

October 10, 2024

The Honorable Xavier Becerra
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Becerra:

On behalf of the physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I am writing to express our serious concern about the impact of Hurricane Helene on facilities producing intravenous (IV) and other sterile drug products critical to the provision of care across the United States. Physicians are already starting to feel the impact of closures of key manufacturers of these products, which will have detrimental impacts on patients and patient care. In fact, [provider survey data](#) just released by Premier found that over 86 percent of health care providers are experiencing shortages of IV fluids in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene. We are also anticipating potential additional impacts from Hurricane Milton as it may have a similar negative effect on supplies from manufacturers in the state of Florida.

We appreciate recent announcements by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regarding actions to help mitigate shortages. We are very pleased to see quick action to bolster alternative manufacturing facilities, consider utilization of compounding pharmacies, and pursue potential international supply chains, along with other efforts. However, we urge all departments and agencies to act in a proactive manner to ensure that supply chains for drugs at risk of shortages are bolstered before shortages actually occur. We should not let drugs fall into predictable shortages before we take action to maintain their availability.

The shortages of essential drug products have been a persistent issue that shows no sign of abating. Sterile injectables and intravenous solutions have seen supply constraints lasting years, frequently exacerbated by severe weather events directly impacting manufacturing facilities. The recent disruption to the Baxter facility in North Carolina comes at a time when many products produced by the facility have already been subject to shortages. Temporary closures and disruptions to production only serve to put more pressure on already limited supplies of essential products. As hurricane season continues to impact our southern states, additional manufacturing facilities, and therefore drug supplies, are at continued risk.

Given the serious impacts of recent storms on the drug manufacturing and supply chains, the AMA urges the administration to pull every available lever to help mitigate any potential shortages and ensure adequate supplies of drug products at risk of shortage.

The AMA hopes these continued threats to our drug supply chain highlight the critical need for action to bolster domestic drug manufacturing resiliency and build redundancy into the supply chain. We cannot

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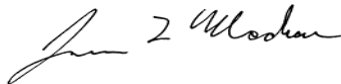
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continue to put patients across the country at risk because we have been unwilling to find solutions that ensure continued access to critical drug products.

Despite the serious ongoing challenges posed by continued severe weather threats across the country, the AMA highlights the need for continued prioritization of this issue and urges HHS, FDA, and other federal departments and agencies to utilize every avenue possible to maintain our nation's drug supply. We also urge the Administration to continue to provide timely updates to physicians and patients about the status of drug supplies and available alternatives and offer our assistance in disseminating any updates and information using the AMA's broad network and extensive communications channels.

We look forward to continuing to work with you to find solutions to this important issue. Should you wish to discuss further or have any questions, please contact Shannon Curtis, Assistant Director of Federal Affairs, at shannon.curtis@ama-assn.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "James L. Madara".

James L. Madara, MD