

CATEGORY RESOURCE GUIDE

Poly can liners

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Vizient award overview

Awarded suppliers

FM0171 – I.B.S. Solutions
 FM0280 – Island Plastic Bags

Distribution

Both direct and distributed through the following distribution channels:

Medical-surgical
 Dietary
 Facilities management



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Questions? Contact supplyassurance@vizientinc.com, pharmacyquestions@vizientinc.com, novaplus@vizientinc.com.

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Making supply uncertainty a thing of the past, not the future

To help members maintain supply assurance for essential products, Vizient shares insights via [category resource guides](#) on vizientinc.com. These category-specific documents contain comprehensive manufacturing, logistics and utilization insights to help members source supplies with confidence. Category resource profiles are one way we're [building supply assurance together](#).

Market landscape

The healthcare poly can liner market landscape is dynamic and influenced by various factors, including the following:

- Regulatory standards: Healthcare facilities must adhere to specific regulations and guidelines when it comes to the disposal of medical waste. These regulations often prescribe the types of can liners that should be used, as well as requirements for strength, durability and containment of hazardous materials. Compliance with these standards is essential for can liner manufacturers and suppliers operating in the healthcare sector.
- Product differentiation: Can liner manufacturers differentiate their products by offering features tailored to healthcare requirements. This includes features like antimicrobial properties, color-coding for waste segregation, odor control and puncture resistance.
- Environmental sustainability: There is a growing emphasis on environmental sustainability in the healthcare industry, including the use of eco-friendly and recyclable materials. Can liner manufacturers are working to provide more sustainable options, such as recyclable and biodegradable can liners.

Manufacturing insights

Product overview

Can liners are used to collect and dispose of medical waste, including materials such as gloves, syringes and other potentially infectious or hazardous materials. Can liners used in healthcare facilities are typically made from high-density polyethylene (HDPE), low-density polyethylene (LDPE) or linear low-density polyethylene (LLDPE). These materials provide the necessary strength and durability required for the disposal of medical waste.

Selection factors

Healthcare facilities must adhere to specific regulations and guidelines when it comes to the disposal of medical waste. These regulations often prescribe the types of can liners that should be used, as well as requirements for strength, durability and containment of hazardous materials. Can liners used in healthcare settings should be strong and durable to handle the weight and contents of medical waste without tearing or leaking. Consider the volume of waste generated, the frequency of disposal and the available storage space for waste containers.

OEM and manufacturing location

Pitt Plastics/I.B.S./Inteplast Group has manufacturing facilities located in Pittsburg, Kan., and Iuka, Miss.

Having manufacturing facilities within the U.S. allows Pitt Plastics to maintain quality control and ensure efficient production processes. It also enables the supplier to respond quickly to customer demands and market trends.

Island Plastics is a smaller manufacturer, local and available to Hawaiian providers and customers.

Raw materials

The raw materials commonly used in the production of can liners for healthcare facilities include HDPE, LDPE and LLDPE. These materials are types of plastic polymers that offer different properties and characteristics.

HDPE is a strong and rigid material with excellent puncture resistance. It is commonly used in can liners that require high strength and durability, such as those used for heavy or sharp objects. LDPE, on the other hand, is more flexible and has good impact resistance. It is often used in can liners that need to conform to the shape of the waste and provide a certain level of stretchability.

LLDPE is a blend of HDPE and LDPE, combining the best properties of both materials. It offers improved tear resistance, puncture resistance and flexibility. LLDPE can liners are commonly used in healthcare facilities where a balance of strength and flexibility is required.

Fluctuations in the prices of HDPE, LDPE and LLDPE can impact the overall cost of manufacturing can liners.

The latest manufacturing insights are available [here](#).

Regulatory and approvals

Waste management regulations: Healthcare facilities generate various types of waste, including medical waste, requiring proper disposal. Regulations related to waste management, such as those outlined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in the U.S., dictate the proper handling, containment and disposal of waste, including the use of appropriate poly can liners for waste collection and transportation.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations: In the U.S., the FDA regulates the safety and effectiveness of medical devices, including poly can liners used in healthcare settings. While poly can liners themselves may not be classified as medical devices, they may come into contact with medical devices or pharmaceutical products. Therefore, they must comply with FDA regulations related to packaging materials and labeling requirements to ensure safety and prevent contamination.

