.

EOC = Emergency Operations Center
(County Wide Center)

DOC = Departmental Operations Center
(Health Department)

Lesson 2: The POD Manual

The POD Manual

The POD Manager will have the POD manual at every facility

ALWAYS

Have it with you

Refer to it for information

Pass it on to the next POD Manager at your shift change

NEVER

Lose it

Remove items from it

Give it to anyone other than another POD Manager

The POD Manual! This is your main reference for running the POD. Depending on how much time we have, we plan to photocopy, package, and label everything before it goes to the POD. It is quite possible that this is an unrealistic goal depending on how much time we have to get all of the PODs open. There is one Master copy of every piece of paper provided to the POD inside the POD Manual. We don't expect you to read every single Job Action sheet and medication sheet! This binder is under YOUR control. If someone is missing something, you can delegate a staff member to go make more photocopies of the item from the POD manual.

Every staff member should have at least one tri-fold Job Action sheet and a facility Map. Some staff members will have extra instructions which explain how to use specific forms or what they should do with patients who come to their station. All of the documents in the binder are filed according to the Command Structure for the POD (which can be identified by the colored chart at the beginning of the staffing section). Example: If you need more copies of the Runners Job Action Sheet it will be located behind the Logistics section since they are managed by the Logistics Section Chief. **IF ANYONE IS MISSING AN INFORMATIONAL ITEM PLEASE TASK SOMEONE TO MAKE MORE COPIES.** Every Yolo county POD location should have at least one photocopier on site!

This binder has all the master forms. Make sure that you give it to the new POD Manager upon transfer of Command to them at the end of your shift.

What's In The POD Manual?

In short...Everything!

Facility Maps

These are the Maps of the layout for the POD which were referred to in the first POD class. If you and your Command staff members decide to change anything on the layout, it is important that you make a note of it so that new staff members coming into the POD will be informed of the change during their "Just-In-Time" training.

Medication Information Sheets

These are produced by either a drug manufacturer, the Center for Disease Control, or the California Department of Public Health. We currently have information for most medications that will be given at a POD translated into 48 different languages. **NOTE:** You will only be provided with mass copies of English, Spanish, and Russian. This is because they are threshold languages in Yolo County. If you need another language check the POD Manual and make a Photocopy for the patient.

Job Action Sheets

These are tri-fold brochures that give a staff member a general idea of what he or she is supposed to do. As certain jobs will change depending on the biological agent and POD location, many staff members will have a short situation-specific addendum to their Job Action Sheet which will provide more detail.

Medical Information

For Medical staff on site there will be treatment algorithms, medication interaction information, and pediatric information. **ONLY MEDICAL STAFF WILL BE PROVIDED WITH THESE ITEMS!**

Procedures

Instructions specific to each job will be provided.

Worksheets

Managers are provided with a blank worksheet for scheduling staff lunches, breaks, and shift changes.

Staff Forms

These are mainly the staff sign-in and sign-out sheets. These track the staff when they are on site since the County is the responsible party for their safety. All Incident Command System (ICS) forms that are to be used at the POD will also be provided. Staff forms which are required include the sign-in and sign-out sheets and the incident form which is to be filled out if someone is injured on the site.

Patient Forms

These are anything that the patient needs to write on, or sign. They always need to be collected from the patient before they leave the POD. All patient forms will be given back to the Health Department for tracking purposes.

Lesson 3: Operations

Activation

There are four main areas which need to be addressed during the Activation of a POD
Set-up – Patient flow through the clinic and Parking
Facility – Walkthroughs and Inspections
Personnel – Sign-In, Training, and Assignments
Training – Just-In-Time Training

LOCATE THE SIGN-IN STAFF PACKET, YOU WILL NEED THAT ONE FIRST!!!!

In a perfect world the Health Department will be sending a set up team ahead of each POD Manager to set up the facility. If this step is not done when you arrive at your site, you may need to add this to your activation steps. If the site has been set up for you, each

staff member's packet will already be at their station. If set up has not been completed all of the staff packets and supplies will be stacked in the center of the room.

The easiest way to open a POD (including set up) would be in the following steps: Assign the first staff member who arrives the job of staff sign in. Give them the sign in packet that has instructions and everything they need. This will free you to do other things. Be sure to give them a thorough briefing as they are the first person POD staff meet upon arrival. This staff member can also start handing out the facility maps to everyone with instructions to set up tables and chairs the way they are displayed on the map. If set up is already complete then staff members can be directed to a specific location to wait for further instructions or go over their staff info sheets.

While staff are getting signed in you **MUST** walk through the facility with any checklists you are given (see the activation section of the POD manual) with a staff member from the facility. These lists mainly note damage to the structure so that the County is not held liable for it after the event is over.

Once you have checked out the facility it is time to come back to the main room to facilitate the “Just In Time” training for all of the staff members.

All of the steps listed above are written in the Priorities of Activation document which is located in the Activation Section of the POD Manual (just in case you forget).

