



# WE GO BEYOND

## SUPPLIER OR PARTNER?

How to strengthen your supply chain resiliency by rethinking your supplier partnerships

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Hospitals and healthcare systems have faced major challenges with their supply chains due to a myriad of factors, including shortages of products due to the global pandemic, clogs in logistics workflows, significant price increases, and implementing stronger sustainability efforts.

According to a recent *State of Healthcare Performance Improvement Report\** by the healthcare consultant firm Kaufman Hall, many hospital and healthcare system leaders are finding that their traditional vendors could not commit on product availability and order fill, forcing them to reevaluate and diversify their current distribution streams.

In fact, to ensure supply continuity and broaden the sourcing of domestic and more sustainable supplies, management teams are shifting their relationships with vendors from a traditional supplier model to a contemporary solutions-driven partnership that provides added value for the organization. The reason? Working with a bonafide partner rather than a supplier means leveraging a shared vision and strategy for a mutually rewarding relationship.

## **LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT TOP PARTNERSHIP CRITERIA FOR HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS AS THEY LOOK TO OVERCOME THEIR SUPPLY CHAIN CHALLENGES AND HIT THEIR KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS.**

\* <https://www.kaufmanhall.com/insights/research-report/2021-state-healthcare-performance-improvement-report-covid-creates>

# 1. ACCESS TO NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND PRODUCTS

## Why is this important?

Technology within healthcare solutions continues to evolve as the needs of healthcare professionals and their patients expands. This especially rings true for safety solutions as more data-driven studies are compiled, ongoing issues within a healthcare system shed light on the need for improvements by way of safety solutions.

Leading healthcare organizations are turning new solutions that incorporate key features addressing chronic problems with healthcare workers, such as limited ergonomics, healthcare-associated infections, and lack of durability.

## Tips to vetting potential partners

Working with a true leader in the safety solutions space will permit ongoing and proactive access to the latest innovations versus traditional suppliers that often deliver the status quo in product offering with little to no differentiation or improved features. Through a solid business relationship, a partner is able to meet you where you are currently and where you want to be by listening to your staff and leadership. You'll benefit from new solutions that will truly solve your issues for both the short and long term.

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## 2. CONSISTENT AND THOROUGH SUPPLY ASSURANCE

The best safety solution providers have concrete strategies in place to ensure end-to-end supply chain resilience.



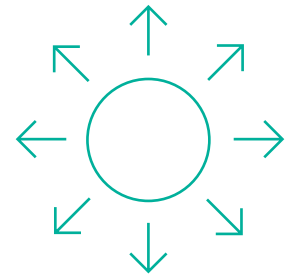
Diversification in manufacturing locations



Critical raw material sourcing capabilities



Regional warehouse support



Expansion plans and capabilities

### Why is this important?

As the global supply chain dynamics continue to be a challenge for healthcare systems, increased focus on supply assurance is a firm pillar for a partnership discussion. As post-pandemic market dynamics continue, new norms are established. The once easy task of getting products from your local distributor to your shelves is no longer routine. Healthcare facilities now find themselves in very compromising situations. They are now looking to have a true partner that provides business continuity thanks to multiple manufacturing and warehousing facilities that can minimize supply chain disruptions and risks.

Healthcare systems have begun to implement more strategic approaches, such as self-distribution models. With these models, the purchasing process is streamlined from the supplier directly, bringing forth many benefits. However, there are still many systems that are not set up this way and still reliant upon distribution.

### Tips to vetting potential partners

With a safety solutions partner, healthcare organizations go beyond the simple (or not-so-simple) distribution model. True safety solution suppliers should have the manufacturing infrastructure built to support your facilities' demands for today as well as tomorrow. They should be able to show you how they concretely manage and control their output of supply and ensure supply delivery with business continuity plans to minimize potential disruptions. Some key factors to be sure your partner of choice has firmly entrenched in its strategy are:

- Diversification in manufacturing locations (facilities and countries)
- Critical raw material sourcing capabilities
- Regional warehouse support
- Expansion plans and capabilities



## 3. SUPPORT FOR YOUR STAFF

### Why is this important?

As expanding beyond transactions to ongoing partnerships continues to fuel today's supplier choices, a partner that offers expertise in safety for healthcare workers and patients is key. Many safety solution suppliers employ generalists who do not specialize in any area, bringing very minimal value when faced with specific questions or concerns among facility staff. Their sole objective is to "manage the account," rather than providing viable solutions.

### Tips to vetting potential partners

Having a field team with subject matter experts that address staff challenges promptly and bring forth evidence-based clinical and operational solutions is critical. This allows your staff to have confidence in using their safety products as they know they are supported.

Having a dedicated support team also means that issues are resolved more quickly. Often, unpredictable situations occur, ranging from new regulatory mandates, allergy occurrence, increased need in supplies or change in staff preference among other things. With dedicated support from your safety solution partner, your organization will benefit from the agility it requires—with minimal impact on your staff and patients.



## 4. END-TO-END QUALITY ASSURANCE

### Why is this important?

In many cases, suppliers are nothing more than procurers of products that pass them along to healthcare organizations with no additional added value. The core objective for these entities is to meet a specific price point—often at the expense of not meeting industry-leading quality. The suppliers are equally seeing a stronger response from Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) on reimbursements due to a rise in Hospital-Acquired Infection (HAI) occurrences in facilities.

### Tips to vetting potential partners

When examining a safety solution for your facility, quality should never be compromised to meet another initiative. Your partner should have sustainable quality assurance and quality control (QA/QC) protocols throughout its entire process. Their QA/QC protocols should be accessible, well-documented and vertically integrated within its manufacturing processes. Your partner should also meet, if not exceed, established criteria from regulatory bodies and best practice guidelines from peer-reviewed entities.



## 5. DEDICATION TO HELPING YOU MEET FINANCIAL TARGETS



### Why is this important?

As healthcare facilities look to rebound from the impacts of elective procedures being suspended, finding innovative ways to reduce costs—all while not compromising the level of healthcare quality—is a primary objective for leadership. As healthcare facility closures and the occurrence of system M&As have accelerated over the past two years, financial decisions continue to drive the selection of key suppliers. One of the easiest paths to obtain savings is examining the cost of supplies. Many healthcare facilities will come to the realization that tactics, such as SKU reduction and supplier consolidation, contribute to achieving the financial goals.

### Tips to vetting potential partners

Portfolio breadth is very important for solutions partners being considered as it will help healthcare systems to successfully achieve their consolidation strategies. Partners should have the expertise to assess the products you are currently purchasing, identify areas to upgrade your offering, and provide additional value by way of implementation supports to ensure the cycle is completed at a satisfactory level for your facility.





**WE ARE READY  
TO BE YOUR  
DEDICATED PARTNER.**

Choosing the supply partnership that meets organizational objectives and is aligned with your core values is more important now than ever before for healthcare systems. Noted earlier are just a few reasons your safety solutions partnership may need an enhancement to ensure optimal patient care and meet both short- and long-term organization objectives. Your partner of choice needs to have the right subject matter knowledge, capabilities to manufacture and distribute products that are aligned with your facility's expectations, and a proven track record. The ultimate partner will complement your own team and bring value beyond a simple transactional relationship.

Interested in learning more on how We Go Beyond the status quo and Ansell can be a true safety solution partner you can rely on?

**Contact us today at**

customersolutionsus@ansell.com or 1-800-952-9916

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