

the needed medical supply is preferably ordered to increase the number of needed medical supply in the inventory, as illustrated in step **3015**.

[**0266**] The inventory of medical supplies may be diminished in rapid fashion, as supplies may be in high demand due to battle combat, for example. Further, delays in receiving new supplies from an order may be unavoidable, as it may be unsafe for medical supply personnel to reach the delivery location. Some injuries may be treated with a variety of different types of medical supplies. For example, a burn injury may be treated with two different types of burn creams. If one of the types of cream is out of inventory stock, then it may be possible to treat a burn with the other type. Thus, in keeping with a particularly advantageous aspect of the invention, in step **3020**, when it is determined that a particular medical supply product is out of inventory stock, an alternative product is preferably suggested.

[**0267**] Referring now to user interface **3100** in **FIG. 31**, in at least one embodiment of the invention, a blood information program (BIP) (that is, a means for providing blood information) is provided, including a blood inventory program, a transfusion/disposition module, and a blood report generator, as will be described in more detail below. For convenience, the BIP is loaded on a handheld device (for example, an Ipaq handheld device) for ease of use. The BIP is advantageous in that it minimizes the chance of tainted blood being used.

[**0268**] The blood inventory program preferably allows an operator to click on “scan-in” button **3105** to automatically scan a blood product into the inventory system of the invention. Upon clicking on scan-in button **3105**, the operator is preferably presented with the user interface of the blood inventory program depicted in **FIG. 32**. The operator then preferably clicks and scans the particular item to be entered with a bar code scanner or enters the identification information manually, for example, as inventory. Expiration date field **3204** is particularly advantageous in that it preferably allows the blood supply to be prioritized. For example, if a first blood bag expires in five days and a second blood bag expires in three days, then the operator (e.g., medic) preferably uses the blood bag that expires in three days, as it should be used sooner than the first blood bag because it will expire sooner than the first blood bag. To enter the data into the system, the operator preferably depresses the “add” button **3205**.

[**0269**] The transfusion/disposition module preferably allows an operator to click on “scan out” button **3110** in **FIG. 31** to automatically scan a product out of the inventory system of the invention when a blood bag, for example, is removed from the blood supply. Upon clicking on “scan-out” button **3110**, the operator is preferably presented with the data interface shown in **FIG. 33**. The operator then preferably clicks and scans the particular item to be removed from the system with a bar code scanner or enters the identification information manually in scan unit number field **3303**, for example. In at least one embodiment, the data entry fields shown in **FIG. 33** are automatically populated upon scanning the product out of the system. As shown in **FIG. 33**, the blood transfusion/disposition module preferably provides the date on which the blood bag was taken out of the blood supply in date field **3305**. In at least one embodiment, the time at which the blood bag was taken

from the blood supply is provided. Such precise tracking preferably assists in helping to ensure that the blood supply is fresh and untainted. In addition, in at least one embodiment, location field **3307** is provided. Location field **3307** preferably allows an operator to enter a location at which the blood bag to be scanned out will be delivered. Such a feature further aids in assisting in helping to ensure the blood supply is fresh in that it allows personnel to quickly retrieve the scanned out item or alternatively to determine who received the blood to allow any medical testing/monitoring to occur if it determines that there is a problem with the item. Save button **3309** preferably allows the operator to save the entered information to the system.

[**0270**] In at least one embodiment, the blood report generation module generates a blood inventory report which may be presented to the user upon clicking on the inventory report button **3115** in **FIG. 31**, for example. Upon clicking on the inventory report button **3115**, the user is preferably presented with the data interface **3405** in **FIG. 34**. The data interface **3405** preferably allows the user to select the data fields the user would like displayed on the report. For example, if the user would like to know the source of the blood reported in the blood inventory report, the user preferably clicks on the “received from” field **3407**, thereby highlighting the field, for example. This is particularly advantageous if the need to determine the source of the blood product should arise. For example, if a particular blood product is determined to be tainted, it is imperative that a determination as to where it came from be made to isolate the problem. In at least one embodiment, the blood inventory report includes a unit number field, a product type field, a blood type expiration date, and a unit location and shipping facility. In at least one embodiment, the above-referenced information is editable and is not required for unit entry. The blood inventory report is preferably emailed, printed, or faxed.

[**0271**] To review the report, the user clicks on view report button **3409**. Clicking on view report button **3409** in **FIG. 34** preferably presents the user with the desired blood inventory report **3505** including the data fields selected by the user in the data interface **3405** in **FIG. 34**, as illustrated in **FIG. 35**. In at least one embodiment, the user may print the report by clicking on the print report button **3411** in **FIG. 34**.

[**0272**] In addition to allowing the operator to obtain a blood inventory report, the blood report module preferably allows the operator to obtain a blood disposition report. Unlike the inventory report, the disposition report includes a report of products transferred out of the system. For example, as illustrated in **FIG. 31**, upon clicking on the “disposition report” button **3120**, the operator is preferably presented with the user interface **3605** illustrated in **FIG. 36**. The user interface of **FIG. 36** preferably allows the user to select the data fields the user would like displayed in the report. The user preferably clicks view report button **3610** to view the report **3705**, as illustrated in **FIG. 37**. In at least one embodiment, the report tracks a blood bag, for example, from the time the bag was entered into the system to the time the bag was shipped, destroyed or transfused. In at least one embodiment, the user is preferably allowed to enter information regarding the transfusion of the blood product such as patient name, social security number, and diagnosis.