

**BIRMINGHAM NEWMAN UNIVERSITY  
SHARPS SAFETY PROCEDURE****Contents**

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**1. Introduction**

1.1 The safe disposal of sharps is essential in order to reduce the risk of cross infection and injuries relating to punctures and cuts. Sharps must be disposed of at the point of use and never passed from hand to hand or re-sheathed. Sharps bins complying with BS 7320 (1990) are recommended by the Infection Control authorities and a variety of sizes will be available from the University stores. In the event of a sharps injury occurring, staff will be aware of the appropriate prompt actions that they must take and the importance of prompt reporting of all exposure incidents. This procedure aims to provide evidence-based guidance for the safe management of sharps and the prevention of sharps or splash injuries.

**1.2 Definition****1.2.1 Sharps**

A **sharp** is any item having corners, edges, or projections capable of cutting or piercing the skin and includes needles, blades (such as scalpels) and glass.

A sharps injury is an incident which causes a sharp to penetrate the skin.

RE-SHEATH- Replacing the original cover back on the used sharp.

**1.2.3 Splash / Spillage Injury**

A "splash / spillage injury" occurs when blood or bodily fluids contaminate a person/s eyes, mouth, broken skin or mucous membranes.

**2. Legal Compliance**

2.1 The legal situation for the health and safety of employees is covered under various legislation, namely:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999)
- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (2002)
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (2013)

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- 2.2 Needlestick and sharps injuries can have devastating consequences for the individuals concerned. Although rare, the main risks are infection from blood borne virus including Hepatitis B, C and HIV.

For this reason prompt reporting of all exposure incidents is important to ensure, appropriate management, documentation, surveillance and minimising the risk of further exposures.

### **3. Responsibilities**

#### **3.1 The University is responsible for:**

- 3.1.2 Provision of ongoing supplies of appropriate sharps containers.
- 3.1.3 Ensuring dissemination and enforcement of this procedure.
- 3.1.4 Carrying out recommendations following audit of sharps disposal.

#### **3.2 Staff are responsible for:**

- 3.2.1 Adhering to health and safety requirements and are not expected to handle sharp boxes unless for personal use.
- 3.2.2 Prompt reporting of malfunctioning, defective and overfilled sharps boxes.
- 3.2.3 Ensuring that they have the knowledge and skills to competently handle and dispose of sharps if required to do so in relation to their job.
- 3.2.4 Ensuring that all incidents are reported promptly in compliance with this procedure and the University's Accident Reporting procedure.
- 3.2.5 Challenging and reporting the poor practice of others.
- 3.2.6 Attending any follow up appointments for sharps and splash injuries as required.

#### **3.3 Health & Safety Manager is responsible for:**

- 3.3.1 Liaising with the Estates and Campus Service on the issuing of sharps boxes to nominated personnel for personal use only and the issue is recorded on the "Sharps Boxes Issue and Disposal Record Form".
- 3.3.2 Reporting of any significant injury involving blood borne viruses, in line with the RIDDOR requirements.
- 3.3.3 Appropriate follow up of incidents that require further Health & Safety investigation and liaising with Occupational Health where necessary.
- 3.3.4 Informing the Health Protection Agency of any significant injury involving blood borne viruses to assist in the national surveillance of Occupational Exposure to Blood borne Viruses.

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3.3.5 Advising First Aiders of the sharps and splash injury procedure and updating the information leaflet in Appendix 1.

**3.4 Estates and Campus Service is responsible for:**

3.4.1 Identifying designated areas for the supply, storage and removal of sharp containers and for the co-location of biological waste bins. The designated areas are:

St Chad's, Lower Atrium (G0) disabled toilet  
Barberi Building, disabled toilet  
Julian of Norwich, disabled toilet  
Edwards Building, PESS Blood Lab

3.4.2 Management of the service level agreement (SLA) with a licensed waste contractor for the supply, storage and removal of sharp containers within designated areas.

3.4.3 Prompt removal of used sharps containers from the designated areas via a licensed waste contractor.

3.4.4 Removal of identified sharps incorrectly disposed, as trained and record incidences.

3.4.5 Prompt response to requests to replenish local supplies of sharps boxes.

3.4.6 Maintain and publicise information and location of sharps boxes.

3.4.7 Liaison with the Health & Safety Manager to ensure compliance with the procedure.

**3.5 First Aiders are responsible for:**

3.5.1 Prompt action in dealing with accidents or incidents involving sharps or splashes in compliance with this procedure. See Appendix 1

3.5.2 Immediately informing the Health & Safety Manager or the Director of Human Resources in the absence of the Health & Safety Manager.

**4. Safe Management System**

4.1 Risk assessments should be made of all situations and activities where a member of staff, student or visitor may be exposed to blood or other potentially infectious material. This will identify which technologies could be used to eliminate exposures, allow consideration of possible alternatives, eliminate the unnecessary use of sharps by implementing changes in practice and providing, where practicable, sharp-free devices or safer needle technologies which retract or shield needles after use. Where there residual risk identified then appropriate monitoring, supervision, training and information will be provided.

