STANDARD OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE FOR THE IMPORTATION OF PHARMACEUTICALS, ANTIBIOTIC AND CONTROLLED PHARMACEUTICALS INTO THE COUNTRY OF BELIZE THROUGH THE MEDICAL MISSION PROCESS

The importation of pharmaceuticals and controlled pharmaceuticals into Belize is a process that is governed by the Competent Authority of Belize, the Director of Health Services of the Ministry of Health.

The importation of Antibiotics is regulated by law under the Antibiotic Act and the importation of controlled pharmaceuticals is governed by the Misuse of Drugs Act, in conjunction with International Conventions on Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances.

Based on the existing legislations, the management and control of pharmaceuticals is done under the supervision of a registered Pharmacist. A registered Pharmacist is a person who is registered under the Chemist and Druggist Act of Belize. In order to improve the efficiency of the importation process of Pharmaceuticals and controlled Pharmaceuticals, the following Standard Operational Procedure has been developed to guide the process and to ensure that it is done in an efficient and effective manner.
MINISTRY OF HEALTH
PHARMACY DEPARTMENT
MEDICAL MISSION - Importation of Pharmaceuticals
(Procedure Number 1003)

Objective:

To describe the procedure that guides the importation of pharmaceuticals and antibiotics into the country of Belize, thorough the medical missions.

To ensure that coordinators of the medical mission are aware of the procedure to enter the country with medicines for use during their medical clinics.

APPROVAL TO CONDUCT MEDICAL MISSIONS:

1. Request must be sent in writing to the Regional Manager of the respective region in which the mission will be conducted.

2. The regional manager will provide a letter authorizing the mission to conduct their medical visits.

3. The list of pharmaceuticals that will accompany the mission must be reviewed by the Pharmacist of the region, who will provide the technical guidance to the Regional Manager, as it relates to the type, quantity and expiry date of the proposed donated shipment.

4. The reviewed list should be returned to the Medical Mission. This is the list that will be forwarded to the Ministry of Health for second review and processing.

5. The letter of authorization by the Regional Manager and the approved list of medications and supplies should be forwarded to the Ministry of Health for processing. The Ministry requires a period of one month to process the request.

6. The Ministry of Health will then forward to the Ministry of Finance, a letter requesting full duty waiver on the approved medicines and supplies.

7. The Ministry of Health, upon approval will prepare a letter to the Comptroller of Custom, granting import authorization for the approved list of Pharmaceuticals and supplies.
8. The Ministry of Finance will review the request and if approved, will send the duty waiver letter to the representative of the Mission and one to Ministry of Health.

9. Any medicines that were added after the approval of the list had been completed will be confiscated by Customs at the point of importation, as no authorization will be granted for the extra medicines.

PROCEDURE TO REQUEST FULL DUTY EXEMPTION FROM THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE:

The Medical Mission must provide the Ministry of Health with a copy of:

- A letter of approval from the Regional Manager authorizing the medical mission to conduct medical clinic in the period stipulated.

- The list of medications and supplies must be reviewed by the office of the Competent Authority, the Director of Health Services, for the Ministry of Health.

- A letter from the Ministry of Health requesting for full duty waiver must be forwarded to the Ministry of Finance before these requests get processed.

- The Ministry of Finance requires a minimum of two working weeks to process these requests.

- Original letters from Finance will be sent to the local address on the letter of request and a copy will be sent to the Ministry of Health.