

## Sharps and Needle stick injuries guidance

The following guidance is designed to advise on issues surrounding the safe use (such as EpiPens) and disposal of sharps, and what protocol staff should follow in the event of a sharps or needle stick injury.

### Definitions:

**Sharp** – something with the potential to break the skin, such as needles, scissors, blades or teeth etc.

**Needle stick** – puncture injury caused by a needle or sharp (may be contaminated or non-contaminated).

### Council procedure

When using or disposing of sharps ensure you follow these simple rules and any other procedures identified within the risk assessment:

#### Use:

- Do not pass sharps or needles
- Do not re-sheath syringes
- Use the sharp in a suitable environment, out of the way of others (this includes use of scissors)
- Do not walk around with sharps or allow service users to move around with their sharps
- Only use syringes and specialist sharps equipment if you have been trained to do so, this includes the use of EpiPens.

#### Disposal:

- Dispose of sharps, in the correct manner. If sharps bins are used in the workplace, ensure they are not over filled
- Dispose of broken glass in a suitable manner, for example wrap in cardboard / newspaper and if possible place into a rigid container or sharps bin
- When using or disposing of sharps, ensure you wear the correct personal protective equipment such as gloves.

If a syringe or suspect sharp is found on site **do not** attempt to pick up the sharp – **contact the Site Staff/Caretaker**. They should ensure the sharp is removed suitably using pick up sticks in conjunction with suitable personal protective equipment. This will then be disposed of into a sharps bin or suitable rigid container (training is available through Health and Safety).

Needle stick and sharps injuries - if you receive a puncture wound with a contaminated sharp:

- Bleed the wound if possible (squeezing the wound can encourage bleeding)
- Place wound under running water. Lukewarm water can encourage bleeding further

- Contact GP, Occupational Health or local Accident and Emergency for further advice. Give all known information regarding the contaminant – for medication the packaging or label information should be given. For possible contamination of blood any information regarding the service user can be helpful if known
- Fill out an online incident reporting form.

**Counselling can be arranged, if necessary, directly through the employee's HR officer.**