The American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standards: ASTM has developed standards specifically for poly can liners used in healthcare facilities. ASTM D1709 and ASTM D1922 provide test methods for measuring the resistance of polyethylene films to puncture and tear, respectively. These standards help ensure the quality and performance of poly can liners in healthcare applications.

Health and safety regulations: Healthcare facilities must adhere to health and safety regulations set forth by government agencies, such as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in the U.S. These regulations may include guidelines on the safe handling, storage and disposal of poly can liners to prevent injuries and comply with environmental standards.

Non-awarded suppliers

Heritage Bag Co.

Elkay Plastics

Logistics insights

Transportation/shipping

Inteplast Group ships products to facilities via distribution centers throughout the U.S.

See additional freight update [here](#).

Product storage

No specific storage requirements.

Utilization insights

Clinical contract support resources

N/A

Building supply assurance

Potential supply vulnerabilities

Any disruption in raw material availability, such as polyethylene or polypropylene resins, can lead to a shortage of poly can liners. In addition, any potential natural disasters or manufacturing plant disruptions can cause shortage and limitations to capacity:

International trade and tariffs: The poly can liner industry relies on global trade for the import and export of raw materials and finished products. Trade disputes, tariffs or changes in trade policies can disrupt the supply chain and increase costs.

Environmental factors: Natural disasters, climate change or other environmental factors can impact the production and distribution of poly can liners. For example, disruptions in resin production due to hurricanes or extreme weather events can affect the overall supply.

Conservation strategies

Proper waste segregation: Implement a comprehensive waste segregation system to ensure that different types of waste are separated at the point of disposal. This helps reduce the need for multiple can liners and prevents cross-contamination. Color-coded bins or labels can be used to clearly indicate which waste goes into each can liner.

Continuous monitoring and improvement: Regularly assess the waste management processes and identify areas where can liner usage can be reduced or optimized further. This can involve conducting waste audits, tracking usage patterns and seeking feedback from staff to identify opportunities for improvement.

Because predicting the next supply shortage is impossible, it is important that healthcare providers not only adopt and implement care practices strategies to conserve critical products and supplies, but it is equally as important to sustain leading practices that will help ensure the availability of essential products post recovery and in the future. For example, some hospitals have reported decreasing their intravenous solution use by as much as 50% in some care areas by continuing to adhere to the conservation strategies implemented during the recent shortages.

Additionally, with other products and services:

- Assess and identify all hospital services.
- Identify and list critical products, supplies, and resources required to sustain operation of those areas identified and ranked in the first step.
- Maintain the internal planning team document with accurate information. Review and update the document on a routine basis with current employee contact information. If a team member no longer works in the organization, identify the replacement and communicate the information to all stakeholders.
- Communicate practice changes and procedures frequently to staff and stakeholders.
- Hold regularly scheduled planning meetings in the absence of a supply chain shortage or event. This will help to ensure that identified processes and protocols remain relevant and any issues requiring revisions and/or updates are addressed in advance of a shortage or disaster.

If your organization has implemented conservation strategies for poly can liners, or any other category, share your information [here](#). The information you share will be anonymous unless you grant Vizient permission to share.

Supply chain programs

Diversity

I.B.S Solutions and Island Plastic Bags are Vizient diversity suppliers. Vizient's Supplier Diversity Program supports the development of minority-, woman-, disability-, LGBT- and veteran-owned business enterprises that meet high-quality standards. We also strive to work with suppliers who proactively seek strategic partnerships with diverse companies. For more information, click [here](#).

