

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
November 26, 2018

Healthcare Groups Release Recommendations to Address Drug Shortages
Proposals Call for Actions to Allow Healthcare Providers to Prepare for Imminent Shortages

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A coalition of healthcare groups today issued a series of wide-ranging [recommendations](#) to address the ongoing shortages of critical medications affecting patient care across the country. The American Hospital Association (AHA), American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA), the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO), ASHP (American Society of Health-System Pharmacists), and the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) released the proposals, which provide suggestions for regulatory, legislative, and marketplace solutions to stem drug shortages, in advance of tomorrow's public meeting hosted by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Duke Margolis Center for Public Health Policy.

The 19 recommendations are the product of an invitation-only summit of healthcare leaders: "Drug Shortages as a Matter of National Security: Improving the Resilience of the Nation's Healthcare Critical Infrastructure," held in September. The summit, jointly convened by ASA and ASHP and supported by AHA, ASCO, and ISMP, brought together representatives from clinician groups, industry and supply chain entities, and government officials. Summit participants examined vulnerabilities in the supply chain, U.S. dependence on foreign-sourced pharmaceutical ingredients, disaster planning and response efforts, and risk factors associated with pharmaceutical manufacturing and distribution.

The group's recommendations urge actions that will allow healthcare providers to prepare for an imminent shortage, including calling on the FDA to share information on the type of products that may be impacted during a public health emergency and the expected duration of the impact on the entire drug supply chain. These communications would allow healthcare organizations to assess their inventories to prepare for a shortage and would give manufacturers the time needed to manage their supplies to ensure equitable distribution and guard against potential hoarding of drugs.

"Achieving lasting solutions that ensure life-saving drugs are always available to meet the needs of patients will require fundamental changes to the systems used by government and industry that currently allow drug shortages to persist," said ASHP CEO Paul W. Abramowitz, Pharm.D., Sc.D. (Hon.), FASHP. "These recommendations are an urgent call to action to take immediate steps to strengthen the drug supply chain so that patients have reliable access to the medications they need."

Other high-priority recommendations from the summit include commissioning a Government Accountability Office (GAO) study to identify new and emerging factors that contribute to shortages, creating a list of critical drugs deemed essential for emergency response and saving and preserving life, and offering incentives to manufacturers that create contingency production plans for pharmaceuticals on the critical drug list.

"The majority of physician anesthesiologists are dealing with this major issue," said ASA President Linda Mason, M.D., FASA. "Every day our members walk into their institutions facing shortages that could potentially affect patient care. Hopefully, these recommendations will be put into action so we can have both short- and long-term solutions to this problem."

The complete list of recommendations is available [online](#).

About the AHA

The AHA is a not-for-profit association of health care provider organizations and individuals that are committed to the improvement of health in their communities. The AHA is the national advocate for its members, which include nearly 5,000 hospitals, health care systems, networks and other providers of care and 43,000 individual members. Founded in 1898, the AHA provides education for health care leaders and is a source of information on health care issues and trends. For more information, visit www.aha.org.

About ASA

Founded in 1905, the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) is an educational, research and scientific society with more than 52,000 members organized to raise and maintain the standards of the medical practice of anesthesiology. ASA is committed to ensuring physician anesthesiologists evaluate and supervise the medical care of patients before, during and after surgery to provide the highest quality and safest care every patient deserves. For more information on the field of anesthesiology, visit the American Society of Anesthesiologists online at asahq.org. To learn more about the role physician anesthesiologists play in ensuring patient safety, visit asahq.org/WhenSecondsCount. Like ASA on [Facebook](#); follow [ASALifeline](#) on Twitter.

About ASCO

Founded in 1964, the American Society of Clinical Oncology, Inc. (ASCO®) is committed to making a world of difference in cancer care. As the world's leading organization of its kind, ASCO represents nearly 45,000 oncology professionals who care for people living with cancer. Through research, education, and promotion of the highest-quality patient care, ASCO works to conquer cancer and create a world where cancer is prevented or cured, and every survivor is healthy. ASCO's Conquer Cancer Foundation supports the Society by funding groundbreaking research and education across cancer's full continuum. Learn more at www.ASCO.org, explore patient education resources at www.Cancer.Net, and follow us on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

About ASHP

ASHP represents pharmacists who serve as patient care providers in acute and ambulatory settings. The organization's 45,000 members include pharmacists, student pharmacists, and pharmacy technicians. For more than 75 years, ASHP has been at the forefront of efforts to improve medication use and enhance patient safety. For more information about the wide array of ASHP activities and the many ways in which pharmacists advance healthcare, visit ASHP's website, www.ashp.org, or its consumer website, www.SafeMedication.com.

About ISMP

The Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) is an independent, nonprofit charitable organization that works closely with healthcare practitioners and institutions, regulatory agencies, consumers, and professional organizations to provide education about medication errors and their prevention. ISMP represents more than 30 years of experience in helping healthcare practitioners keep patients safe, and continues to lead efforts to improve the medication use process. For more information on ISMP, or its medication safety alert newsletters and other tools for healthcare professionals and consumers, visit www.ismp.org

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