



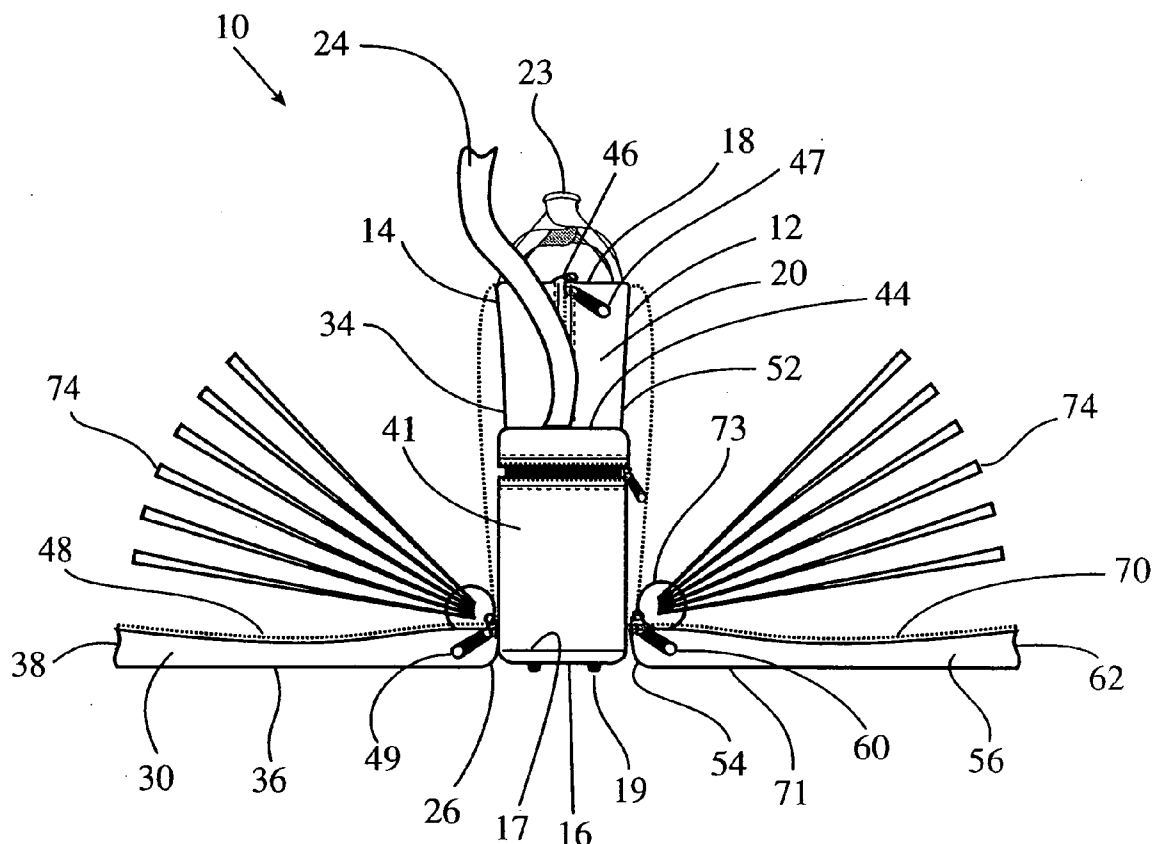
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(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication****Kenney**(10) **Pub. No.: US 2006/0131206 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Jun. 22, 2006**(54) **PORTABLE MEDICAL BAG APPARATUS**(52) **U.S. CL. 206/570**(76) **Inventor: Philip Michael Kenney**, Baltimore,
MD (US)(57) **ABSTRACT**

Correspondence Address:

Marvin S. Townsend**Patent Attorney****8 Grovepoint Court****Rockville, MD 20854 (US)**(21) **Appl. No.: 11/264,156**(22) **Filed: Nov. 2, 2005****Related U.S. Application Data**(60) **Provisional application No. 60/636,098**, filed on Dec.
16, 2004.**Publication Classification**(51) **Int. Cl.**
B65D 69/00 (2006.01)

A portable medical bag apparatus includes a first compartment which includes a first compartment space. First-compartment closure means are connected to the first compartment for permitting access to the first compartment space. A second compartment is connected to a wall of the first compartment, external to the first compartment space. The second compartment includes a second compartment space, and second-compartment closure means are connected to a wall of the second compartment for permitted access to the second compartment space. The first compartment and the second compartment form a unified, integrated structure. Preferably, the second compartment is shaped and dimensioned for reception of a standard Sharps disposable container. Preferably, indicia indicating a biohazard are attached to the second compartment or the second-compartment closure means. In addition, one or more handles and a shoulder strap are included. Third, fourth, fifth, and sixth compartments are also provided.



