

Strategic Inventory Planning in Interior Health

In consideration of the surge supplies required to support health services during a pandemic, the Infectious Hazards Emergency Response Planning Task Force (IHERPTF) created the Medical Surge Supplies Working Group (WG) in 2007. Tasked with the responsibility of estimating the health authority's requirements for pandemic supplies and equipment, or strategic inventory, this group completed its planning work in October 2008. Estimates for the strategic inventory covered supply requirements for a broad range of scenarios and clinical settings, including assessment centres, site-based (e.g. in-hospital) care, and mass vaccination clinics.

Determining estimates for the strategic inventory was based on a number of approaches. As per the direction of the Interior Health Infectious Hazards Task Force, and in accordance with other forward-looking health initiatives for the health authority, the estimated client population for Interior Health was based on data from BC Stats' Sub-Provincial Population Projections (P.E.O.P.L.E. 32) for the year 2020. The Task Force determined that using a population forecast, as opposed to current population data, would more beneficial to determine future surge capacity of supplies and equipment should a pandemic occur in the next 5-10 years. In addition, valuable data was also gained from the US CDC FluSurge pandemic modeling tool. As per Interior Health's own pandemic planning assumptions, the results of this data analysis represented a worst-case scenario where the virus exhibits a 35% attack rate over the course of the first pandemic wave.

It should be noted that future strategic inventory planning pertaining to distribution, procurement, storage, logistics, and tracking operations has since moved from the Working Group to within the IHERPTF and Interior Health Logistics and Supply Management.