



**MEMO**

**To:** All Service Provider Organizations and Health Service Providers

**From:** Tini Le, Interim Chief Quality, Safety and Risk Officer and Vice President, Patient Services  
Regional Lead - Toronto and East  
and Michelle Nurse, Vice President, Contracts

**Date:** October 5, 2024

**Subject: Infusion and Fulfillment of Medical Supplies Update #2**

The provincial Medical Equipment and Supplies (MES) procurement strategy, developed in collaboration with Ontario Health, had specific goals of improving the quintuple aim. Specifically, it was designed to ensure patient equity through a first ever provincial standardized formulary, that includes access to high quality products across all regions, improved supplier resiliency, and improved processes such as service standards with the ability to measure vendor performance through a service level agreement.

As we head into the weekend, we wanted to provide another update on the recent supply challenges following the go-live of the Infusion and Fulfillment of Medical Supplies contracts.

We made some good progress this week on back-ordered items and worked with our vendors and suppliers to remove barriers and support implementation. We continue to have ongoing daily meetings with our vendors and suppliers to discuss areas of concern related to stock levels and expected dates of delivery.

We met with all our contracted service providers and health system partners to provide updates and address questions and concerns. We also met with our patient services teams across the province to reinforce the process for urgent orders and ensure orders for palliative and priority patients get submitted and delivered in a timely manner.

**Reminder for Submitting Urgent Orders**

The cut-off time within the new MES contracts have not changed from the previous cut-off times. As required, please continue submitting urgent orders:

1. Up to 5 pm
2. For end-of-life patients between 5 and 9 pm, for delivery by midnight.

Ontario Health atHome staff will continue to send orders until 9 pm ensuring high priority orders are processed first and orders for urgent pain medications for palliative patients are processed for same day delivery.

To ensure timely care for our palliative patients, we have instructed our vendors to continue to accept verbal orders directly from physicians as per previous practice, in alignment with Ontario College of Pharmacists guidelines.

### **Sourcing and Supply Actions**

Shortly after launch, we became aware of ordering patterns that far exceeded forecasted demand and we have been working daily with all vendors to stabilize resulting supply challenges. We have been assured stock levels are steadily improving daily and expected to return to normal in the coming days. To prevent any potential impacts on patient care and quickly resolve issues, we continue to meet daily with vendor partners who are working tirelessly to fulfill orders. We are also taking a number of additional steps including:

#### **1. Addressing high-priority needs / items**

1. Identifying critical items for high-risk patient scenarios and nursing clinics to prioritize delivery for high-priority items
2. Directing our vendor partners to prioritize high needs and palliative patients who require pain management medication
3. Working with our vendors to process urgent medication deliveries, specifically for palliative patients who need immediate support.

#### **2. Addressing issues and inventory oversight**

4. Twice daily, provincially tracking and monitoring of out-of-stock items
5. Daily meetings to address potential and real concerns:
  1. Drop-ins with the MES Modernization working group
  2. As required, with specific vendors to escalate and resolve issues
  3. In the coming days, we will establish daily drop-in meetings with Ontario Health atHome patient services directors to support timely sharing of updates and information
6. Working with vendors to identify clinically equivalent items that can be leveraged to replace those on manufacturer backorder.
7. A substitute for Pleurx has been sourced and delivery is expected this weekend.  
Note: several shipments of back-ordered items arrived Friday and will be shipped over the weekend.
8. Ensuring all necessary vendor education is provided to manage stock efficiently.

Thank you for your ongoing support as we work with our vendors and suppliers to improve stock-levels and ensure timely deliveries to patients and nursing clinics across the province. If you have any urgent patient needs or concerns, please continue to follow your regular process to speak with

a care coordinator. For non-urgent questions related to MES implementation, please email [MESmodernization@ontariohealthathome.ca](mailto:MESmodernization@ontariohealthathome.ca).

Thank you.