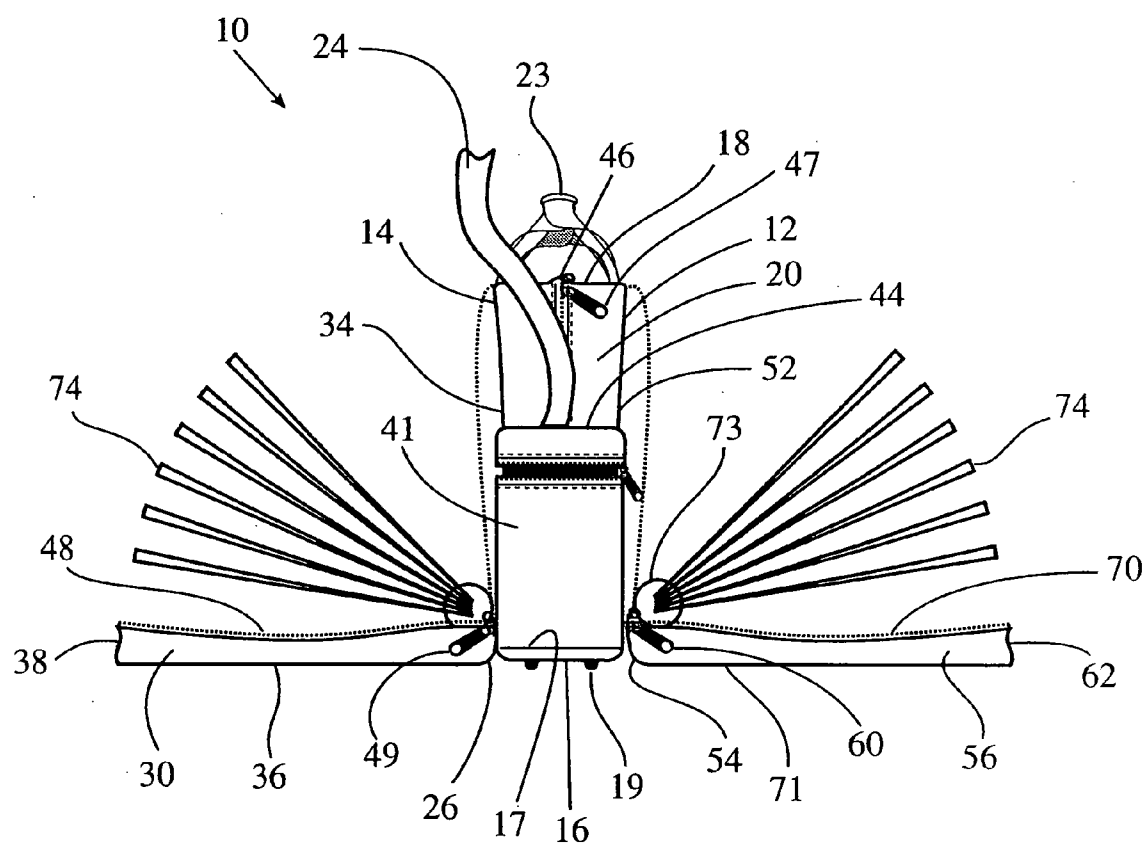


FIG. 1

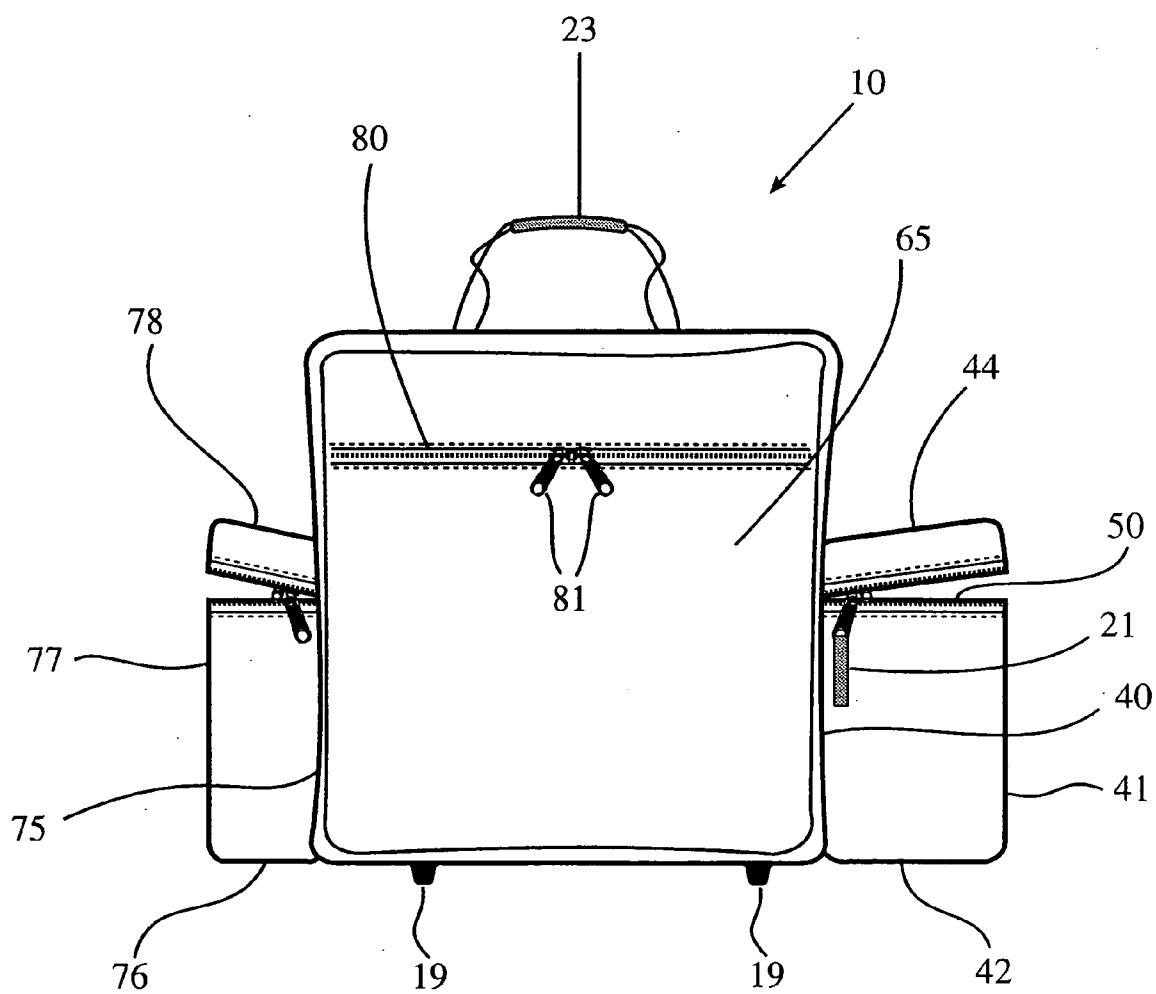


FIG. 3

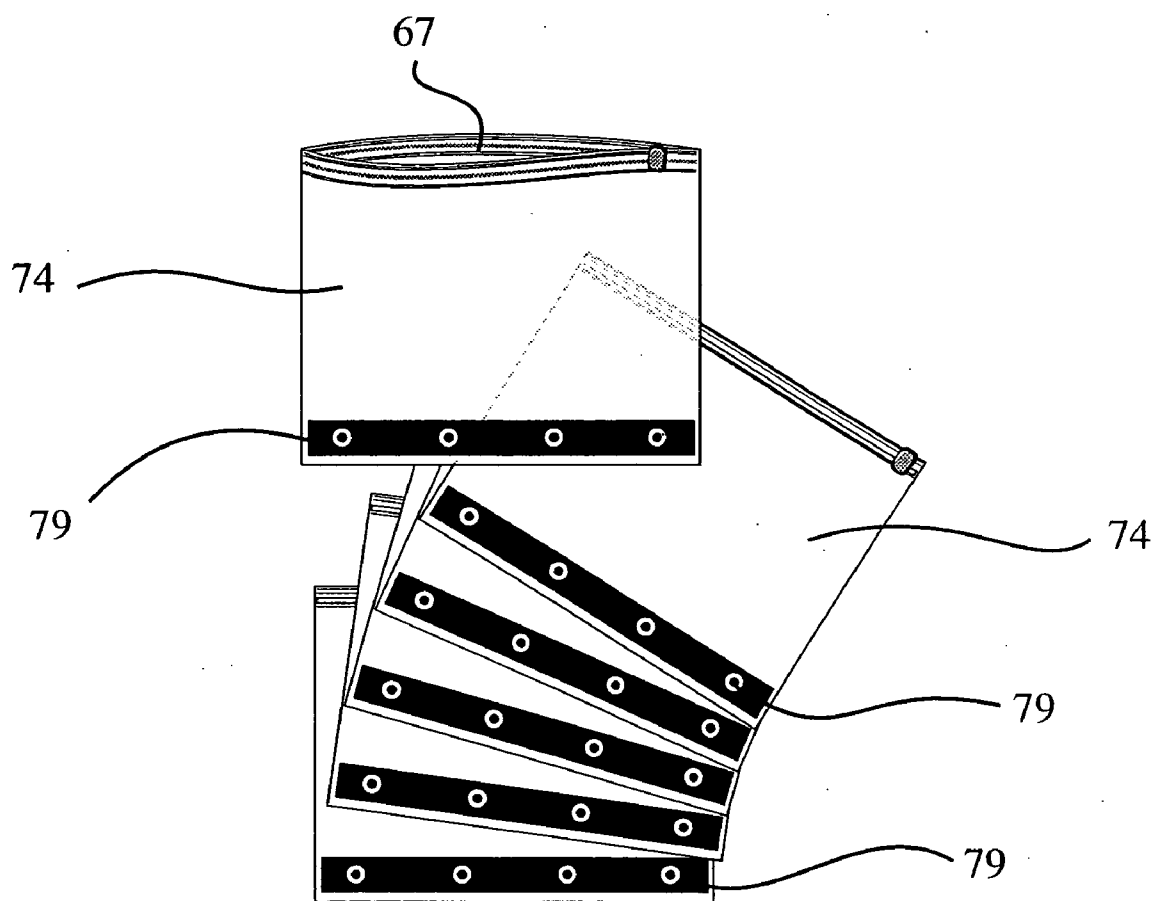


FIG. 4

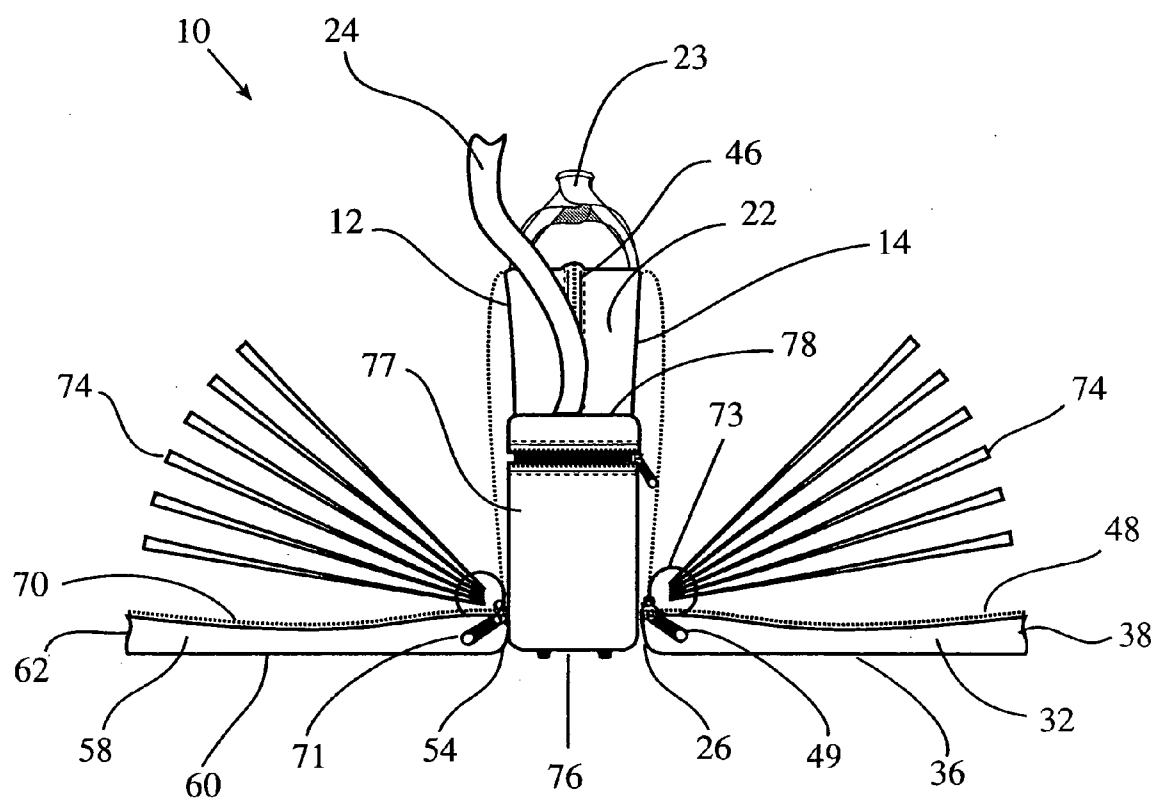


FIG. 5

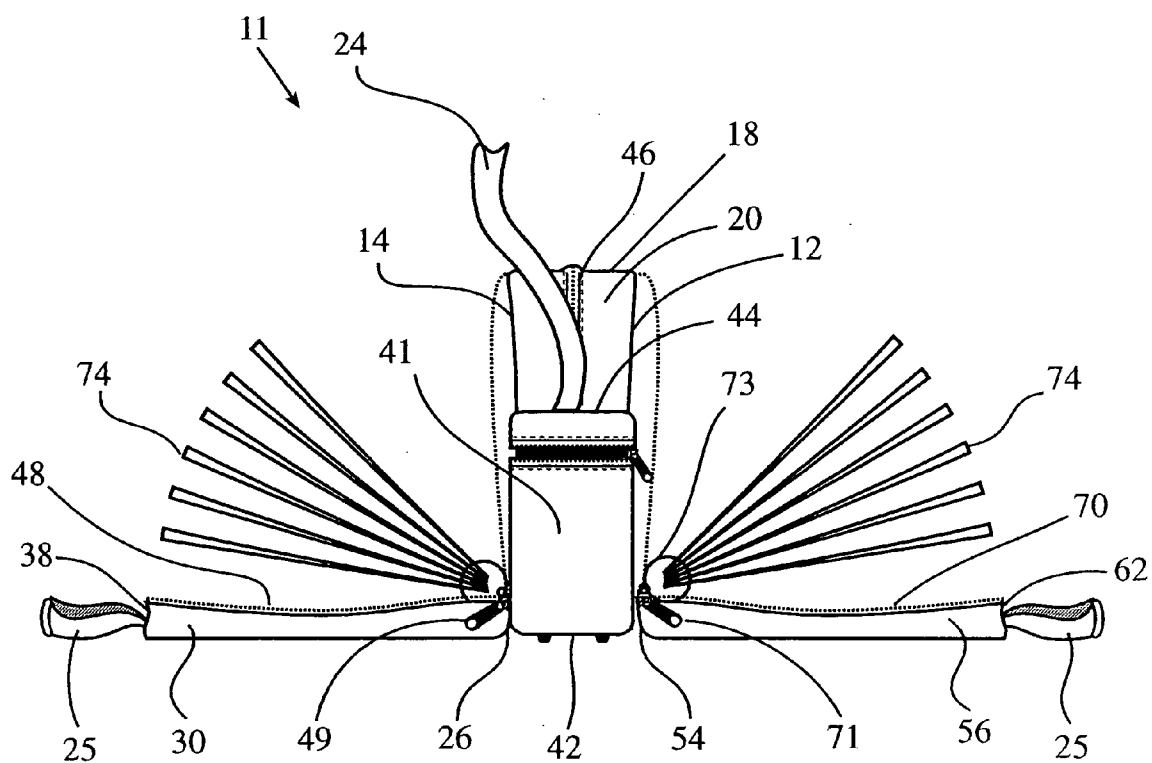


FIG. 6

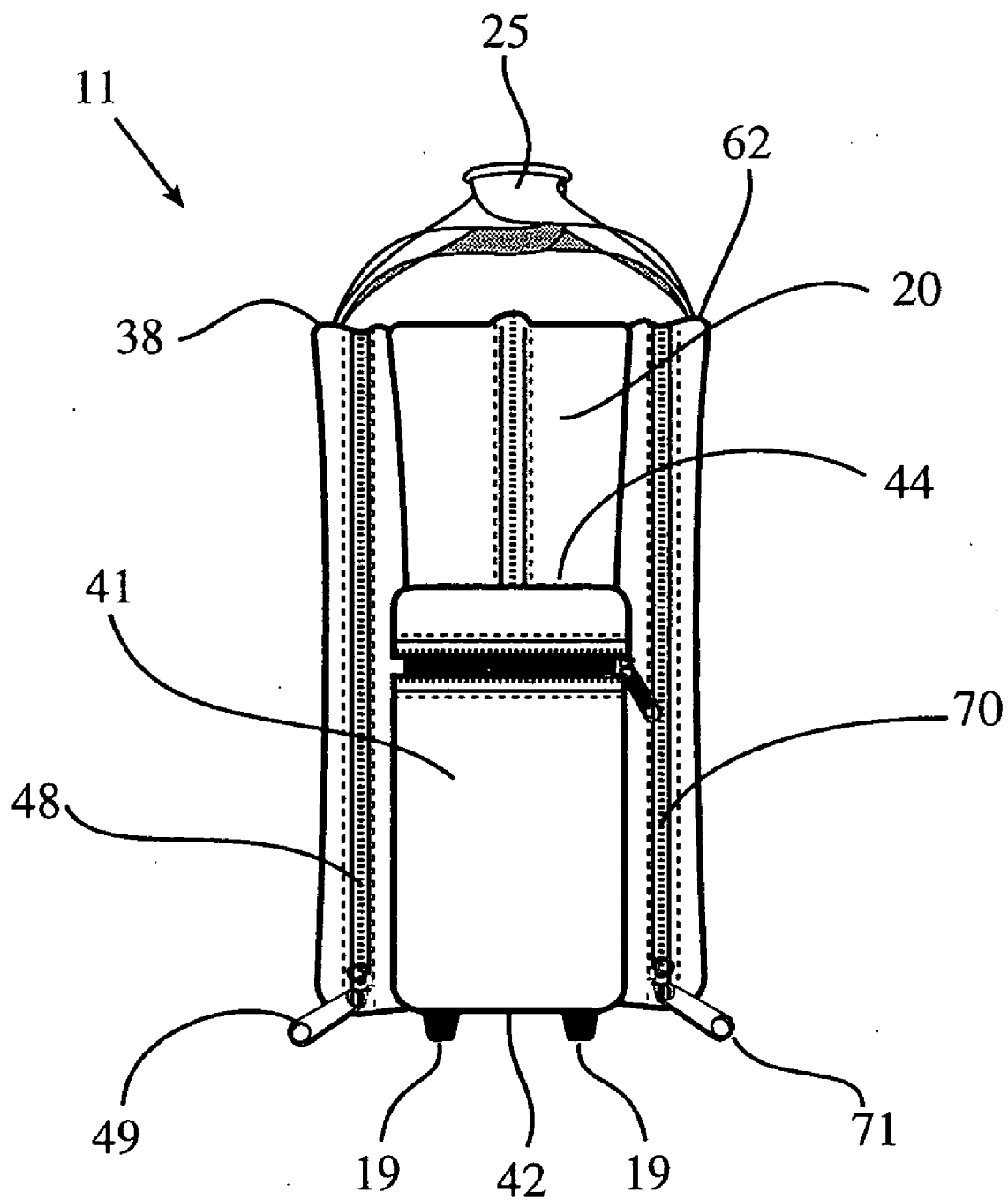


FIG. 7

PORTABLE MEDICAL BAG APPARATUS

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] This application claims priority based upon my copending Provisional Application Ser. No. 60/636,098, filed Dec. 16, 2004.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] The present invention relates generally to portable bags, and, more particularly, to portable bags especially adapted for carrying medical supplies and instruments.

[0004] 2. Description of the Prior Art

[0005] Portable bags for carrying medical supplies and instruments are well known in the art. For example, the Catalog Volume 201 for Hopkins Medical Products, 5 Greenwood Place, Baltimore, Md. 21208 sets forth a wide variety of medical bags.

[0006] Of particular interest in the present patent, are Sharps containers which are containers especially designed for carrying biohazard materials, and more especially, for carrying sharp objects such as needles which are contaminated with biohazard materials.

[0007] More specifically, the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires (see 29 CFR 10.0) that Sharps containers, which contain biological wastes, are separated from diagnostic instruments and clean medical products, such as bandages, swabs, and washing solutions, among others. The catalog of Hopkins Medical Products mentioned above, for example on pages 16 and 17, sets forth a number of Sharps containers and a number of portable carriers for the Sharps containers.

[0008] Some of the portable carriers are designed to carry one Sharps container. With such a portable carrier, a snug fit is provided for the portable carrier and the respective Sharps container. Yet such portable carriers are not designed for carrying diagnostic instruments and clean medical products, such as bandages, swabs, and washing solutions, etc. Therefore, if a user wishes to carry (a) Sharps containers in a snug fitting carrier and (b) diagnostic instruments and clean medical products in a carrier, the user must employ two separate portable carriers: one for the Sharps containers; and the other for the diagnostic instruments and clean medical products. To avoid the inconvenience and expense of employing two separate portable carriers, it would be desirable if a single portable bag were provided for carrying Sharps containers in a snug fitting compartment and for carrying diagnostic instruments and clean medical products in other compartments that are separated from the Sharps containers to comply with the OSHA separation requirements mentioned above.

