Managing critical supplies during the COVID-19 pandemic

Global impact
The world is experiencing challenges in supply chains and logistics across all sectors and industries as a result of COVID-19. As we navigate the changing pandemic conditions, we are likely to see these challenges continue for some time to come.

What can your Blood Service do?

1. Consider assigning a dedicated procurement team to manage stock levels, ordering, distribution and shortages, and to maintain supplier relationships.

2. Increase monitoring of current stock and future supply needs.

3. Maintain frequent and regular dialogue on the status of essential supplies with:
   - National Society
   - Ministry of Health/Health Department
   - Current and potential new suppliers
   - Other blood centers/providers and health organizations
   - Local WHO office or Supply Chain Task Force Coordinator (see 5 below)
   Be aware of any anticipated changes or challenges.

4. Have well planned contingencies in place and documented, such as:
   - increased minimum stock levels, where possible
   - multiple storage sites, for assured access in the event of site closures
   - consider/list multiple and alternative supplier sources
   - engage and establish relationships with trustworthy suppliers

5. Use country consolidated procurement systems and established mechanisms where necessary, such as the United Nations (UN) / World Health Organization (WHO) Supply Chain Task Force for ordering critical supplies. For more information on this, see below.

WHO COVID-19 Supply Chain System: Requesting and Receiving Supplies

In response to the major impact the pandemic has had on supply chains, the UN has collaborated with WHO to create a country-consolidated procurement system for essential supplies during COVID-19. Managed by the WHO Supply Chain Task Force and other partner organizations (including Red Cross and Federation), the system consists of a forecasting tool, an item catalogue, and an ordering portal. Refer to the FAQ sheet, document links, or your local WHO country office for more information and how to register.

What items are available?

Supplies including, but not limited to:
- personal protective equipment (gloves, face shields, masks and gowns)
- rapid/PCR diagnostic test kits
- monitoring devices
Shipping of essential items is provided free of charge.

More resources are available. Go to our GAP website for the full list: https://globaladvisorypanel.org/resources/covid-19-resources

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