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(71) Applicant: **NEEDLESMART LTD** [GB/GB]; Suite 3, Stanley Grange, Ormskirk Road, Knowsley Merseyside L34 4AT (GB).

(72) Inventor: **KIRBY, Clifford**; 3, Old Rectory Green, Sefton Village Merseyside L29 6YD (GB).

(74) Agent: **HUTCHINSON IP LTD**; 57 Hoghton Street, Southport Merseyside PR9 0PG (GB).

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(54) Title: PHLEBOTOMY NEEDLE DESTRUCTION

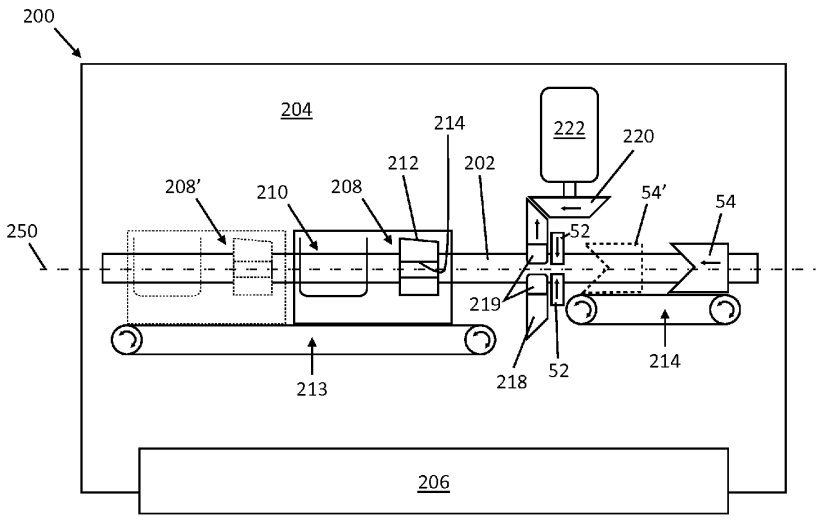

FIGURE 21

(57) Abstract: An apparatus (200)for processing a phlebotomy needle (12) is disclosed. The phlebotomy needle (12) is a double-ended needle (12) with a hub (18) located between its tips(14, 16). The apparatus (200) has a clamping electrode (52) for contacting and clamping one end (14) of the needle (12) between the hub (18) and the tip (14) and a tip electrode (54) for contacting the needle (12) at its tip (14). A voltage (302) is applied between the clamping electrode (52) and the tip electrode(54), to soften/melt the needle via resistive heating, at the same time as the tip electrode (54) is advanced (304) to compress the needle tip (14) and blunt it. The apparatus (200) is characterised by means (208, 210, 216, 218, 224) that allows the needle (12) to be rotated through, say 180 degrees, so that the first tip (14) and the second tip (16) can be blunted. Also disclosed is means for detaching the phlebotomy needle (12) from a main body (20) and/or for removing a cover (22) covering one end (16) of the phlebotomy needle(12). The apparatus (200) enables a Vacutainer-type needle (10) to be disassembled into its various parts (12, 20, 22) and the needle (12) rendered blunt at both ends and non-hazardous.

WO 2019/238979 A8

[Continued on next page]

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