[0009] Another type of portable carrier in the catalog of Hopkins Medical Products has a number spacious compartments wherein a Sharps container can be placed on one of the spacious compartments, and clean medical products can be placed in other spacious compartments. In this way, the Sharps containers can be kept separate from the clean medical products. However, because the compartment holding the Sharps container is so spacious, the Sharps container

does not fit in the spacious compartment with a snug fit. As a result, the Sharps container can move around and tip over while inside the spacious compartment. Because of the nature of the biohazard materials inside the Sharps container, it is very desirable that the Sharps container cannot move around inside and tip over while inside a spacious compartment. Therefore, it would be desirable if a multi-compartment portable carrier had a compartment that retains a Sharps container with a snug fit so that the Sharps container cannot move around and tip over while inside the compartment.

[0010] The catalog of Hopkins Medical Products also sets forth a transport pouch for a Sharps container that can be temporarily attached to and then removed from a portable carrier. Once the transport pouch is attached to the portable carrier, when the user lifts the portable carrier, both the portable carrier and the transport pouch are lifted together. Yet, the attachment of the transport pouch to the portable carrier is provided by only one strap at the top of the transport pouch. As a result, the transport pouch and the Sharps container held snugly therein can swing back and forth as the user is transporting the portable carrier. Moreover, the swinging motion of the transport pouch can be substantially independent from any swinging action of the portable carrier because of the simple strap connection between the portable carrier and the transport pouch. Such substantially independent swinging action between a portable carrier and a transport pouch attached thereto may make it difficult for the user to prevent uncontrolled-swinging and spillage in the transport pouch. In this respect, it would be desirable if a multi-compartment carrier for a Sharps container and for clean medical products prevents independent swinging action between the compartment holding the Sharps container and the compartment holding the clean medical products.

[0011] An independent transport pouch for a Sharps container has four vertical walls. An independent portable carrier has its own vertical wall adjacent to a vertical wall of the independent transport pouch. For purposes of economy in the use of materials, it would be desirable if one of the vertical walls of the transport pouch could be integrated into one of the walls of the portable carrier, whereby a net reduction in one vertical wall would occur. Moreover, by sharing a common wall between a portable carrier and a transport pouch, the portable carrier and the transport pouch cannot swing independently of one another.

