



SBAR: IV Fluid Supply Chain Shortage

Situation, Background, Assessment, and Recommendations (SBAR)

Situation

Maryland hospitals are facing potential IV fluid supply chain shortages due to the closure of Baxter International's North Cove plant, which supplies 60% of the country's IV solutions. The plant shut down following flooding caused by Hurricane Helene. Maryland Hospital Association (MHA) and Maryland hospitals are working with the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and federal partners to assess current supply levels and next steps.

Background

Baxter International's North Cove plant is a major supplier of intravenous (IV) solutions, providing more than half of the nation's supply. The facility was temporarily shut down after suffering damage from Hurricane Helene, which caused widespread flooding. The extent of the damage is still being assessed, and it is uncertain when the plant will resume operations. While federal agencies like the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are working with suppliers and distributors to manage the situation, hospitals may still face supply shortages in the near future.

Assessment

Hospitals may face delays in receiving these supplies due to these disruptions.

Although immediate impacts are projected to be limited, proactive measures are necessary to prepare, particularly if the Baxter facility remains offline for an extended period. At this time, it is expected that Maryland hospitals could face disruption in the supply of these items. MDH is recommending conservation strategies to stretch the supply.

MDH is evaluating state and federal resources that could be deployed, and MHA is distributing a survey to member hospitals and health systems to assess current supplies and suppliers.

Recommendations

MDH recommends:

- Evaluate current stock levels, expiration dates, and the distribution of IV solutions
- Collaborate with clinical teams to identify which patients are in critical need of impacted IV solutions
- Identify alternative sources of solutions and medications such as oral rehydration for non-critically ill patients
- Optimize fluid management to minimize waste
- Assess pharmacy operational strategies
- Engage clinical teams on managing fluid restrictions, medication changes, and potential risks
- Document and monitor fluid usage, patient needs, and any shortages encountered

Resources

- [Maryland Department of Health, IV Solution Conservation Letter for Clinicians, Oct. 3, 2024](#)
- [ASHP, Fluid Shortages - Suggestions for Management and Conservation](#)
- [ECRI, Supply Chain Report](#)
- [American Hospital Association, Baxter Allocation Letter](#)

Baxter

- [Plant Updates](#)
- [List of Affected Supplies](#)

Healthcare Ready

- [Alert Hub](#)
- [Baxter Plant SPOTREP #2](#)

MHA is working proactively with member hospitals and health systems to prevent service disruptions. For questions, contact [Megan Roderick](#), MHA Director of Healthcare Preparedness at mroderick@mhaonline.org.