



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Regional Emergency Preparedness Exercise - A Success!

During the week of November 16th, the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department and many community partners participated in a California Department of Public Health annual preparedness challenge. This year the challenge was to prepare to provide medications to everyone in our county in a timely and coordinated manner in the event of an emergency.

Though today's exercise was practice, the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department and its partners have been challenged to respond in a smaller scope to real contagious and hazardous health conditions. In 2009, we provided immunizations to protect the community from the impact of H1N1 flu. In 2013, we helped UCSB mitigate an outbreak of viral meningitis that was contagious and potentially lethal through the dissemination of vaccine.

This year, the Public Health Department's goal was to respond to a mass mobilization of medications to our entire community as quickly and efficiently as possible. In this scenario, the Health Officer authorized medications to be released to our county from national warehouses. Due to the location and size of our county, we worked with partners throughout the region (San Diego through San Luis Obispo) to bring medications to our county. The medication was redistributed and shipped to 16 public dispensing sites and 22 private and non-profit organizations.

Each organization worked within their capacity and structure to develop their ability to partner with us to serve our community.

The amount of preparation, cooperation, communication, and mobilization of community partners made an exercise of this magnitude a success! The commitment of our partners instilled confidence in our ability to respond to a large scale emergency to protect the health and safety of all.

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