4.2 Diabetic insulin injection or EpiPen users should be encouraged to bring in and take home their own sharps containers, where this is not possible an authorised container should be provided by Estates, at the request from the user's line manager. This must be returned to Estates for disposal via a licensed waste contractor.

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- 4.3 Sharps containers are available in the disabled toilets for emergency use.
- 4.4 To ensure and audit procedure compliance the University will undertake an audit exercise on a yearly basis to respond to areas of deficit and evaluate need for change to the procedure. The audit is to be undertaken as part of Infection Control measures.

**5. General Principles for the Safe Management and Disposal of Sharps**

- 5.1 Staff must ensure that precautions are followed at all times when dealing with sharps. Refer to **Section 7 Actions** to be taken and **Appendix 1 First Aid for Sharps/ Splash injury and Appendix 2 for Events in the Clinical Skills Laboratories**.
- 5.2 Needles must never be re-sheathed.
- 5.3 Never bend or break needles after use.
- 5.4 Do not disassemble needles from syringes or other devices wherever possible. If disassembly is required, the needle should be removed using an approved device NOT fingers as per an appropriate Risk Assessment. Wherever possible dispose of as a single unit.
- 5.5 Sharps must always be disposed of at the point of use into a sharps box.
- 5.6 Sharps should not be passed from hand to hand.
- 5.7 Appropriate gloves must be worn when dealing with sharps. Aprons and eye protection should be worn if there is a risk of splash or spillage.
- 5.8 Any incidents involving sharps or faulty sharps bins must be reported to the Health & Safety Manager and an Accident Reporting Form must be completed.

**6. Sharps Containers Practice**

- 6.1 All sharps containers must comply with BS 7320:1990.
- 6.2 Sharps containers must be assembled correctly and labels completed - signed and dated by the person responsible for assembly. (**Appendix 3**)
- 6.3 The lid must be fitted securely to ensure a leak proof seal.
- 6.4 Never try to get anything back out of the sharps bin and never try to empty the sharps.
- 6.5 Sharps containers should be appropriate for the area in which they are used.
- 6.6 Staff must take the sharps container to point of use and dispose of the sharp directly into it. The sharps container should be positioned while using sharps to facilitate the disposal of sharp at the point of use.
- 6.7 Sharps containers must not be over filled. They must only be filled to the "fill line" which is clearly identified on the container or  $\frac{3}{4}$  full if line is not known.

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- 6.8 The lid of sharps containers should be closed when not in use.
- 6.9 Sharps containers must be locked when removing for disposal.
- 6.10 The person locking the sharps containers must sign the identification label, date and sign.
- 6.11 Sharps containers awaiting collection must be stored in a secure protected area.
- 6.12 The porters and housekeeping staff must not attempt to move sharps containers that are not correctly and securely sealed.

## **7. Action to be taken in the event of a Sharps or Splash / Spillage Injury**

- 7.1 If you receive a sharps injury, follow this first aid advice immediately (**Appendix 1**), or follow **Appendix 2** for Events in the Clinical Skills Laboratories :
- Encourage the wound to bleed, ideally by holding it under running water.
  - Wash the wound using running water and plenty of soap.
  - Don't scrub the wound while you're washing it.
  - DO NOT suck the wound.
  - Dry the wound and cover it with a waterproof plaster or dressing.
- 7.2 If you receive a splash injury, irrigate all splashes to the eye, mouth and mucous membranes with large amounts of saline or tap water.
- 7.3 Immediately inform the Health & Safety Manager or the Director of HR in the absence of the Health & Safety Manager.
- 7.4 The member of staff should seek urgent medical advice and should attend the Accident and Emergency Department of the nearest hospital immediately.

The nearest Accident and Emergency Department is located at:

Queen Elizabeth Hospital  
 Mindelsohn Way  
 Edgbaston  
 Birmingham  
 B15 2WB

**This Sharps Safety Procedure supersedes all previous Sharps Safety Procedures and shall be reviewed at no less than 3 yearly intervals**

<b>Presented to Health and Safety Committee:</b>	<b>22/02/2024</b>
<b>Ratified by University Operational Team:</b>	<b>14/03/2024</b>

## Appendix 1

**First Aid for Sharps/Splash Injury**

**DO NOT DISMISS THIS INCIDENT. YOU COULD BE AT RISK OF CONTRACTING INFECTION FROM A BLOOD-BORNE VIRUS**

<b>For Sharps Injuries:</b>	<b>For Splash Injuries: (Contamination of mouth/eyes, broken skin)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Encourage the wound to bleed, ideally by holding it under running water</b></li> <li>• <b>Wash the wound using running water and plenty of soap</b></li> <li>• <b>Don't scrub the wound while you're washing it</b></li> <li>• <b>DO NOT suck the wound</b></li> <li>• <b>Dry the wound and cover it with a waterproof plaster or dressing</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Rinse thoroughly with plenty of running water or irrigate thoroughly with sterile water/saline</b></li> </ul>

**THEN**

- ✂ Immediately inform the Health & Safety Manager or the Director of Human Resources in the absence of the Health & Safety Manager
- ✂ Seek urgent medical advice for the affected member of staff and enable them to attend the Accident and Emergency Department of the nearest hospital immediately.
- ✂ Ensure the incident is reported on the accident report form in line with the Accident Reporting procedure
- ✂ It is the responsibility of all staff involved in the incident to ensure that this procedure is followed