[0012] For carrying medical products, it is often desirable that a portable carrier have flexible vertical walls and be in the form of a portable bag. Flexible walls provide the benefit of collapsibility when the portable bag is empty. Also, flexible walls provide that the portable bag occupies a volume only a little greater than the volume necessary to store and carry the items stored in the portable bag. In this respect, it would be desirable if a portable bag for carrying medical products were provided with flexible walls.

[0013] Portable bags that are used by health care professionals, such as visiting nurses, are often used to carry three classes of items: diagnostic instruments; clean medical products; and dirty medical products. In this respect, it would be desirable for a portable bag used by health care professionals to have at least three separate compartments, one for diagnostic instruments, one for clean medical products, and one for dirty medical products.

[0014] In addition, when the health care professional needs to carry a Sharps container, it would be desirable for a portable bag used by health care professionals to have at least four separate compartments, one for diagnostic instruments, one for clean medical products, one for dirty medical products, and one for a Sharps container.

[0015] When a number of items are to be stored in a particular compartment, particular items of interest can become mixed up and hidden by other items in the compartment. Sometimes, a particular item of interest can move to bottom of a pile of other items and not be easily visible to the potential user of the particular item.

[0016] To avoid the mixing up and hiding of items inside a compartment, throughout the years, a number of innovations have been developed by which particular items are segregated from other items in a compartment using plural sub-compartments. In one class of innovations, the sub-compartments are permanently attached to an inside wall of the compartment. In another class of innovations, the sub-compartments are attached to a ring binder. In these respects, the following U.S. patents disclose sub-compartments that are permanently attached to an inside wall of a compartment: U.S. Pat. Nos. 1,914,087 and 4,852,293. In addition, the following U.S. patents disclose sub-compartments that are attached to a ring binder: U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,394,638 and 5,632,113. It is also noted that the sub-compartments in U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,394,638 and 5,632,113 are transparent and have ziplock type closures. It is further noted that none of the compartments shown in U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,394,638 and 5,632,113 are in portable bags that are used by health care professionals.

[0017] As matters of interest, U.S. Pat. No. 2,423,817 discloses a book in which pages are bound together by ring binders; U.S. Pat. No. 2,807,265 discloses transparent, zippered pockets for a ring binder; and U.S. Pat. No. 4,359,052 discloses the use of a flexible bag which has a press fit, tongue and groove type seal which is known in the art under the trade name "ZIPLOC". None of these patents discloses a portable bag having specific features desirable for use by health care professionals.

[0018] For health care professionals, it would be desirable to provide a portable bag that has sub-compartments that are permanently attached to an inside wall of a compartment.

[0019] Moreover, for health care professionals, it would also be desirable to provide a portable bag that has sub-compartments that are attached to a ring binder and that are transparent and have ziplock type closures.

[0020] For health care professionals, there is a requirement to provide for the privacy of patients records. Such privacy requirements are set forth in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). In this respect, it would be desirable to provide a portable bag for health care professionals that has a lockable compartment for keeping patients records therein in privacy.

[0021] Hereinabove, the use of Sharps containers is discussed. Another pertinent point relating to Sharps containers is that a common capacity for a Sharps container is one quart. In this respect, it would be desirable if a portable, multi-compartment bag for health care professionals were provided which has a compartment that retains a one quart capacity Sharps container with a snug fit.

[0022] The following U.S. patents are also of interest: U.S. Pat. Nos. 2,577,670 and 3,830,348.

[0023] More specifically, U.S. Pat. No. 2,577,670 discloses a traveling bag that has two equal size compartments. The traveling bag has a handle and a shoulder strap. This bag also has protective buttons or feet at the bottom of the bag.

[0024] Turning to U.S. Pat. No. 3,830,348, a three-compartment collapsible luggage is shown in FIG. 5. In addition, in FIG. 3, a pair of separate compartments are integrated onto the outside side wall of one of the compartments.

[0025] However, in neither of U.S. Pat. No. 2,577,670 or U.S. Pat. No. 3,830,348 is there a disclosure of a bag or luggage which has specific features that are useful for health care professionals such as (1) a separate compartment for a Sharps containers, such as (2) separate compartments for (a) diagnostic instruments, (b) clean medical products, and (c) dirty medical products, and such as (3) a lockable compartment for retaining patients records in privacy.

[0026] Also, in neither of U.S. Pat. No. 2,577,670 or U.S. Pat. No. 3,830,348 is there a disclosure of the provision of a plurality of separate sub-compartments, either attached to an inside compartment wall or attached to a ring binder inside a compartment, for retaining a plurality of clean medical products separated from one another or for retaining a plurality of dirty medical products separated from one another.

[0027] Also, as a matter of interest, a commercially available bag is made by Bass Pro Shops, Springfield, Mo., that is known as the Bass Pro Shops, Extreme Binder Bag, Jumbo Exterior which is made for storing fishing tackle and related items. This Bass Pro bag includes sub-compartments that are attached to a ring binder. It is noted that the sub-compartments in the Bass Pro bag are transparent and have ziplock type closures. Pictures of the Bass Pro bag can be seen on the Internet at the URL <http://www.basspro.com/servlet/catalog.TextId?hvarTextId=13318&hvarTarget=search&cmCat=SearchResults>. The Bass Pro bag does not have features set forth above that are suitable for a portable bag used by health care professionals. In this respect, the Bass Pro bag is not suitable for use by health care professionals.

[0028] Thus, while the foregoing body of prior art indicates it to be well known to use portable medical bags, the prior art described above does not teach or suggest a portable medical bag apparatus which has the following combination of desirable features: (1) carries Sharps containers in a snug fitting compartment and carries diagnostic instruments and clean medical products in other compartments that are separated from the Sharps containers to comply with OSHA separation requirements; (2) provides a multi-compartment portable carrier which has a compartment that retains a Sharps container with a snug fit so that the Sharps container cannot move around and tip over while inside the compartment; (3) provides a multi-compartment carrier for a Sharps container and for clean medical products which prevents independent swinging action between the compartment holding the Sharps container and the compartment holding the clean medical products; (4) provides that one of the vertical walls of the transport pouch can be integrated into one of the walls of the portable carrier, whereby a net reduction in one vertical wall occurs; (5) provides a portable

bag used by health care professionals to have at least three separate compartments, one for diagnostic instruments, one for clean medical products, and one for dirty medical products; (6) provides a portable bag used by health care professionals to have at least four separate compartments, one for diagnostic instruments, one for clean medical products, one for dirty medical products, and one for a Sharps container; (7) provides a portable bag for health care professionals that has sub-compartments that are permanently attached to an inside wall of a compartment; (8) provides a portable bag for health care professionals that has sub-compartments that are attached to a ring binder and that are transparent and have ziplock type closures; (9) provides a portable bag for health care professionals that has a lockable compartment for keeping patients records therein in privacy; and (10) provides a portable, multi-compartment bag for health care professionals which has a compartment that retains a one quart capacity Sharps container with a snug fit. The foregoing desired characteristics are provided by the unique portable medical bag apparatus of the present invention as will be made apparent from the following description thereof. Other advantages of the present invention over the prior art also will be rendered evident.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0029] To achieve the foregoing and other advantages, the present invention, briefly described, provides a portable medical bag apparatus which includes a first compartment which includes a first compartment space. The first compartment includes first-compartment side walls and first-compartment end walls. First-compartment closure means are connected to the first compartment for permitting access to the first compartment space. A second compartment is connected to a wall of the first compartment, external to the first compartment space. The second compartment includes a second compartment space, and second-compartment closure means are connected to a wall of the second compartment for permitting access to the second compartment space.

[0030] Preferably, the first compartment and the second compartment form a unified, integrated structure. Preferably, the second compartment and the first compartment share a common wall, and the second compartment is shaped and dimensioned for reception of a standard Sharps disposable container. Preferably, indicia indicating a biohazard are attached to the second compartment or the second-compartment closure means. For example, the indicia indicating a biohazard can be a quantity of red ribbon attached to the second-compartment closure means.

[0031] In addition, one or more first handles are attached to the first compartment. Also, preferably, a shoulder strap assembly is connected to the first-compartment top wall.

[0032] More specifically, the second compartment can be shaped and dimensioned for reception of a standard one quart Sharps disposable container.

[0033] Preferably, a third compartment is connected to the first compartment, external to the first compartment space. The third compartment includes a third compartment space, and the third compartment and the first compartment share a common wall. Third-compartment closure means are connected to the third compartment for permitting access to the third compartment space.

[0034] Preferably, a fourth compartment is connected to the third compartment, external to the third compartment space. The fourth compartment includes a fourth compartment space, and the fourth compartment and the third compartment share a common wall. Fourth compartment closure means are connected to the fourth compartment for permitting access to the fourth compartment.

[0035] Preferably, a fifth compartment is connected to the first compartment, external to the first compartment space. The fifth compartment includes a fifth compartment space, and the first compartment and the fifth compartment share a common wall. Fifth-compartment closure means are connected to the fifth compartment for permitting access to the fifth compartment.

[0036] Preferably, a sixth compartment is connected to a wall of the first compartment, external to the first compartment space. The sixth compartment includes a sixth compartment space, and sixth-compartment closure means are connected to a wall of the sixth compartment for permitting access to the sixth compartment space. Preferably, the sixth compartment and the first compartment share a common wall. In this respect, the first compartment and the sixth compartment form a unified, integrated structure.

[0037] More specifically, in accordance with the invention, a portable medical bag apparatus includes a first compartment which includes a first compartment space defined by a first-compartment first side wall, a first-compartment bottom wall connected to a bottom portion of the first-compartment first side wall, and a first-compartment first end wall connected to respective first ends of the first-compartment first side wall and the first-compartment bottom wall, a first-compartment second end wall connected to respective second ends of the first-compartment first side wall and the first-compartment bottom wall. The first compartment space is also defined by a first-compartment second side wall connected to the first-compartment bottom wall, the first-compartment first end wall, and the first-compartment second end wall. Also, a first-compartment top wall is connected to the first-compartment first side wall, the first-compartment first end wall, the first-compartment second end wall, and the first-compartment second side wall. First-compartment closure means are connected to the first compartment for gaining access to the first compartment space.

