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**Delaware County Council releases
Strategic National Stockpile Implementation Plan**

Delaware County Council released a draft of its Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Implementation Plan, which provides the framework for dispensing life-saving medications in response to a public health emergency in Delaware County.

The plan was developed under the auspices of the Delaware County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) through a contract with Crozer-Keystone Health System. Input was provided by local hospitals, numerous state and county entities, and key stakeholders from the private sector and volunteer organizations.

The purpose of the SNS Plan is to provide medication for treatment and/or prevention to the 550,000 residents of the county within 48 hours should it be needed in response to a pandemic or other large-scale event.

“County residents can be assured that Delaware County Council has a well-developed and executable base plan to dispense life-saving medication, antibiotics or chemical antidotes in response to a public health emergency, which could include a flu outbreak, natural disaster or terrorist attack,” said County Council Chairman Andrew J. Reilly.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has a national stockpile, or large quantities of medicine and medical supplies that can be used if there is a large-scale public health emergency requiring an immediate response.

SNS supplies can be released in the event of a public health emergency that can be naturally occurring, such as an extreme flu outbreak, catastrophic flood or earthquake, or an act of terrorism involving chemical, biological or nuclear agents, or a major industrial accident.

If such an event occurs, the federal government can release medical supplies, anti-virals or anti-toxins that would be adequate to treat the entire county population.

(more)

(SNS Plan continued)

The SNS Plan details how medication will be distributed, who carries out the plan, the Points of Distribution (PODs), how people will be trained and how the plan will be communicated to the public. In Delaware County, 16 PODs will be located in local schools and will be staffed by volunteers.

“Having a plan and training the responders who will carry out the plan is critically important, but equally important is for the public to know how the procedure works, and that the public has confidence they will be protected,” Reilly said.

The SNS plan is mandated by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and is a major component of an overall Pandemic Response Plan, formulated in accordance with protocol set by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

County Council was joined in making the Nov. 21 presentation of the SNS Plan by Ed Truitt, director of the county’s Emergency Operations Center (EOC), and Mark Mitchell of Crozer-Keystone Health System.

Cost for the plan and the necessary training and preparation to implement the plan is \$150,000. Funding comes from the Department of Homeland Security, through the Regional Task Force, set up under the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Major participants in the SNS Plan are Delaware County Council and the county’s Emergency Services Operation, Department of Intercommunity Health Coordination, Emergency Medical Services and the District Attorney’s office. Other major stakeholders include the Delaware County Intermediate Unit, county hospitals, including Crozer-Keystone Health System, Riddle Memorial Hospital and Mercy Fitzgerald Hospital, the state Department of Health, Pennsylvania State Police, the American Red Cross, and the Pennsylvania National Guard.

In coming months, there will be a series of educational programs to major stakeholders including municipal leaders, school officials, emergency responders, health care providers and local businesses.

There will also be training for the individuals who will lead, manage and execute the tasks outlined in the SNS Plan.

For general information about the Delaware County SNS Plan, residents can visit the Web site at www.co.delaware.pa.us.

