

## Forty-Foot Container Shipping Program



### **Introduction**

Since its inception in 1999, MedShare has shipped over 450 forty-foot containers of valuable medical supplies and equipment to over 70 countries worldwide. MedShare recovers valuable, useable surplus medical supplies and equipment in the United States which would otherwise be discarded.

MedShare's unique sorting process, combined with its web-based inventory ordering system, allows each recipient hospital to choose the contents of its container, box by box. This process ensures that recipients are able to fully utilize the contents of each shipment.

## Preview

To preview MedShare's inventory to determine if it suits your needs, please access our online medical supplies ordering system by clicking on the following link and typing in the access information listed.

<http://66.211.202.10:49200/POL/login.asp?FB=894>

**AgencyRef:** demo

**Password:** demo

Please note that biomedical equipment is not listed in our online inventory. See the section titled **Biomedical Equipment** below for more information.

## Major Steps in the Process

1. Secure funding based on MedShare's requested sponsorship donation for the shipment. See the section titled **Container Sponsorship** for more details.
2. Complete MedShare's online application (click on the link below) by submitting complete details on the hospital.

<http://medshare.org/services/medical-product-shipments/form-english>

3. Obtain official clearance from the destination country's government to import the container as duty-free humanitarian aid. See the section titled **Customs Clearance** for more information.
4. Complete a biomedical equipment request form. See the section titled **Biomedical Equipment**.
5. After being assigned a login and password from MedShare, select supplies to fill the remaining space in the container based on the amount of space taken up by biomedical equipment. See the section titled **Ordering Medical Supplies Online**.

## Container Sponsorship

All of the items in MedShare's extensive inventory are donated to MedShare, and in turn donated to recipient medical institutions. However, there are costs associated with operating a distribution center and processing thousands of donated items. As a non-profit organization, MedShare raises funds each year to cover our operating budget. The majority of funds come from container sponsorship donations made by the partners with whom we ship containers.

Each year, MedShare establishes a budget and estimates the number of containers that it can feasibly ship. Based on these figures, an average internal cost per container is calculated. At the same time, MedShare performs detailed historical analysis on international shipping costs and forecasts the cost of shipping to ports in various regions. Based on these results, an overall sponsorship donation, which includes the cost of shipping the container to a port in the destination country, is established for each region of the world.

The contents of a typical MedShare forty-foot container are valued at **\$150,000-\$200,000**.

For 2008, MedShare's requested sponsorship donation is \$16,000 plus the actual cost to ship the container from our facility to the nearest ocean port. The recipient organization assumes responsible for costs related to customs clearance and transportation to the final delivery point.

MedShare is a leader among similar organizations because we sort medical supplies down to the box level, which requires extensive staff and volunteer resources. Our model allows our recipient hospitals to choose exactly what supplies and equipment they need, thus ensuring that nothing in a container shipment goes to waste. Our process is labor-intensive and requires us to invest in staff and technology.



## Customs Clearance

This documentation often comes from the Ministry of Finance or Revenue Authority, depending on the country. Every country around the world has different requirements and guidelines for importation of goods. There are also differences between importing commercial goods versus humanitarian aid.

MedShare's shipments are considered humanitarian aid and, therefore, should be allowed into destination countries without being charged import taxes. Obtaining clearance to import humanitarian aid can often be a challenging and lengthy process – especially for organizations that do not have previous experience with this type of work. This part of the process can take several months, depending on the country and circumstances.

MedShare's policy is not to release a shipment until we have received official documentation from the government authority of the destination country which confirms that the shipment will be allowed to enter the country as duty-free humanitarian aid.

One good source of information on customs clearance is a website called Global Hand: <http://www.globalhand.org/information/countries>.

MedShare requires first-time shipping partners to use the services of a local customs clearing agent in the destination country to ensure that there will be no issues related to getting the container into the country. These agents charge a fee for their service and are familiar with the process and documentation involved.



## Biomedical Equipment

MedShare's goal is to include a limited amount of high-quality biomedical equipment in each container shipment. All shipped biomedical equipment has been thoroughly inspected and tested. We strive to ship each piece of equipment with an instruction manual and at least six months of spare parts and accessories whenever possible.

The attached Excel template (separate attachment) is a 'wish list' that we ask our recipient hospitals to submit once they have been approved to receive a container shipment. Since MedShare has little or no control over what we receive as donations, we are not always able to meet all requests for biomedical equipment.

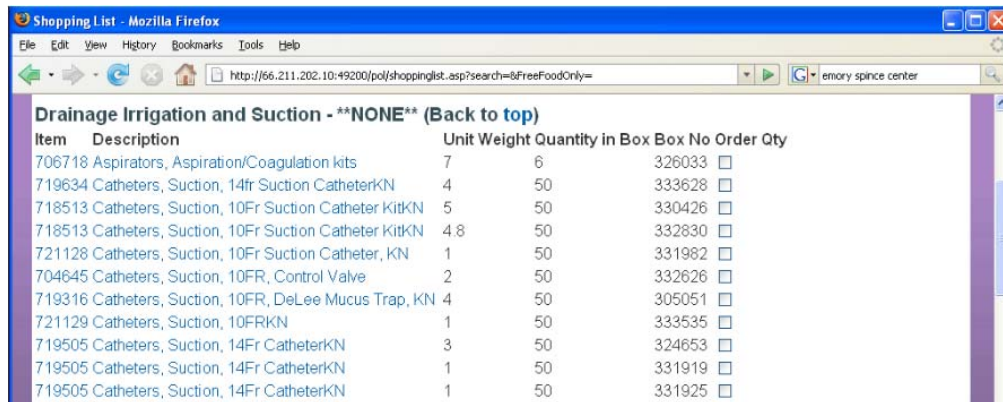


## Ordering Medical Supplies Online

Once we have assessed the biomedical needs list, the recipient is given access to our web-based inventory ordering system and given guidance on how many boxes of items will complete the order.

Our online ordering system is updated every three hours to reflect items added and removed from the inventory. Until a recipient actually completes the entire order, other recipients shopping online at the same time have the option to select the same items. The first recipient to complete the order will receive any boxes selected by multiple recipients.

A forty-foot container can hold approximately 1,000 boxes or 12,000 pounds. Our system keeps a running total of both quantity and weight so that container space can be maximized to its fullest extent.



Container measurements are as follows:

	<u>English</u>	<u>Metric</u>
Length:	39 feet, 5 inches	12 meters
Width:	7 feet, 8 inches	2.3 meters
Height:	7 feet, 10 inches	2.4 meters

### Contact Information

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