[0038] A second compartment includes a second compartment space defined by a second-compartment first side wall connected to the first-compartment first end wall and a second-compartment bottom wall connected to the second-compartment first side wall. A second-compartment second side wall is connected to the second-compartment first side wall and the second-compartment bottom wall, and a second-compartment top wall is connected to the second-compartment first side wall and the second-compartment second side wall. Second-compartment closure means are connected to the second compartment for gaining access to the second compartment space.

[0039] Preferably, a stiff reinforcement bottom panel is located next to the first-compartment bottom wall outside of the first compartment space. Also, feet are located under the stiff reinforcement bottom panel.

[0040] Preferably, the first-compartment closure means are connected to the first-compartment top wall. The first-

compartment closure means can include a first-compartment zipper closure. The first-compartment zipper closure includes a pair of independently operable and interlockable first-compartment zipper closure units.

[0041] The second-compartment closure means include a second-compartment zipper closure. The first-compartment first end wall and the second-compartment first side wall are a unified integrated wall structure.

[0042] Preferably, the portable medical bag apparatus further includes a third compartment which includes a third compartment space defined by a third-compartment first side wall connected to the first-compartment first side wall. A third-compartment bottom wall is connected to the first-compartment bottom wall and the third-compartment first side wall. A third-compartment first end wall is connected to respective first ends of the third-compartment bottom wall and the third-compartment first side wall. A third-compartment second end wall is connected to respective second ends of the third-compartment bottom wall and the third-compartment first side wall. A third-compartment second side wall is connected to the third-compartment bottom wall between the third-compartment first end wall and the third-compartment second end wall. A third-compartment top wall is connected between the third-compartment first side wall, the third-compartment first end wall, the third-compartment second end wall, and the third-compartment second side wall. Third-compartment closure means are connected to the third compartment for gaining access to the third compartment space.

[0043] Preferably, the third-compartment closure means can include a third-compartment zipper closure. The third-compartment zipper closure includes a pair of independently operable and interlockable third-compartment zipper closure units.

[0044] Preferably, the third-compartment first side wall is contiguous with the first-compartment first side wall. The third-compartment first side wall and the first-compartment first side wall are a unified integrated wall structure.

[0045] Preferably, a plurality of individually closeable pocket assemblies are connected to the third-compartment first side wall and the third-compartment second side wall inside the third compartment space.

[0046] Preferably, a plurality of binder rings are connected to the third-compartment bottom wall inside the third compartment space, and a plurality of individually closeable flexible bags are connected to the binder rings by respective moveable connections. The individually closeable flexible bags include ring-reception apertures for receiving the binder rings. Preferably, the individually closeable flexible bags are transparent and includes ziplock closures.

[0047] Also, a plurality of binder rings can be connected to the fifth-compartment bottom wall inside the fifth compartment space, and a plurality of individually closeable flexible bags are connected to the binder rings by respective moveable connections. The individually closeable flexible bags are transparent and includes ziplock closures.

[0048] Preferably, a fourth compartment includes a fourth compartment space defined by a fourth-compartment first side wall, external to the third compartment space which is connected to the third-compartment second side wall. A

fourth-compartment second side wall is connected to the fourth-compartment first side wall. Fourth-compartment closure means are connected to the fourth-compartment second side wall for permitting access to the fourth compartment space. The fourth-compartment first side wall is contiguous with the third-compartment second side wall. Preferably, the fourth-compartment first side wall and the third-compartment second side wall are a unified integrated structure.

[0049] Preferably, the fourth-compartment closure means include a fourth-compartment zipper closure. The fourth-compartment zipper closure includes independently operable and interlockable fourth-compartment zipper closure units.

[0050] Preferably, a fifth compartment includes a fifth compartment space defined by a fifth-compartment first side wall, external to the first compartment space, which is connected to the first-compartment second side wall. A fifth-compartment bottom wall is connected to the first-compartment bottom wall and the fifth-compartment first side wall. A fifth-compartment first end wall is connected to respective first ends of the fifth-compartment bottom wall and the fifth-compartment first side wall. A fifth-compartment second end wall is connected to respective second ends of the fifth-compartment bottom wall and the fifth-compartment first side wall. A fifth-compartment second side wall is connected to the fifth-compartment bottom wall between the fifth-compartment first end wall and the fifth-compartment second end wall, and a fifth-compartment top wall is connected between the fifth-compartment first side wall, the fifth-compartment first end wall, the fifth-compartment second end wall, and the fifth-compartment second side wall. Fifth-compartment closure means are connected to the fifth compartment for gaining access to the fifth compartment space.

[0051] Preferably, the fifth-compartment closure means can be a fifth-compartment zipper closure. The fifth-compartment zipper closure includes a pair of independently operable and interlockable fifth-compartment zipper closure units. The fifth-compartment first side wall is contiguous with the first-compartment second side wall. Preferably, the fifth-compartment first side wall and the first-compartment second side wall are a unified integrated wall structure.

[0052] Preferably, a sixth compartment includes a sixth compartment space defined by a sixth-compartment first side wall which is connected to the first-compartment second end wall. A sixth-compartment bottom wall is connected to the sixth-compartment first side wall. A sixth-compartment second side wall is connected to the sixth-compartment first side wall and the sixth-compartment bottom wall, and a sixth-compartment top wall is connected to the sixth-compartment first side wall and the sixth-compartment second side wall. Sixth-compartment closure means are connected to the sixth compartment for gaining access to the sixth compartment space.

[0053] The above brief description sets forth rather broadly the more important features of the present invention in order that the detailed description thereof that follows may be better understood, and in order that the present contributions to the art may be better appreciated. There are, of course, additional features of the invention that will be described hereinafter and which will be for the subject matter of the claims appended hereto.

[0054] In this respect, before explaining a number of preferred embodiments of the invention in detail, it is understood that the invention is not limited in its application to the details of the construction and to the arrangements of the components set forth in the following description or illustrated in the drawings. The invention is capable of other embodiments and of being practiced and carried out in various ways. Also, it is to be understood, that the phraseology and terminology employed herein are for the purpose of description and should not be regarded as limiting.

[0055] As such, those skilled in the art will appreciate that the conception, upon which disclosure is based, may readily be utilized as a basis for designing other structures, methods, and systems for carrying out the several purposes of the present invention. It is important, therefore, that the claims be regarded as including such equivalent constructions insofar as they do not depart from the spirit and scope of the present invention.

[0056] It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a new and improved portable medical bag apparatus which has all of the advantages of the prior art and none of the disadvantages.

[0057] It is another object of the present invention to provide a new and improved portable medical bag apparatus which may be easily and efficiently manufactured and marketed.

[0058] It is a further object of the present invention to provide a new and improved portable medical bag apparatus which is of durable and reliable construction.

[0059] An even further object of the present invention is to provide a new and improved portable medical bag apparatus which is susceptible of a low cost of manufacture with regard to both materials and labor, and which accordingly is then susceptible of low prices of sale to the consuming public, thereby making such portable medical bag apparatus available to the buying public.

[0060] Still yet a further object of the present invention is to provide a new and improved portable medical bag apparatus which carries Sharps containers in a snug fitting compartment and carries diagnostic instruments and clean medical products in other compartments that are separated from the Sharps containers to comply with OSHA separation requirements.

[0061] Still another object of the present invention is to provide a new and improved portable medical bag apparatus that provides a multi-compartment portable carrier which has a compartment that retains a Sharps container with a snug fit so that the Sharps container cannot move around and tip over while inside the compartment.

[0062] Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a new and improved portable medical bag apparatus which provides a multi-compartment carrier for a Sharps container and for clean medical products which prevents independent swinging action between the compartment holding the Sharps container and the compartment holding the clean medical products.

[0063] Even another object of the present invention is to provide a new and improved portable medical bag apparatus that provides that one of the vertical walls of the transport

pouch can be integrated into one of the walls of the portable carrier, whereby a net reduction in one vertical wall occurs.

[0064] Still a further object of the present invention is to provide a new and improved portable medical bag apparatus which provides a portable bag used by health care professionals to have at least three separate compartments, one for diagnostic instruments, one for clean medical products, and one for dirty medical products.

[0065] Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a new and improved portable medical bag apparatus that provides a portable bag used by health care professionals to have at least four separate compartments, one for diagnostic instruments, one for clean medical products, one for dirty medical products, and one for a Sharps container.

[0066] Still another object of the present invention is to provide a new and improved portable medical bag apparatus which provides a portable bag for health care professionals that has sub-compartments that are permanently attached to an inside wall of a compartment.

[0067] Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a new and improved portable medical bag apparatus that provides a portable bag for health care professionals that has sub-compartments that are attached to a ring binder and that are transparent and have ziplock type closures.

[0068] Still a further object of the present invention is to provide a new and improved portable medical bag apparatus that provides a portable bag for health care professionals that has a lockable compartment for keeping patients records therein in privacy.

[0069] Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a new and improved portable medical bag apparatus which provides a portable, multi-compartment bag for health care professionals which has a compartment that retains a one quart capacity Sharps container with a snug fit.

[0070] These together with still other objects of the invention, along with the various features of novelty which characterize the invention, are pointed out with particularity in the claims annexed to and forming a part of this disclosure. For a better understanding of the invention, its operating advantages and the specific objects attained by its uses, reference should be had to the accompanying drawings and descriptive matter in which there are illustrated preferred embodiments of the invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0071] The invention will be better understood and the above objects as well as objects other than those set forth above will become more apparent after a study of the following detailed description thereof. Such description makes reference to the annexed drawing wherein:

[0072] **FIG. 1** is a front end view a first embodiment of the invention, wherein, from left to right, the third and fifth compartments are in an open condition, and wherein each of the third and fifth compartments includes a plurality of ziplock bags retained on a ring binder.

