



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR

CHIYOME LEINAALA FUKINO M.D.
DIRECTOR
Phone: (808) 586-4410
Fax: (808) 586-4444

For Immediate Release: March 11, 2008

08-28

**HAWAI`I'S HOSPITAL WORKERS PRACTICE EMERGENCY
RESPONSE TO THREAT OF MOCK ANTHRAX EXPOSURE**

HONOLULU – Hospital workers on Hawai`i, Kaua`i, Lana`i, Maui, Moloka`i and O`ahu will participate tomorrow in the Department of Health's (DOH) and Healthcare Association of Hawai`i's (HAH) statewide emergency preparedness exercise structured around a mock bioterrorism attack. The exercise is designed to test, document and improve the state's ability to distribute medication to hospital workers in the event of an anthrax attack.

"As part of our public health emergency plan, we want to make sure Hawai`i's healthcare providers are one of the first groups to receive medication," said Director of Health Chiyome Fukino, M.D. "It's essential they be able to continue to provide care to the public during a disaster situation in order to treat and reduce illness for their patients."

The exercise will simulate hospital response to the threat of possible anthrax exposure. The scenario includes a simulated activation of the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS). The SNS is a large national supply of antibiotics, chemical antidotes, antitoxins, life-support medications, and medical/surgical items. It is designed to supplement and re-supply state and local public health agencies in the event of a national emergency anywhere and at anytime within the U.S. or its territories. The exercise simulates the receipt, storage, tracking and delivery of medication to participating hospitals and distribution to staff.

"We're not just going to wait for something to happen," said Toby Clairmont, Director of Emergency Services for HAH. "Hospitals, nursing facilities and other Hawai`i health care providers have been working with the Department of Health to plan and prepare for public health emergencies for over 65 years. We've made considerable progress since the September 11th attacks in developing an effective preparedness and response program."

Castle Medical Center, Hawai`i Medical Center (East and West), Kaiser Foundation Hospital, Straub Clinic and Hospital and The Queen's Medical Center will participate on O`ahu. Hilo Medical Center and Kona Community Hospital will take part in the exercise on the Big Island. Maui Memorial Medical Center, Wilcox Memorial Hospital on Kaua`i, Lana`i Community Hospital and Moloka`i General Hospital will also participate.

###

Media Availability:

- The DOH and HAH staff involved in the exercise will be available for interviews.
- Media will **NOT** be allowed access inside hospitals during the exercise due to privacy laws.
- Video of the exercise at The Queen's Medical Center and Castle Medical Center will be provided upon request in the afternoon after completion of the exercise.
- Photographs will also be made available.
- Please contact Kurt Tsue at (808) 586-4402 if you are interested in receiving a B-roll tape or photographs from the exercise.

For further information on this news release contact:
Kurt Tsue
Communications Office
Phone: (808) 586-4402

Toby Clairmont
Healthcare Association of Hawai`i
Phone: (808) 864-7723