Just In-Time Training

What is Just-In-Time training?

A three-part training given to all of the staff which introduces them to what they will be doing during their shift as well as an overall briefing on the POD and event status.

Entire POD Staff – 15 Minutes

Command Staff – 20 Minutes

Section Breakout – 20 Minutes

By this time your Command Staff should have arrived. You can check the sign-in station to get their names and call them to the front of the room. These staff members will need to be introduced and will assist you with the “Just-In-Time” Training process. You will also need to locate the **COMMAND STAFF PACKET**. This has everything each command staff member needs to function in their role.

The Yolo County Just-In-Time Training has been written to take a maximum of 1 hour and relay important information which may not be in a staff members Job Action Sheet. During the POD Manager “Just-In-Time” training you will have been given specifics of

the situation and what you need to complete your mission. Now it is your turn to relay information to your staff. The training has been written so that even if you get nervous you can simply read it word for word and your staff will get the majority of the information that they need.

The first 15 Minutes consists of:

Briefing everyone on the status of the event and goal of the response. This may include throughput, number of people expected to arrive, etc.

Introducing the Command Staff by name, title, and color of vest.

Quick overview of the Incident Command Structure (always report to your supervisor and information needs to flow up and down the chain of command).

Explain the badge colors and security: Every member is wearing a badge with a colored stripe. This tells what security clearance they have i.e. where in the POD they are allowed to go.

Distributing vests to all POD staff so that they are easily identifiable (these can be found in the POD-in-a-box vest box, green and orange). Usually runners are given a different color from the rest of the staff to insure that they can be spotted at all times. Typically the orange vests are used for runners and green for general staff.

Bring any noted paperwork discrepancies to the attention of all POD staff.

Have the Safety Officer read the Safety section out loud to all staff to inform them of the specific safety issues which may present themselves during the day.

Finally, get the sign in sheet and call roll. Instruct staff members to get into their staff groups and go to their stations to open the station's packet and start reading the information at the station.

(Anyone not pre assigned with a staff position on the sign in sheet will need to wait until operations are underway and gaps in staffing are identified before they can be tasked by the POD Manager.)

The next 20 minutes consist of:

The POD Manager meeting with the Command Staff to review the organizational chart and identify which staff are being managed by which Command Staff members.

Review Forms being used today and how they work.

Review layout of the POD and how patient flow will work.

Relay any other important information you learned during your "Just in Time" training to your Command staff.

Sign out radios to all Command Staff members, read instructions out loud, and make sure everyone knows how to use their radio.

All Command Staff members have been given folders with everything they need to manage their staff and/or perform their duties. These folders are organized exactly like the staffing section of the POD Manual.

The last 20 minutes consist of each Command staff member meeting with their sections to go over any specific questions.

There is a lot of information to cover in one hour so try to keep on task to assure that it is completed on time. Once everyone is working you will need to go to the Daily Business section and read the Shift Change procedures so that you are familiar with them well in advance.

Daily Business

Shift Change – Each person should be able to explain their job to the person relieving them.

Breaks – Command Staff should be instructed to check their staff every 2-3 hours.

Managing Fatigue – Staff don't always realize how stressed/tired they are.

Command Staff Briefing – Meetings to share what is working well, what is not and coming up with plans to make the POD function better.

Every new staff member entering the POD will need to be given the same instructions as the initial “Just-In-Time” training. If staff are trickling in, the sign-in staff member can provide a base level of information while each Command Staff member goes into more depth when they show the staff member their station. Be sure your Logistics Unit Deputy is keeping their sign-in staff briefed as often as possible to ensure continuity and good flow of communications at the POD. If they are coming in massive groups you may need to hold small meetings to inform everyone at the same time.

Command staff should be instructed to inform their Team Leads to break staff members every 2-3 hours (if not more). During an event where people are running on adrenalin they do not always realize how tired or stressed they really are. A fatigued staff member is more likely to make careless mistakes which could be detrimental to the patient. Always keep an eye on your staff.

During the course of the operation you will need to set specific times to meet with your Command Staff to assure that everything is functioning properly. This is where you will be able to ask your Command Staff if changes need to be made to increase or decrease patient flow, and whether or not more staff or assets need to be requested. After your Command Staff Briefing ALWAYS relay important information which was brought up to the All POD Coordinator.

During a shift change the “Just-In-Time” training becomes easier because every staff member should be able to describe their job to the next staff member on shift and hand over all of their informational materials to that staff member. Ensure that during shift changes, off-going staff have a chance to meet and brief on-coming staff.

Deactivation

Once the POD manager gets approval to close the POD, the message should be sent to all staff so that stations can begin closing procedures – counting supplies and cleaning/returning the facility to the manner in which it was found when the POD was opened. This is similar to a restaurant closing for the evening.

Once the public is gone:

Clean everything so as to return the facility to its original configuration.

Pack everything into boxes for return to the Health Department.

Upon finishing steps #1 and #2 return to the main room for a debriefing.