[0073] **FIG. 2** is a side view of the embodiment of the invention shown in **FIG. 1**, wherein the plurality of ziplock bags from the third compartment have been removed from the ring binder.

[0074] FIG. 3 is a side view of the embodiment of the invention shown in FIG. 1, wherein the third compartment is in a closed condition.

[0075] FIG. 4 is a top view of a plurality of ziplock bags that have been removed from a ring binder.

[0076] FIG. 5 is a rear end view the embodiment of the invention shown in FIG. 1.

[0077] FIG. 6 is a front end view a second embodiment of the invention, wherein, from left to right, the third and fifth compartments are in an open condition, and wherein each of the third and fifth compartments includes a plurality of ziplock bags retained on a ring binder.

[0078] FIG. 7 is a front end view of the embodiment of the invention shown in FIG. 6 with the embodiment shown is a zipped-up, closed condition.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0079] With reference to the drawings, a number of embodiments of a new and improved portable medical bag apparatus embodying the principles and concepts of the present invention will be described.

[0080] Turning to FIGS. 1-5, there is shown a first embodiment of the portable medical bag apparatus of the invention generally designated by reference numeral 10. In general terms, in the first embodiment, the portable medical bag apparatus 10 includes a first compartment which includes a first compartment space. The first compartment includes first-compartment side walls and first-compartment end walls. First-compartment closure means are connected to the first compartment for permitting access to the first compartment space. A second compartment is connected to a wall of the first compartment, external to the first compartment space. The second compartment includes a second compartment space, and second-compartment closure means are connected to a wall of the second compartment for permitted access to the second compartment space.

[0081] Preferably, the first compartment and the second compartment form a unified, integrated structure. Preferably, the second compartment and the first compartment share a common wall, and the second compartment is shaped and dimensioned for reception of a standard Sharps disposable container. Preferably, indicia 21 indicating a biohazard is attached to the second compartment or the second-compartment closure means. For example, the indicia 21 indicating a biohazard 21 can be a quantity of red ribbon attached to the second-compartment closure means.

[0082] In addition, one or more first handles 23 are attached to the first compartment. Also, preferably, a shoulder strap assembly 24 is connected to the first-compartment top wall 18.

[0083] The portable medical bag apparatus 10 of the invention is especially useful to healthcare professionals who make visits to the sick and post surgical patients in their homes. The portable medical bag apparatus 10 provides a well organized bag permitting easy access to supplies, providing enhanced productivity, and complying with Federal and industry regulatory standards.

[0084] The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires (see 29 CFR 10.0) that Sharps con-

tainers, which contain biological wastes, are separated from diagnostic instruments and clean medical products, such as bandages, swabs, and washing solutions, among others. In this respect, the second compartment space of the integrated second compartment is separated from the first compartment space of the first compartment and from other compartments and other compartment spaces as described below.

[0085] A Sharps disposable container (not shown) can be readily placed into the second compartment space and can be readily removed from the second compartment space. When the second-compartment zipper closure 50 is zipped up, the Sharps container is secured in the second compartment space. To remove the Sharps container from the second compartment space, the second-compartment zipper closure 50 is unzipped, and the Sharps container is removed from the second compartment space. More specifically, the second compartment can be shaped and dimensioned for reception of a standard one quart Sharps disposable container.

[0086] Preferably, a third compartment is connected to the first compartment, external to the first compartment space. The third compartment includes a third compartment space, and the third compartment and the first compartment share a common wall. Third-compartment closure means are connected to the third compartment for permitting access to the third compartment space.

[0087] Preferably, a fourth compartment is connected to the third compartment, external to the third compartment space. The fourth compartment includes a fourth compartment space, and the fourth compartment and the third compartment share a common wall. Fourth compartment closure means are connected to the fourth compartment for permitting access to the fourth compartment.

[0088] Preferably, a fifth compartment is connected to the first compartment, external to the first compartment space. The fifth compartment includes a fifth compartment space, and the first compartment and the fifth compartment share a common wall. Fifth-compartment closure means are connected to the fifth compartment for permitting access to the fifth compartment.

[0089] Preferably, a sixth compartment is connected to a wall of the first compartment, external to the first compartment space. The sixth compartment includes a sixth compartment space, and sixth-compartment closure means are connected to a wall of the sixth compartment for permitted access to the sixth compartment space. The first compartment and the sixth compartment form a unified, integrated structure.

[0090] If desired, the sixth compartment can be shaped and dimensioned for reception of a standard Sharps disposable container, such as a one quart Sharps disposable container.

[0091] More specifically, with reference to FIGS. 1-5, in accordance with the invention, a portable medical bag apparatus 10 includes a first compartment which includes a first compartment space defined by a first-compartment first side wall 12, a first-compartment bottom wall 16 connected to a bottom portion of the first-compartment first side wall 12, a first-compartment first end wall 20 connected to respective first ends of the first-compartment first side wall 12 and the first-compartment bottom wall 16, and a first-compartment second end wall 22 connected to respective

second ends of the first-compartment first side wall 12 and the first-compartment bottom wall 16. The first compartment space is also defined by a first-compartment second side wall 14 connected to the first-compartment bottom wall 16, the first-compartment first end wall 20, and the first-compartment second end wall 22. Also, a first-compartment top wall 18 is connected to the first-compartment first side wall 12, the first-compartment first end wall 20, the first-compartment second end wall 22, and the first-compartment second side wall 14. First-compartment closure means are connected to the first compartment for gaining access to the first compartment space.

[0092] A second compartment includes a second compartment space defined by a second-compartment first side wall 40 connected to the first-compartment first end wall 20 and a second-compartment bottom wall 42 connected to the second-compartment first side wall 40. A second-compartment second side wall 41 is connected to the second-compartment first side wall 40 and the second-compartment bottom wall 42, and a second-compartment top wall 44 is connected to the second-compartment first side wall 40 and the second-compartment second side wall 41. Second-compartment closure means are connected to the second compartment for gaining access to the second compartment space.

[0093] Preferably, a stiff reinforcement bottom panel 17 is located next to the first-compartment bottom wall 16 outside of the first compartment space. Also, feet 19 are located under the stiff reinforcement bottom panel 17. The stiff reinforcement bottom panel 17 and the feet 19 help to keep the portable medical bag apparatus 10 in an upright orientation when a health care worker attends to patients in a medical home care setting.

[0094] Preferably, the first-compartment closure means are connected to the first-compartment top wall 18. The first-compartment closure means can include a first-compartment zipper closure 46. The first-compartment zipper closure 46 includes a pair of independently operable and interlockable first-compartment zipper closure units 47.

[0095] The second-compartment closure means include a second-compartment zipper closure 50. The first-compartment first end wall 20 and the second-compartment first side wall 40 are a unified integrated wall structure.

[0096] Preferably, the portable medical bag apparatus 10 further includes a third compartment which includes a third compartment space defined by a third-compartment first side wall 34 connected to the first-compartment second side wall 14. A third-compartment bottom wall 26 is connected to the first-compartment bottom wall 16 and the third-compartment first side wall 34. A third-compartment first end wall 30 is connected to respective first ends of the third-compartment bottom wall 26 and the third-compartment first side wall 34. A third-compartment second end wall 32 is connected to respective second ends of the third-compartment bottom wall 26 and the third-compartment first side wall 34. A third-compartment second side wall 36 is connected to the third-compartment bottom wall 26 between the third-compartment first end wall 30 and the third-compartment second end wall 32. A third-compartment top wall 38 is connected between the third-compartment first side wall 34, the third-compartment first end wall 30, the third-compartment second end wall 32, and the third-compartment second side wall

36. Third-compartment closure means are connected to the third compartment for gaining access to the third compartment space.

[0097] Preferably, the third-compartment closure means can include a third-compartment zipper closure 48. The third-compartment zipper closure 48 includes a pair of independently operable and interlockable third-compartment zipper closure units 49.

[0098] Preferably, the third-compartment first side wall 34 is contiguous with the first-compartment second side wall 14. The third-compartment first side wall 34 and the first-compartment second side wall 14 are a unified integrated wall structure.

[0099] Preferably, a plurality of individually closeable pocket assemblies 72 are connected to the third-compartment first side wall 34 and the third-compartment second side wall 36 inside the third compartment space. The individually closeable pocket assemblies 72 in the third compartment can be transparent and can be used to keep items separate from one another, to keep the items clean, and to keep the items easy to find. Each of the individually closeable pocket assemblies 72 can have its own respective zipper 66.

[0100] Preferably, a plurality of binder rings 73 are connected to the third-compartment bottom wall 26 inside the third compartment space, and a plurality of individually closeable flexible bags 74 are connected to the binder rings 73 by respective moveable connections. The individually closeable flexible bags 74 include ring-reception apertures 79 for receiving the binder rings 73. Preferably, the individually closeable flexible bags 74 are transparent and include ziplock closures 67. The individually closeable flexible bags 74 can be used to store medical dressings in a clean environment and in an easy to find way.

[0101] The individually closeable pocket assemblies 72 and the individually closeable flexible bags 74 are especially useful for storing and containing a plurality of small items in an easily retrieved manner. Without such a plurality of individually closeable pocket assemblies 72 and individually closeable flexible bags 74, a plurality of small items may fall to the bottom of a bag causing inefficient and wasted time in finding them, product spoilage, and bag clutter.