Novaplus

I.B.S Solutions is a Vizient Novaplus® supplier. Through Novaplus, access to products goes deep with more than 15,000 individual line items – including numerous high-demand items. The brand encompasses a broad range of categories needed across the care continuum, such as anesthesia, business products and services, diagnostic imaging, food, laboratory, medical, orthopedic, pediatric, pharmacy, respiratory and surgical. Today as the capabilities, expertise and purchasing power of Vizient grow, we offer expanded value so you unlock even more from your private-label purchasing. For more information, click [here](#).

Impact Standardization

I.B.S Solutions participates in the Impact Support Services Standardization Program, which improves procurement processes on commonly purchased products and financially reward standardization efforts while reducing product variation and improving procurement processes on commonly purchased products. Since 1996, members have earned more than \$1.5 billion in cash rebates through the programs. With 12 programs to choose from and built-in flexibility within each program, it's easy to gain additional value beyond price for your organization. For more information, click [here](#).

Planning for disruptions

Distributor recommendations

Evaluation of alternative brands and offerings

Best practice strategies

Vizient offers the following best practices to help members manage disruptions. These suggestions are available to help you gain insight on how the industry is managing supply challenges.

If your inventory is low

Vizient is committed to bringing hospitals, manufacturers, distributors and the industry together to talk about this issue and any long-term implications. We feel continued dialogue around the issue by experts – hospitals, manufacturers, distributors and industry – will be crucial to ultimately arriving at a solution to vexing issue. During critical supply periods, members should continue to order their normal levels of products in order to ensure continued availability for all institutions.

If you begin to experience a shortage:

- Evaluate your current supply.
- Contact your local supplier representative and report exactly how many days' supply you have left.
- If you are not getting a response from suppliers, contact Vizient so we can facilitate communication between member and supplier; provide whether you are ordering direct or through distribution (medical/surgical/expense or pharmacy), and indicate supplier and distributor (if applicable) when you contact Vizient.
- We encourage you to continue the conversation within your organization, with your peers and with the manufacturers and distributors to identify ways to manage your ongoing needs.
- Submit inquiries to disasterresponse@vizientinc.com.

Expedite supply resolution

To expedite resolution for supply issues, contact your local supplier and provide the following information:

- The description and item number of the product that is experiencing a shortage
- Whether you are purchasing directly or through an Authorized Distributor
- Days' supply remaining in your inventory

If expanding your facility

We suggest members notify suppliers when expanding their facilities to assist in planning and anticipate increases in allocations. You should consider notifying your suppliers at least three months ahead of the completion of your facility to ensure sufficient capacity.

Building supply assurance together

Collaboration among suppliers, distributors, members and Vizient strengthens the assurance of supply for all stakeholders. Our wealth of experience, actionable data and predictive planning helps to strengthen supply assurance. Further, our work with stakeholders focuses on improving supply chain risk mitigation as we collaborate to enhance data, increase supply visibility and expand inventory access.

Four themes keep us centered and are the pillars of our supply chain assurance efforts: insights, access, enablement and advocacy. [Learn more about our supply assurance strategy.](#)

In the event of a supply disruption, Vizient will publish a [product disruption brief](#) to the [Supply Assurance webpage](#). Curated by Vizient experts, these documents provide a summary of current conditions and strategies to manage product-level disruptions.

In addition to our disruption briefs, Vizient also compiles all known disruptions into the monthly [Supply Update Executive Summary](#) which tracks all supply chain disruptors, including current market challenges, category-specific product updates and recovering markets.

Whether a supply disruption is the result of a natural or human-made disaster, it is imperative that members are informed. The [Vizient Disaster Preparedness webpage](#) was developed to help providers meet supply chain needs before, during and after an event. The Supply Update section of the guide is updated on a frequent and routine basis with communication from all awarded suppliers that have manufacturing facilities in areas impacted by a disaster. Additionally, a status update list of those manufacturers whose operations have been affected, as well as a list of impacted product(s), will be maintained and updated as that information is received from supplier.

