



SAFE USE AND DISPOSAL OF SHARPS

INTRODUCTION

The risk of injury or infection from accidents with sharps within client provider premises is significant. The purpose of this protocol is to provide some basic rules relating to the handling and disposal of sharps.

- 1) Sharps must not be passed directly from hand to hand, and handling should be kept to a minimum.
- 2) Needles must not be bent or broken prior to use.
- 3) **Always** dispose of sharps at the point of use in a suitable container. The date of opening of the sharp's container should be clearly visible and written in pen.
- 4) Needles **must not** be re-sheathed by hand.
- 5) Syringes/cartridges and needles **should be disposed of intact**.
- 6) **Do not** fill sharps containers above the manufacturer's marked line.
- 7) **Lock** the used sharps container when ready for final disposal in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. The date of sealing the container should be clearly visible and written in pen.
- 8) Sharps containers should be disposed of when the manufacturer's marked line has been reached or at intervals specified by local procedures, usually no more than three months.
- 9) Always carry used sharps containers by the handle.
- 10) **Do not** dispose of sharps with other clinical waste.
- 11) **Do not** place used sharps containers in yellow bags for disposal.
- 12) Place damaged used sharps containers into a large secure rigid container, which is properly labelled.
- 13) **Dispose of sharps containers either by incineration or maceration, followed by heat or chemical treatment.**

WHICH SHARPS BIN DO I NEED?

There are various types of sharps bins which are colour coded to help you separate your waste into the correct containers.

(Please see next page)



NON-PHARMACEUTICAL SHARPS BINS – (ORANGE LID) – are used for tattoo needles, piercing needles, knives or stationery products.



SHARPS CONTAMINATED WITH MEDICINAL PRODUCTS – (YELLOW LID) – are used for needles, syringes or other sharps which have been used with medicines and pharmaceuticals. For example, needles are used to administer injections.



SHARPS CONTAMINATED WITH HAZARDOUS CHEMICALS – (PURPLE LID) – are used for sharps contaminated with cytotoxic or cytostatic medicines. For example, medicinal vials.