Customer Communication – Problem Solving During the Pandemic

November 1, 2020

How are we supporting customers during this time?
As a global life science business, we are committed to supplying our customers in all markets served and, as such, are actively monitoring our supply chain for potential impacts due to the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19).

Our global COVID-19 Task Force actively evaluates our overall supply chain, both of our products and raw material suppliers, to mitigate risk and supply disruption. We continue to leverage our business continuity plans which include risk mitigation activities, accelerated investments and adjusted production schedules for some high demand products. As before, our global sites have relevant and approved preparedness plans and are empowered to act per their local scenarios, as necessary.

We are deploying appropriate resources and working alongside distribution partners and carriers to meet the needs of our customers, including those developing vaccines and treatments, as well as continuing the production of non-COVID-19 lifesaving and enhancing drugs.

Are you working with local governments to maintain continuity?
Yes, given the criticality of our products and services for human health and scientific progress, we are working with all local governments to continue manufacturing, packaging and shipping our products.

Are you hosting customer visits or audits at your sites?
In efforts to reduce potential disruption, some of our sites are requesting that external visits and audits of customers and suppliers be postponed or redirected towards virtual meeting options. As an additional precautionary measure, we are asking any visitors to our sites to answer a few screening questions.

Are you prepared to supply customers as they resume operations?
The majority of our portfolio areas have stable inventory levels to support orders and we have determined options for alternative sources, if required. For those products where we are experiencing unprecedented demand related to COVID-19, we are working to increase output. Any changes or impact on orders will be communicated directly to customers through our Commercial Services team.

Are any of your manufacturing sites impacted by COVID-19?
Our global manufacturing sites are all operating, although capacity and local conditions are variable, and each of our sites is actively managing business continuity plans with pandemic situational scenarios. Each site is continuing to implement measures to protect employees, including those who continue to develop, manufacture, package and ship products, or provide services, driving business continuity. In select regions, in accordance with local government guidance, employees are also returning to offices with precautionary measures in place.
How will you communicate impacts to sites?
We are following pandemic scenario plans at the site level and taking actions as local conditions warrant. Significant events that impact orders will be communicated directly to customers through our Commercial Services team.

How are you monitoring the impact of the logistics restrictions of key suppliers?
We are in contact with our suppliers to review open purchase orders and assess safety stock levels. We have determined options for alternative sources, if required. Any changes or impact on orders will be communicated directly to customers through our Commercial Services team.

What impact are you experiencing on the transportation of materials?
As regions across the globe recover and reopen, our dedicated import and export teams continue monitoring all available trade lanes to optimize transportation activities. Limited air transportation continues to create some delays with the inter-company transportation of our goods, but overall, we have not seen this significantly impact our service levels. Predictability and stability of global transportation continues to improve, and we will maintain diligence in monitoring backlog and using all available trade lanes to prevent disruption.

Are there any restrictions in sending samples to any of the testing services sites?
No, the import and export of goods has not been impacted.

What is the impact to your supply chain over the next three months, specific to finished products?
We do not see significant elevated risk to our overall supply chain, although local conditions and individual portfolio areas have variability. Impacts are dictated by current inventories of raw materials, product demand, functionality of shipping channels, availability of alternative sources and local conditions.

How are you handling deliveries to institutions that are temporarily closed?
As we learn of closings, we are blocking deliveries, however if labs are still open/receiving goods or labs are reopening, customers should communicate with their Commercial contact or local customer service so that we avoid supply disruption of our products and allow our customers to continue their impactful work.

How are you making decisions to reopen your offices and what measures are you putting into place?
Employee health and safety remains our top priority as an organization. In select regions, in accordance with local government guidance, employees are also returning to offices with precautionary measures in place. We continue to monitor the evolving situation on a local basis with the support of data-driven dashboards and take actions to mitigate exposure and spread of the virus.