



# MedSurplus Alliance: Turning Unused Resources into Life-Saving Tools

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The Task Force's MedSurplus Alliance (MSA) has partnered with communities in the U.S. and around the world for 13 years. MSA ensures high-quality standards for medical donations and has helped organizations provide millions of life-saving medical supplies, devices and pharmaceuticals where they are needed most. One part of MSA's work is the Kits4Life program, a cross-sector initiative that repurposes clinical trial supplies and equipment for health facilities that are low on supplies. Since its launch in 2020, it has made a tangible difference in more than 2 million lives.

Working in partnership with MSA-Accredited Medical Surplus Recovery Organizations, 16 of the largest life sciences and biotechnology companies enabled this program to reach new heights in 2024. We spoke with MSA Director Lori Warrens about this expansion, the unique role MSA plays in eliminating diseases, and how everyone can contribute to the cause.



*Lori Warrens, Director, MedSurplus Alliance*

## **How does MSA use innovation and collaboration to ensure that people receive medical supplies when and where they are needed most?**

MSA drives innovation and collaboration by rethinking every stage of the medical donation process. We bring together a diverse leadership council to analyze the entire donation pipeline, including medical surplus recovery organizations (MSROs), NGOs, private sector leaders and academic experts. This collaborative approach allows these groups to design a comprehensive framework that standardizes procedures, builds capacity and streamlines operations.

Specifically, MSA develops innovative tools like a voluntary [Code of Conduct and Accreditation Program](#), which sets clear standards in areas such as governance, needs assessment, logistics, quality control and emergency response. These measures ensure that donated medical supplies are rigorously vetted, properly handled and efficiently delivered to healthcare providers and patients.

What makes us different from a lot of organizations is that we're trying to create large-scale change by improving donation systems. We want to involve donors because they have tremendous influence over what happens to the products they donate. When they're educated about the practices that are in place by the organizations that are accredited by us, it opens the door for more donations because they are confident that sophisticated pieces of equipment will be placed in a location where they can be used properly and maintained.

**MSA’s Kits4Life program has led to roughly 1.6 million donations, helping more than 2 million people so far. How did this get started, and what role does it play in your mission?**

The program got started when a severe yellow fever outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in September 2016 exposed a critical gap in resources. Despite having more than 1 million vaccine doses, a major shortage of syringes (about 6 million) hampered vaccination efforts, resulting in significant loss of life. Recognizing this urgent need, a leader in the life sciences industry saw an opportunity for clinical trial sponsors to donate supplies that would otherwise have been destroyed.

The Kits4Life program plays a crucial role by providing a donation tool that tracks donation quality and placement. It transforms what would be wasted quality equipment and supplies into meaningful tools to save lives. Not only does this save time and effort, but it also fosters pride among staff. Moreover, it strengthens the relationships between clinical trial teams, their sponsors and the broader healthcare community by turning surplus into life-saving resources – a win-win for all parties involved.

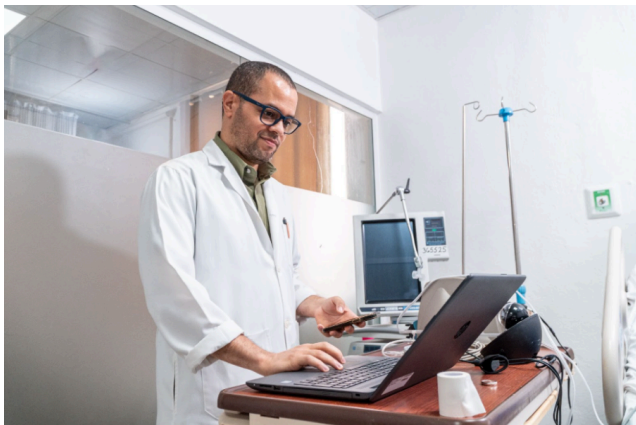


*Photo credit: Anna Tenne. An unused hospital bassinet can be repurposed for a maternity unit that needs one at the Hospital de San Pedro Antigua Guatemala.*

**The Kits4Life program has greatly expanded in the last few years and shows promise for even more growth. How is this momentum driving your mission forward?**

Since the program started, we've really focused on expanding our product categories to meet the evolving needs in healthcare. Early on, we concentrated on placing clinical trial study kits; these donations more than doubled in the span of one year – from 1,186 units in 2020 to 2,618 in 2021. This was our initial step in providing critical training materials to as many as 20,000 phlebotomy and nursing students, setting the stage for what was to come.

In 2022, we introduced new categories, most notably personal protective equipment (PPE) and single-use items. That year, we saw a huge increase, reaching more than 1 million units, which drove up our total donations to 1.1 million. We also put more of a focus on assorted items, which helped diversify the types of products we were able to provide, reaching even more healthcare needs.



*Photo Credit: Brother's Brother Foundation. Kits4Life donation of an EndoPAT Device for early cardiovascular disease detection being used in the Dominican Republic.*

By 2024, we added digital tools to our offerings and donated 4,105 smartphones and tablets, which are now used to help providers track patient information. Thanks to the generosity of our program sponsors, what began as a donation of unused clinical trial kits has evolved into a comprehensive resource, offering more than 100 different types of products to health facilities.

Each achievement moves us closer to advancing equitable healthcare access by ensuring that quality medical products are available where and when they are needed. We hope this cross-sector approach serves as a benchmark for the life sciences industry and as a model for other donors, establishing a standard for innovation and collaboration in the distribution of essential healthcare resources.

### **Why is this work meaningful to you personally?**

Throughout my career, my driving passion has always been about connecting people to the resources they need. I truly believe we have enough in this world to meet everyone's basic needs, we just have to figure out how to align those resources effectively. It's not just about making people feel good in the moment, but about fundamentally shifting mindsets and behaviors to reduce waste and ensure critical supplies get to the people who need them most. I'm mostly driven by this belief that we can solve these problems if we're bold enough to step up and try. I encourage everyone to do the same: don't underestimate what you can achieve when you're willing to take a risk and get engaged. That's where the real magic happens.