While your staff are cleaning, you will need to do a walk through of the building with a member of the staff from the facility to check for damages to the facility. This checklist can be found in the deactivation section of the POD Manual. You may need to reference the activation checklist (completed by the activation POD Manager, in the activation section) to see what items were noted as being damaged at the start of operations.

The last item of business during operations is a debrief. You should:

Thank everyone for their service.

Acknowledge the success of the operation as well as any challenges.

Give time to staff to voice observations and suggestions for future operations at this site as well as provide some emotional and psychological relief and validation.

Document all responses!

Only with the feedback of the staff who work the event can changes to procedures be made to make it run more efficiently in the future.

EVERY POD MANAGER IS REQUIRED TO FILL IN A SIMPLE ONE PAGE AFTER ACTION REPORT WITH THEIR ASSESSMENT ABOUT HOW THE POD WENT AT THE END OF HIS/HER SHIFT. There is an outline for this report in the deactivation section of your POD manual.

Try to address everything in the outline!

Write legibly!

Don't worry about grammatical errors!

Don't cross out any information!

These reports are used by the Health Department to create a county wide After Action Report for the event as a whole. All insights are appreciated! This information will also be used for reimbursement.

Multi-Day Events

If a POD needs to be open for more than 24 hours:

Make sure everyone gets food & water.

The All-POD Coordinator will help you with the next steps.

The All POD Coordinator is available to help you with anything you need. If it is deemed necessary for a POD to be opened for 24 hours or two different days this person will relay specific information to you regarding any night time procedures you will need to follow. They will also be the person to assure that staff are provided with food, water,

resting accommodations, and appropriate security are available on site for night time operations.

Sections of the POD may need to be locked during the night shift.

Although it is rare that a POD would be open during the night, it is quite possible it would be necessary to do so to meet the gold standard of distributing antibiotics in 48 hours to all of Yolo County.

You may need to change Facility Set-up

It is also possible that if other facilities close during night time operations the set-up of the PODs remaining open would change to a different format to assist in throughput of higher numbers of patients. If that is deemed necessary the All POD Coordinator will most likely send extra help to assist with a set up change.

Lesson 4: Media Training

The County and the Media

All media inquiries need to be directed to the Public Information Officer (PIO) or appropriate designee.

The County already has systems in place to create and distribute information to the Media. In order for the POD to work efficiently with these systems it is very important that you:

- Only distribute items which have been approved to release.
- NEVER try to answer any questions from the Media. Send them to the County EOC, Public Information Officer (PIO) or Joint Information Center (JIC).

The Media can be persistent when they show up to a POD and “want answers for their story”. Don’t let them interrupt the functionality of the POD. Try to lead them to the an empty room or the designated Media area so that you can forward their requests them to the PIO.

Here are some responses that may be recommended by the PIO:

- “All our efforts are currently directed at ensuring that operations are running efficiently and everyone is receiving proper service and appropriate information. You may contact our Public Information Officer for more information”.

- “Our communications officer is currently preparing a statement. Can we send it to you by fax?”
- “You may check our website for background information, and I will fax/email you with the time of our next update.”

Communicating with the Media

- The POD manager may act as or assign a person to be the Press Assistant.
- The Press Assistant fields requests for interviews/information from the media.
- The Press Assistant may be required to complete a “Media Call Intake Sheet”.
- The Press Assistant then submits the Media Call Intake Sheet to the Public Information Officer or appropriate designee.

The POD Manager or Press Assistant would be the **ONLY** people at the POD to forward information to the County EOC, PIO or JIC. Any Media who show up at the POD should be directed to either the POD Manager or Press Assistant so that they can fill in the Media Call Intake Sheet.

The Media Intake Sheet

The Media Call Intake Sheet includes items such as media deadlines, type of information requested, and action needed.

If there is a fax machine on the premises of the POD you are managing you will be given the fax number which you can send your Media Call Intake Sheets to for review by the Public Information Officer.

If a fax machine is not available you will need to hold onto your sheets until you are contacted by phone for the information or a courier comes to collect them.

If a specific request is time sensitive (i.e. has a close deadline) you will have a phone number which will allow you to verbally give the information on your Media Call Intake Sheet to someone who can get the answer.

Even if the Media Call Intake Sheet gets reformatted the day of the event you will have several blank copies available to you in your Job Information Packet (this is the packet which contains your Job Action sheet and any specific information you will need to be aware of on that day.)

NEVER Provide Interviews

The POD Manager/Press Assistant **DOES NOT** provide information or interviews to the media, unless specifically directed by the Lead Public Information Officer.

No staff member at the POD is to provide any type of interview to any member of the media. Again, it is handy to move the media to a separate room so that they will be less likely to interview members of the public as well.

This allows the POD to perform its function without having to respond to media requests and for our department to provide a consistent and coordinated message to the public.

By distributing information in this manner a uniform message will be given to all persons throughout the county and we will be able to better control “rumors”.