

MedSurplus Alliance - Ascension

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The MedSurplus Alliance (MSA) is a network of non-profit Medical Surplus Recovery Organizations (MSRO) with the vision of repurposing and distributing the surplus of medical products and equipment to local and international health organizations, following a Code of Conduct that ensures quality processes and donations. Ascension is the largest non-profit health system in the United States, with more than 131 clinics and hospitals across the nation.

This MSA proposes to support efficient, economical recovery and distribution of medical supplies from selected Ascension facilities by the MSA accredited MSROs. This project analyzes the MSA's current capabilities and provides a framework, recommendations, and roadmap to develop and implement a series of standard operating procedures and evaluations that will ultimately



Fig. 2: Ascension—MSA stakeholders



Fig. 1: MedSurplus Project structure

mately drive efficiency across the whole network.

A diagnostic survey was developed to analyze MSA in regards to our proposed work structure. The survey covered three main areas: Logistics, Information and Quality Assurance. The results obtained from this survey were used to perform an initial assessment of the MSA challenges and opportunities. In summary, some of most important challenges found were: the lack of a standard language (data, KPI, process evaluations), the need of defining how to handle the immediate increase in donations, and make strategic agreements. However, in these differences also provide opportunities for the Alliance, such as access to diverse skills and experience, access to a variety of different resources and knowledge (warehouses in different areas of the country, a distributed fleet, and a group of skilled collaborators), and the possibility of access to more corporate partners and funding.

Executive summary

Industry Project developed as part of the requirements to obtain the degree of M.S. Supply Chain Engineering

“The MSA is a very heterogeneous network. Yet in their differences lies their biggest opportunities”



RECOVER



REPURPOSE



REDISTRIBUTE

The MSA is a very heterogeneous network. Yet in their differences lies their biggest opportunities. The MSROs are willing to share information, but concerned about the cost and level of effort associated with making this change. The Alliance needs to define their desired level of integration based on an understanding of their opportunities, challenges, and the potential cost efficient strategies that can come as a result of collaborative work.

A framework and recommendations for each area listed above (logistics, information, and quality assurance) were then provided for the imminent challenges faced by the MSA, as well as a roadmap for the future of the MSA. It is recommended that the MSA and its accredited MSROs begin working towards a higher level of integration, evolving from the cooperation model currently planned to a more collaborative model, where all stakeholders may benefit and gain scale. By establishing standards of communication, information, and record keeping a system of trust is established, in which members are transparent in their intentions, resources (including money, information, and technology), and goals.

The next towards this idea is the implementation of sharing resources within the MSA. For this, the use of an internal currency is proposed, which may be exchanged for:

- ◇ **Inventory:** request or offer products in stock to other MSROs. This can improve donation capabilities and reduce inventory management cost.
- ◇ **Services:** Request or offer transportation, warehouse space, and technical support of donated medical equipment.

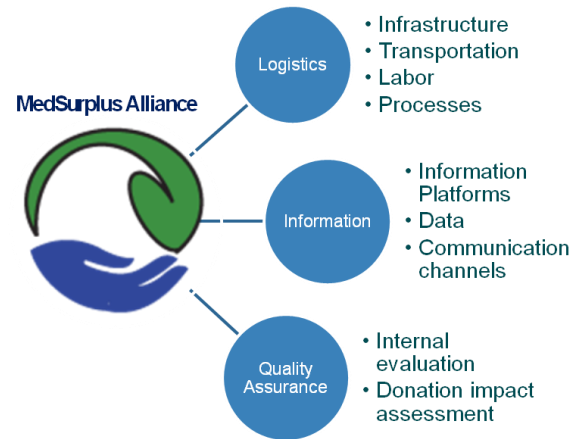


Fig. 3: Framework structure

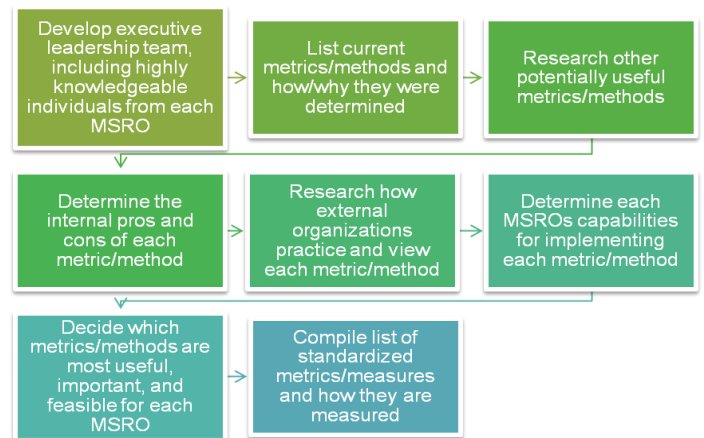


Fig. 4: Steps to metric's standardization

- ◇ **Knowledge:** Offer and request training and consulting (i.e. Customs processes, best practices, others).

With such a collaborative network, the MSA becomes highly efficient due to the high utilization of their current resources. Furthermore, the MSRO will be building up competences from inside the Alliance and becoming more efficient, which will ultimately make them and the Alliance more attractive to other corporate donors and funding to better serve the needs of the most vulnerable people.