

Wholesaler assistance



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If you're in the business of buying medicines, an international wholesaler can act as your own personal shopping service. When you need a product that's not readily available in your market (such as a medicine in a different form or strength, a discontinued medicine or an unregistered medicine) an international wholesaler should be your first port of call. Some can also source medical equipment and consumable supplies for you as well as pharmaceuticals. And if you're looking for a product that's made by a specialist manufacturer where licenses are required (such as the narcotic and controlled drugs), there are a few international wholesalers who hold the necessary import or export licenses to handle them for you.

The other really useful thing about using an international wholesaler is that

you can completely personalise your order. For instance, there are often no, or very small, minimum order values, so if you need a one-off life-saving product that you know you'll probably never need again, you can order just that item.

At the other end of the scale, international wholesalers can dispatch enormous quantities, when your demand is high, and if there's a national supply shortage for a popular product, international wholesalers can help plug the gap until national supplies get back to normal. International wholesalers are used to responding to differing needs around the world, from Ministry of Health appeals and relief agency emergencies, through requests from non-governmental organisations, such as the Red Cross, and orders from big-business multinationals, such as the oil companies that buy

and donate medicines after a disaster down to local hospital or clinic requirements.

And just because your products are being sourced from all corners of the globe, doesn't mean to say you will wait months for your order to arrive, many wholesalers offer one or two-day delivery over a large part of the globe. You won't be faced with enormous bills, either, because some markets, such as the UK, are very competitively priced (you might even find you're paying less in some cases). The savings will be even greater if you opt for generic products as none of the big-brand costs are involved.

However, there are some restrictions involved in buying from these pharmaceutical wholesale companies. My advice to you before you order anything is to make sure you're not breaking any local laws. For instance, does your local medicines authority impose any importation regulations on your market? You need to find out, or your product could be seized and held by customs – a costly mistake! Also, make sure the company you're buying from is familiar with the culture of the market you're buying from, otherwise you can get into 'lost-in-translation' errors and delays. Remember, you're paying for their expertise.

One call should be all it takes. You call them, place your order and they do all the rest. ■

Durbin PLC is a British company based in South Harrow, London. Established in 1963, the company specialises in supplying quality assured pharmaceuticals, medical equipment and consumable supplies to healthcare professionals and aid agencies in over 145 countries. As well as reacting rapidly to emergency situations, Durbin PLC responds to healthcare supply needs from local project level to national scale programmes. Email: L.morgan@durbin.co.uk