



Safe Use, Handling and Disposal of Sharps

Safe Handling and Use of Sharps

Infection control procedures when handling needles and other sharp contaminated objects include:

- Always wear disposable gloves when handling needles or sharp objects
- Use only one sharps item at any given time
- Sharps should not be handled if feeling fatigued (i.e. late in the day)
- Request assistance with sharp items with a restless or agitated client
- Avoid handing uncapped needles directly from one person to another; instead place on a stable, clean surface to transfer.
- Never attempt to re-cap, snap or bend used needles
- Never re-use a needle
- Handle needles by the barrel.
- Always handle butterfly needles by their wings to prevent the needle flicking back and injuring the user
- Draw up medication requiring syringe at the location where used
- Always take a yellow sharps container to the location where used for immediate disposal of sharps
- The person who has used the sharp is responsible for its immediate safe disposal following its use

Safe Disposal of Sharps

Sharps disposal units should be available in any Life Without Barriers workplace that uses needles or sharp objects as part of work activities or are exposed to clients or visitors requiring to use needles whilst in the premises.

- Managers must ensure sufficient sharps containers are provided.
- Sharps containers should not be accessible to clients or visitors, particularly children.
- All sharps disposal units should be cleared out by a qualified and competent person or service provider regularly.
- In workplaces that have a high risk of need use in bathrooms, a fixed disposal unit should be installed and cleared out regularly.
- Ensure sharps containers are stored upright to prevent leakage.
- Sharps should never be forcibly placed into sharps containers.
- Always drop the sharp end first into the sharps container.
- Never over fill a sharps container.





- Sharps should NEVER be placed in a normal waste bin.
- Never put your hands into a waste bin or sharps container.
- Never manually compress garbage bags, hold garbage bags close to their body.
- Hold garbage bags by the base of the bag.

Sharp items that can be disposed of in sharps containers include:

- Disposable razors.
- Glass contaminated with body fluids.
- Needles.
- Syringes.
- Scalpel blades.

Sharps Containers

Sharps containers must:

- Be a medically approved puncture-proof container.
- Be yellow in colour and clearly labelled with the “biohazard” symbol.
- Have an opening that is wide enough to allow sharps to be dropped in by a single hand operation.
- Units must be key operated or clip locked to prevent accidental opening.
- Be compliant with Australian Standard AS 4031-1992.



All needle stick injuries must be immediately reported refer to the management of needlestick injuries factsheet for full details.

Emergency Contact Details

The house supervisor must ensure that contact details for local emergency / medical services are in the Emergency Response Procedure (ERP) and displayed on a poster in a prominent location.

First Aid Kits

The manager/house supervisor will ensure that first aid kits appropriate to the nature and scale of the site are maintained on the site in accordance with the First Aid Procedure