[0102] Viewing the contents of each of the respective individually closeable flexible bags 74 is made easy by being able to rotate each respective individually closeable flexible bag 74 around the binder rings 73 so as to be able to clearly see the contents of the respective bags one at a time. Access to the contents of each individually closeable flexible bag 74 is readily obtained by opening a respective ziplock closure 67.

[0103] Preferably, a fourth compartment includes a fourth compartment space defined by a fourth-compartment first side wall, external to the third compartment space which is connected to the third-compartment second side wall 36. A fourth-compartment second side wall 65 is connected to the fourth-compartment first side wall. Fourth-compartment closure means are connected to the fourth-compartment second side wall 65 for permitting access to the fourth compartment space. The fourth-compartment first side wall is contiguous with the third-compartment second side wall

36. Preferably, the fourth-compartment first side wall and the third-compartment second side wall **36** are a unified integrated structure.

[0104] Preferably, the fourth-compartment closure means include a fourth-compartment zipper closure **80**. The fourth-compartment zipper closure **80** includes independently operable and interlockable fourth-compartment zipper closure units **81**.

[0105] The fourth compartment can be used for retaining patients records in a private manner. The independently operable and interlockable fourth-compartment zipper closure units **81** provide fulfillment of patients privacy requirements set forth in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). More specifically, the independently operable and interlockable fourth-compartment zipper closure units **81** can be locked together, such as with a key-operated lock or combination lock to prevent unauthorized access to the fourth compartment space.

[0106] A fifth compartment includes a fifth compartment space defined by a fifth-compartment first side wall **52**, external to the first compartment space, which is connected to the first-compartment first side wall **12**. A fifth-compartment bottom wall **54** is connected to the first-compartment bottom wall **16** and the fifth-compartment first side wall **52**. A fifth-compartment first end wall **56** is connected to respective first ends of the fifth-compartment bottom wall **54** and the fifth-compartment first side wall **52**. A fifth-compartment second end wall **58** is connected to respective second ends of the fifth-compartment bottom wall **54** and the fifth-compartment first side wall **52**. A fifth-compartment second side wall **60** is connected to the fifth-compartment bottom wall **54** between the fifth-compartment first end wall **56** and the fifth-compartment second end wall **58**, and a fifth-compartment top wall **62** is connected between the fifth-compartment first side wall **52**, the fifth-compartment first end wall **56**, the fifth-compartment second end wall **58**, and the fifth-compartment second side wall **60**. Fifth-compartment closure means are connected to the fifth compartment for gaining access to the fifth compartment space.

[0107] Preferably, the fifth-compartment closure means can be a fifth-compartment zipper closure **70**. The fifth-compartment zipper closure **70** includes a pair of independently operable and interlockable fifth-compartment zipper closure units **71**. The fifth-compartment first side wall **52** is contiguous with the first-compartment first side wall **12**. The fifth-compartment first side wall **52** and the first-compartment first side wall **12** are a unified integrated wall structure.

[0108] Also, a plurality of binder rings **73** can be connected to the fifth-compartment bottom wall **54** inside the fifth compartment space, and a plurality of individually closeable flexible bags **74** are connected to the binder rings **73** by respective moveable connections. The individually closeable flexible bags **74** are transparent and includes ziplock closures.

[0109] The individually closeable pocket assemblies **72** in the fifth compartment can be transparent and can be used to keep items separate from one another, to keep the items clean, and to keep the items in an easy to find manner.

[0110] Alternatively, if desired, the individually closeable pocket assemblies **72** in the fifth compartment can be used to retain dirty items. In this respect, when the individually

closeable pocket assemblies **72** in the third compartment are used to store clean items, and the individually closeable pocket assemblies **72** in the fifth compartment are used to store dirty items, clean and dirty items are separated from one another in the portable medical bag apparatus **10**, and such separation of clean items from dirty items is highly desirable for reasons of sanitation and for compliance with health regulations.

[0111] Preferably, a sixth compartment includes a sixth compartment space defined by a sixth-compartment first side wall **75** which is connected to the first-compartment second end wall **22**. A sixth-compartment bottom wall **76** is connected to the sixth-compartment first side wall **75**. A sixth-compartment second side wall **77** is connected to the sixth-compartment first side wall **75** and the sixth-compartment bottom wall **76**, and a sixth-compartment top wall **78** is connected to the sixth-compartment first side wall **75** and the sixth-compartment second side wall **77**. Sixth-compartment closure means are connected to the sixth compartment for gaining access to the sixth compartment space.

[0112] The respective connections between the respective walls, bottoms, and tops can be in the form of sewn seams.

[0113] In the embodiment of the invention described above, the first-compartment side walls are longer than the first-compartment end walls. Also, the third-compartment side walls are longer than the third-compartment end walls. However, if desired, the first-compartment side walls can be made longer than the first-compartment end walls, and the third-compartment side walls can be made longer than the third-compartment end walls.

[0114] With the first embodiment of the invention shown in the drawings, the first compartment is the center compartment. The center compartment can be used to store diagnostic equipment, such as a stethoscope and a blood pressure pulseoximeter.

[0115] With the first embodiment of the invention shown in the drawings, the third compartment and the fifth compartment are side compartments. In addition, with the first embodiment of the invention shown in the drawings, the second compartment and the sixth compartment are end compartments.

[0116] As stated above, the fourth-compartment zipper closure units **81** can be locked together, such as with a key-operated lock or combination lock to prevent unauthorized access to the fourth compartment space. In addition, respective zipper closure units for other compartments can be locked together, such as with a key-operated lock or combination lock, to prevent unauthorized access to the respective compartments.

[0117] Turning to **FIGS. 6 and 7**, a second embodiment **11** of the invention is shown. Reference numerals are shown that correspond to like reference numerals that designate like elements shown in the other figures. In general the second embodiment **11** of the portable medical bag apparatus is substantially the same as the first embodiment of the portable medical bag apparatus **10** of the invention.

[0118] The key difference between the first embodiment of the invention and the second embodiment of the invention relates to the placement of respective handles. More specifically, the first handles **23** of the first embodiment of the

invention are attached to the first compartment. In contrast, with the second embodiment **11** of the invention, a pair of second handles **25** are attached to the third compartment and the fifth compartment, respectively. More specifically, one of the second handles **25** is attached to the outside edge of the third-compartment top wall **38**, and the other of the second handles **25** is attached to the outside edge of the fifth-compartment top wall **62**, as shown in **FIGS. 6 and 7**.

[**0119**] The portable medical bag apparatus **10** of the invention can be called EZ View Med Bag™.

[**0120**] The components of the portable medical bag apparatus of the invention can be made from inexpensive and durable cloth, plastic, and metal materials.

[**0121**] More specifically, there are materials which have antimicrobial characteristics that inhibit bacterial growth, and such materials are known by the name Microban™ and are made or licensed for manufacture by Microban Products Company, Huntersville, N.C. More specifically, antimicrobial acrylic materials are disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 6,448,305, incorporated herein by reference. In addition, fiber reinforced plastic composites having antimicrobial characteristics that inhibit bacterial growth are disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 5,919,554, incorporated herein by reference. Such materials which have antimicrobial characteristics that inhibit bacterial growth can be used in making the portable medical bag apparatus of the invention.

[**0122**] As to the manner of usage and operation of the instant invention, the same is apparent from the above disclosure, and accordingly, no further discussion relative to the manner of usage and operation need be provided.

[**0123**] It is apparent from the above that the present invention accomplishes all of the objects set forth by providing a new and improved portable medical bag apparatus that is low in cost, relatively simple in design and operation, and which may advantageously be used to carry Sharps containers in a snug fitting compartment and to carry diagnostic instruments and clean medical products in other compartments that are separated from the Sharps containers to comply with OSHA separation requirements. With the invention, a portable medical bag apparatus provides a multi-compartment portable carrier which has a compartment that retains a Sharps container with a snug fit so that the Sharps container cannot move around and tip over while inside the compartment. With the invention, a portable medical bag apparatus provides a multi-compartment carrier for a Sharps container and for clean medical products which prevents independent swinging action between the compartment holding the Sharps container and the compartment holding the clean medical products. With the invention, a portable medical bag apparatus provides that one of the vertical walls of the transport pouch can be integrated into one of the walls of the portable carrier, whereby a net reduction in one vertical wall occurs. With the invention, a portable medical bag apparatus provides a portable bag used by health care professionals to have at least three separate compartments, one for diagnostic instruments, one for clean medical products, and one for dirty medical products.

[**0124**] With the invention, a portable medical bag apparatus provides a portable bag used by health care professionals to have at least four separate compartments, one for diagnostic instruments, one for clean medical products, one

for dirty medical products, and one for a Sharps container. With the invention, a portable medical bag apparatus provides a portable bag for health care professionals that has sub-compartments that are permanently attached to an inside wall of a compartment. With the invention, a portable medical bag apparatus provides a portable bag for health care professionals that has sub-compartments that are attached to a ring binder and that are transparent and have ziplock type closures. With the invention, a portable medical bag apparatus provides a portable bag for health care professionals that has a lockable compartment for keeping patients records therein in privacy. With the invention, a portable medical bag apparatus provides a portable, multi-compartment bag for health care professionals which has a compartment that retains a one quart capacity Sharps container with a snug fit.

[**0125**] Thus, while the present invention has been shown in the drawings and fully described above with particularity and detail in connection with what is presently deemed to be the most practical and preferred embodiments of the invention, it will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art that many modifications thereof may be made without departing from the principles and concepts set forth herein, including, but not limited to, variations in size, materials, shape, form, function and manner of operation, assembly and use.

[**0126**] Hence, the proper scope of the present invention should be determined only by the broadest interpretation of the appended claims so as to encompass all such modifications as well as all relationships equivalent to those illustrated in the drawings and described in the specification.

