

# Case Study in Reuse

## Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital, Boston, MA



**Situation:** Whole building cleanout of 196-bed, 224,000sf rehabilitation hospital, in advance of turning over to a new owner.

**Material Composition:** Physical therapy and medical equipment; Hospital beds and other patient room furnishings; Laboratory and pharmacy equipment; Administrative furnishings; Kitchen and cafeteria.

**Quantity:** Approximately 2,000 pieces in five project phases.

**Setting:** Urban streets.

### Overview

Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital moved to a new campus. After moving and redeployment of furnishings, more than 2,000 pieces of surplus remained in the old facility. The surplus included patient care items from beds to therapy equipment; the hospital kitchen, laboratory, and pharmacy; bookshelves and storage cabinets; plus hundreds of pieces from administrative areas.

Consistent with its commitment to Sustainability, Spaulding sought to minimize disposal of this surplus. With essentially 100% of the surplus still in usable condition, Spaulding identified reuse as the best and highest management option.

Spaulding had a window of less than eight weeks to clean out the facility for turnover to a new owner. This demanded a comprehensive, one-step process to handle the surplus. From previous projects, Spaulding knew of IRN's capability to manage large quantities of surplus for distribution and reuse in needy communities. This was the best fit against Spaulding's criteria for social and environmental benefit, cost, and comprehensive project management.

### Setting

Urban, restricted access, adjacent to Boston Garden and North Station, the Charles River, and a major highway interchange with ongoing highway construction.

### Implementation

The project was implemented in five phases as Spaulding refined its inventory of what needed to be removed, and identified additional reuse opportunities through IRN. Phase 1: Removal of 129 hospital beds that were unsuitable for use in Spaulding's new facility. Phase 2: Cleanout of approximately 900 pieces of mixed patient and administrative surplus. Phase 3: Dismantling and shipment of appliances and equipment from Spaulding's kitchen. Phase 4: Removal of laboratory and pharmacy equipment and furnishings. Phase 5: Removal of approximately 800 additional pieces of mixed surplus, plus recreational and physical therapy equipment and woodworking shop.

### Composition

More than 99% of the surplus remaining at the old Spaulding facility was shipped for reuse. Fewer than 1,500 pounds were disposed of, consisting mainly of packing materials and some few items too damaged to be reused.

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**Composition  
(ctd)**

Type of Surplus	Count	Weight
Administrative	1,226	105,758
Patient Care, Patient Room	272	24,805
Kitchen, Laboratory, Pharmacy	113	20,331
Other	170	10,478
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,781</b>	<b>161,372</b>

Administrative includes desks, tables, seating, file cabinets and other storage, etc. Patient Care includes therapy equipment, patient room furnishings, etc. Kitchen, Laboratory, Pharmacy includes appliances, equipment, and supplies.

**Keys to Success**

**Flexibility, Quick Response.** The project scope changed frequently, against a very tight deadline. When the project started Spaulding was still identifying materials to be declared surplus and those to be moved to their new facility. Some were offered to the public and local charities. There were questions about what items would be left in place for the new owner. As a result IRN had to plan and budget new phases of the work several times while the project was underway, and secure the manpower and logistics resources to keep the project on schedule.

**Access Planning and Management.** There were multiple contractors onsite, competing for elevator capacity, floor space, and dock access. This demanded careful attention to crew management, scheduling and staging to keep the project on time and budget. Truck access was an additional complication because of Spaulding’s location and active road construction in the area.

**Loading and Protecting Equipment.** Many patient care and physical therapy items were large and fragile. Some had to be dismantled. Many had to be braced and padded to prevent damage in transit. Balanced against these needs was the imperative to minimize shipping costs by packing trailers at tight as possible.

**Destination**

IRN worked with longtime partner Food For The Poor (FFP) to place Spaulding’s surplus. Hospital beds were provided to FFP-supported projects in Haiti and Trinidad. Spaulding’s kitchen and cafeteria and much of the lab and pharmacy equipment were also shipped to Trinidad. FFP received the balance of Spaulding’s surplus at its warehouse in Kingston, Jamaica, from which it will be distributed to FFP projects throughout the Caribbean and Central America.

**Cost**

With a tight deadline to vacate the facility, Spaulding’s faced the prospect of disposing of more than 80 tons of surplus at a cost of about \$100,000. Reuse through IRN cut this cost by nearly 50%. Reuse also had the advantage of cutting truck traffic by about two-thirds, because each trailer packed for reuse displaced three to four rolloff containers for disposal.

*“IRN and reuse were the best decision we could have made on this project. IRN was incredibly flexible as the project developed. Everything happened as it needed to, on schedule, on budget.”*

**Kathy Young, Vice President of Support Services**