The importance of an internal planning team

Identifying an internal planning team is imperative to managing supply, mitigating risks and sustaining operations during a supply shortage. According to [the Supply Chain Disaster Preparedness Manual](#) developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), internal teams should consist of representatives from supply chain, purchasing, emergency management, each clinical/care delivery area, inventory staff, receiving and distribution staff. Relative to medication and solutions, Vizient member feedback indicated the pharmacy department as an integral member to the internal team, as clinical/pharmacy practice changes may occur. Additional members may include the facilities safety manager, security, risk management, legal, marketing and communications, and public relations.

A simple internal team planning document will help to identify, contact and quickly convene relevant team members. See the sample below:

Name	Title	Department/role	Phone	Email

Once an internal team is identified, additional considerations before beginning the development and implementation of a recovery plan include the following:

- The team’s goals
- The responsibilities of each planning team member
- Other department/team members who may need to be involved
- Frequency of team meetings
- How the goal/mission be accomplished
- How information will be documented and communicated to the broader audience
- A current framework for success either within your facility or from a leading organization

Stakeholder communication

During supply chain product disruptions, it is vital that accurate and timely information is disseminated to internal and external stakeholders. The following actions should be considered in an effort to facilitate and ensure informed decisions:

- Designate the point person or persons who will be responsible for developing, disseminating and monitoring all communications coming from the internal planning team.
- The internal planning team should collaborate key messages/information to stakeholders, such as changes in policies and/or practice changes.

- Clearly communicate the roles and responsibilities of all staff based on the agreed upon recovery plan. If there are changes to the plan at any time, timely communication of those changes will help to increase risk mitigation and minimize interruption of patient care.
- Establish communication mechanisms for information exchange. Examples include but are not limited to regularly scheduled briefings and meetings, in-services, staff trainings, live/recorded webinars, memos and emails.
- Determine the frequency of reminders and updates regarding supply disruption status and anticipated resolution.
- Frequent updates and reminders after a supply disruption has been mitigated or eliminated help to ensure ongoing success and sustainability of best practices.

Supply management and logistics

A leading practice identified in managing recent shortages is a centralized management approach of impacted product codes. A key responsibility of the internal planning group is to identify all affected product codes and to determine the amount of supply on hand, expected and any allocation protocols implemented by the supply source. Once the current product status is determined, the following actions are recommended:

- Update and maintain an accurate inventory list. Each care area that utilizes any product code on the inventory list should identify a point person to collect on hand and usage levels on an agreed upon frequency. That information should be reported back to the internal planning team. Inventory can either be managed by care delivery areas or in a centralized manner.
- Identify space in the facility to store, manage and distribute product. Designate authorized personnel responsible for maintaining the inventory (expiration dates temperature, ventilation, utilization, equipment maintenance and repair, etc.).
- Develop and seek approval for the inventory management protocol and communicate this information to all stakeholders.
- Update and maintain accurate purchase order and allocation protocols from the contracted supplier and your group purchasing organization (GPO).
- Update and maintain accurate emergency contact information for all suppliers as well as internal stakeholders. This process should be done at least every six months.
- Review the inventory management status on an agreed upon frequency with the internal planning group. Assess for barriers to its effectiveness, implement any changes necessary and communicate those changes to all stakeholders.

Planning for all levels of care and ancillary products

Feedback from lessons learned indicated the need to include all levels of care and ancillary products, if applicable, in the conservation plan. If your provider system has children's hospitals, ambulatory surgery centers, outpatient clinics and/or long-term care facilities, utilization and logistics of products and supplies must be incorporated into the plan. Additionally, it is vital that ancillary products are considered when contemplating allocations and purchase orders. For example, during the recent drugs and solutions shortages, as large volume solution bags went on back order, smaller volume bags, compounding products, and syringes also went on back order because of practice changes. Therefore, conservation planning should include actual and the additional ancillary products that may be required to sustain a clinical and/or operational practice change.



To learn more, please contact:
Kylie Taylor, Dir., Assurance.,
supplyassurance@vizientinc.com.

As the nation's largest member-driven health care performance improvement company, Vizient provides solutions and services that empower health care providers to deliver high-value care by aligning cost, quality and market performance. With analytics, advisory services and a robust sourcing portfolio, we help members improve patient outcomes and lower costs.