What is claimed as being new and desired to be protected by Letters Patent of the United States is as follows:

1. A portable medical bag apparatus, comprising:

a first compartment which includes a first compartment space, wherein said first compartment includes first-compartment side walls and first-compartment end walls,

first-compartment closure means connected to said first compartment for permitting access to said first compartment space,

a second compartment connected to a wall of said first compartment, external to said first compartment space, wherein said second compartment includes a second compartment space,

second-compartment closure means connected to a wall of said second compartment for permitted access to said second compartment space,

wherein said first compartment and said second compartment form a unified, integrated structure,

wherein said second compartment and said first compartment share a common wall, and

wherein said second compartment is shaped and dimensioned for reception of a standard Sharps disposable container.

2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein respective walls of said apparatus are made from materials which have antimicrobial characteristics that inhibit bacterial growth.

3. The apparatus of claim 1, further including:
indicia indicating a biohazard attached to said second compartment or said second-compartment closure means.
4. The apparatus of claim 3 wherein said indicia indicating a biohazard is a quantity of red ribbon attached to said second-compartment closure means.
5. The apparatus of claim 1, further including:
one or more first handles attached to said first compartment.
6. The apparatus of claim 1, further including:
a first-compartment top wall connected between said first-compartment side walls and said first-compartment end walls, and
a shoulder strap assembly connected to said first-compartment top wall.
7. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said second compartment and said first compartment share a common end wall of said first compartment.
8. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said second compartment is shaped and dimensioned for reception of a standard one quart Sharps disposable container.
9. The apparatus of claim 1, further including:
a third compartment connected to said first compartment, external to said first compartment space, wherein said third compartment includes a third compartment space, and wherein said third compartment and said first compartment share a common wall, and
third-compartment closure means connected to said third compartment for permitting access to said third compartment space.
10. The apparatus of claim 9, further including:
a fourth compartment connected to said third compartment, external to said third compartment space, wherein said fourth compartment includes a fourth compartment space, and wherein said fourth compartment and said third compartment share a common wall, and
fourth compartment closure means connected to said fourth compartment for permitting access to said fourth compartment.
11. The apparatus of claim 10, further including:
a fifth compartment connected to said first compartment, external to said first compartment space, wherein said fifth compartment includes a fifth compartment space, and wherein said first compartment and said fifth compartment share a common wall, and
fifth-compartment closure means connected to said fifth compartment for permitting access to said fifth compartment.
12. The apparatus of claim 11, further including:
one or more second handles attached to said fifth compartment.
13. The apparatus of claim 11, further including:
a sixth compartment connected to a wall of said first compartment, external to said first compartment space, wherein said sixth compartment includes a sixth compartment space,
sixth-compartment closure means connected to a wall of said sixth compartment for permitted access to said sixth compartment space,
wherein said first compartment and said sixth compartment form a unified, integrated structure,
wherein said sixth compartment and said first compartment share a common wall.
14. A portable medical bag apparatus, comprising:
a first compartment which includes a first compartment space defined by a first-compartment first side wall, a first-compartment bottom wall connected to a bottom portion of said first-compartment first side wall, a first-compartment first end wall connected to respective first ends of said first-compartment first side wall and said first-compartment bottom wall, a first-compartment second end wall connected to respective second ends of said first-compartment first side wall and said first-compartment bottom wall, said first-compartment first end wall, and said first-compartment second end wall, and a first-compartment top wall connected to said first-compartment first side wall, said first-compartment first end wall, said first-compartment second end wall, and said first-compartment second side wall,
first-compartment closure means connected to said first compartment for gaining access to said first compartment space,
a second compartment which includes a second compartment space defined by a second-compartment first side wall connected to said first-compartment first end wall, a second-compartment bottom wall connected to said second-compartment first side wall, a second-compartment second side wall connected to said second-compartment first side wall and said second-compartment bottom wall, and a second-compartment top wall connected to said second-compartment first side wall and said second-compartment second side wall, and
second-compartment closure means connected to said second compartment for gaining access to said second compartment space.
15. The apparatus of claim 14, further including:
a stiff reinforcement bottom panel located next to said first-compartment bottom wall outside of said first compartment space.
16. The apparatus of claim 15, further including:
feet located under said stiff reinforcement bottom panel.
17. The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said first-compartment closure means are connected to said first-compartment top wall.
18. The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said first-compartment closure means include a first-compartment zipper closure.
19. The apparatus of claim 18 wherein said first-compartment zipper closure includes a pair of independently operable and interlockable first-compartment zipper closure units.
20. The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said second compartment is shaped and dimensioned for reception of a standard Sharps disposable container.

21. The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said second compartment is shaped and dimensioned for reception of a standard one quart Sharps disposable container.

22. The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said second-compartment closure means include a second-compartment zipper closure.

23. The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said first-compartment first end wall and said second-compartment first side wall are a unified integrated wall structure.

24. The apparatus of claim 14 further including:

a third compartment which includes a third compartment space defined by a third-compartment first side wall connected to said first-compartment second side wall, a third-compartment bottom wall connected to said first-compartment bottom wall and said third-compartment first side wall, a third-compartment first end wall connected to respective first ends of said third-compartment bottom wall and said third-compartment first side wall, a third-compartment second end wall connected to respective second ends of said third-compartment bottom wall and said third-compartment first side wall, a third-compartment second side wall connected to said third-compartment bottom wall between said third-compartment first end wall and said third-compartment second end wall, and a third-compartment top wall connected between said third-compartment first side wall, said third-compartment first end wall, said third-compartment second end wall, and said third-compartment second side wall, and

third-compartment closure means connected to said third compartment for gaining access to said third compartment space.

25. The apparatus of claim 24 wherein said third-compartment closure means include a third-compartment zipper closure.

26. The apparatus of claim 25 wherein said third-compartment zipper closure includes a pair of independently operable and interlockable third-compartment zipper closure units.

27. The apparatus of claim 24 wherein said third-compartment first side wall is contiguous with said first-compartment second side wall.

28. The apparatus of claim 24 wherein said third-compartment first side wall and said first-compartment second side wall are a unified integrated wall structure.

29. The apparatus of claim 24, further including:

a plurality of individually closeable pocket assemblies connected to said third-compartment first side wall and said third-compartment second side wall inside said third compartment space.

30. The apparatus of claim 24, further including:

a plurality of binder rings connected to said third-compartment bottom wall inside said third compartment space, and

a plurality of individually closeable flexible bags connected to said binder rings by respective moveable connections.

31. The apparatus of claim 30 wherein said individually closeable flexible bags include ring-reception apertures for receiving said binder rings.

32. The apparatus of claim 31 wherein said individually closeable flexible bags are transparent and include ziplock closures.

33. The apparatus of claim 24, further including:

a fourth compartment which includes a fourth compartment space defined by a fourth-compartment first side wall, external to said third compartment space, connected to said third-compartment second side wall and a fourth-compartment second side wall connected to said fourth-compartment first side wall, and

fourth-compartment closure means connected to said fourth-compartment second side wall for permitted access to said fourth compartment space,

wherein said fourth-compartment first side wall is contiguous with said third-compartment second side wall, and

wherein said fourth-compartment first side wall and said third-compartment second side wall are a unified integrated structure.

34. The apparatus of claim 33 wherein said fourth-compartment closure means include a fourth-compartment zipper closure.

35. The apparatus of claim 34 wherein said fourth-compartment zipper closure includes independently operable and interlockable fourth-compartment zipper closure units.

36. The apparatus of claim 33, further comprising:

a fifth compartment which includes a fifth compartment space defined by a fifth-compartment first side wall, external to said first compartment space, connected to said first-compartment first side wall, a fifth-compartment bottom wall connected to said first-compartment bottom wall and said fifth-compartment first side wall, a fifth-compartment first end wall connected to respective first ends of said fifth-compartment bottom wall and said fifth-compartment first side wall, a fifth-compartment second end wall connected to respective second ends of said fifth-compartment bottom wall and said fifth-compartment first side wall, a fifth-compartment second side wall connected to said fifth-compartment bottom wall between said fifth-compartment first end wall and said fifth-compartment second end wall, and a fifth-compartment top wall connected between said fifth-compartment first side wall, said fifth-compartment first end wall, said fifth-compartment second end wall, and said fifth-compartment second side wall, and

fifth-compartment closure means connected to said fifth compartment for gaining access to said fifth compartment space,

37. The apparatus of claim 36 wherein said fifth-compartment closure means include a fifth-compartment zipper closure.

38. The apparatus of claim 37 wherein said fifth-compartment zipper closure includes a pair of independently operable and interlockable fifth-compartment zipper closure units.

39. The apparatus of claim 36 wherein said fifth-compartment first side wall is contiguous with said first-compartment first side wall.

40. The apparatus of claim 36 wherein said fifth-compartment first side wall and said first-compartment first side wall are a unified integrated wall structure.

41. The apparatus of claim 36, further including:

a plurality of binder rings connected to said fifth-compartment bottom wall inside said fifth compartment space, and

a plurality of individually closeable flexible bags connected to said binder rings by respective moveable connections.

42. The apparatus of claim 41 wherein said individually closeable flexible bags are transparent and include ziplock closures.

43. The apparatus of claim 36, further including:

a sixth compartment which includes a sixth compartment space, external to said first compartment space, defined

by a sixth-compartment first side wall connected to said first-compartment second end wall, a sixth-compartment bottom wall connected to said sixth-compartment first side wall, a sixth-compartment second side wall connected to said sixth-compartment first side wall and said sixth-compartment bottom wall, and a sixth-compartment top wall connected to said sixth-compartment first side wall and said sixth-compartment second side wall, and

sixth-compartment closure means connected to said sixth compartment for gaining access to said sixth compartment space.

* * * * *