**Appendix 2****Clinical Skills Labs: ACTION TO TAKE IN AN EVENT**

**Incident Occurs: STOP what you are doing, perform First Aid**

- \*Encourage the wound to bleed, ideally by holding it under running water.
- \*Wash the wound using water with plenty of soap
  - \*Do not scrub the wound while you're washing it
  - \*Do not suck the wound
- \*Dry the wound and cover it with a waterproof plaster or dressing

Inform Senior Person on duty also the Health & Safety Manager or the Director of Human Resources / if H&S manager unavailable

**Senior Person on duty**

- \*Carry out preliminary risk assessment and complete a risk assessment form as to whether any risk of inoculation. If not, treat as first aid incident only.
- \*Report incident on University Accident and Near Miss Reporting System Form
- \*Offer available support for those involved or affected.

Completed forms can be submitted online to the Health & Safety Department :  
Health\_and\_Safety@newman.ac.uk

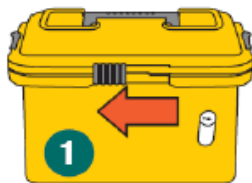
If there is a risk of inoculation or dependant on the severity of the injury, you should seek urgent medical advice.  
**Go to the nearest A&E department if appropriate.**

## Appendix 3

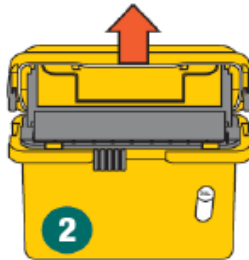
# Sharpsmart

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

### OPEN

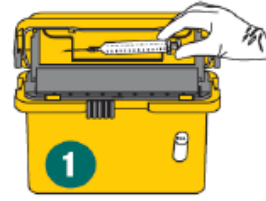


1. Slide front lock to left.

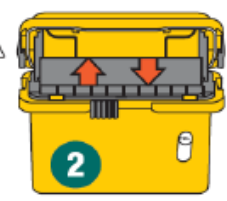


2. Lift lid until locked open.

### SYRINGES

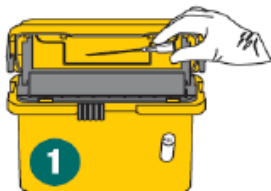


1. Drop syringe horizontally onto tray.



2. Tray will empty itself.

### LIGHT SHARPS

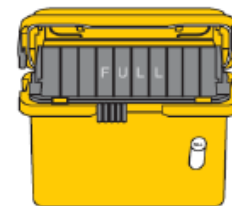


1. Drop sharp horizontally onto tray.



2. Manually lift tray to empty.

### FULL



When tray remains vertical, lock and replace collector.

### CLOSE



1. Press both side supports inward, close lid.



2. Slide front lock fully to right.

### LOCK



1. Depress red tabs.  
2. Slide locks completely forward.

**NOTE: Side locks are permanent!**

### REMEMBER:

- ALWAYS ENSURE SHARP HAS EMPTIED FROM TRAY
- NEVER PUT HANDS BEYOND TRAY LIP
- ALWAYS DISPOSE SHARPS & SHARPS SAFETY DEVICES INTO SHARPS COLLECTORS
- ALWAYS CLOSE COLLECTOR BEFORE MOVING/REMOVING COLLECTOR
- DO NOT DEFACE OR WRITE ON COLLECTOR



## SHARPSGUARD® Sharps Container Door Positions



### Door open position

The door in the lid is fully open allowing for disposal of sharps into the container



### Temporary closure position

The door in the lid has been pulled across to the temporary closure position. Accidental access to the contents is reduced. The lid can still be opened allowing for further use.

**"Temporary Closure"**  
*Moulded within lid*



### Permanent closure position

The door in the lid is closed and locked firmly by pulling right across. The lid cannot be opened again and the sharps container no longer used.

**"Permanent Closure"**  
*Moulded within lid*

SHARPSGUARD®

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Safety, Service and Support Every Day

# SHARPSGUARD®

## Sharps Container Assembly

1. Select the correct type and size of SHARPSGUARD® sharps container for your use.
2. Ensure you use the lid that matches the SHARPSGUARD® container you have selected. The lid colour should match the colour of the label. Note that SHARPSGUARD® 0.5, 0.6, com-plus and 1 are supplied ready assembled.
3. Place the lid on the top of the SHARPSGUARD® container so that the aperture is best suited for your use. The aperture does not have to be immediately above the label.
4. With the container resting on a firm surface, press down on one side of the lid with the ball of your hand.
5. Work your way around the SHARPSGUARD® container pushing the remainder of the lid into position. An audible 'click' is normally heard when the final part of the lid is pushed into place.
6. Test the seal on the lid by trying to take the lid off.



7. Complete the appropriate sections of the label.



8. Place the SHARPSGUARD® container on a bracket, tray or in a mobile holder as appropriate.



**ST35**

### POUDS®

A system for the disposal of sharps at the point of use to help reduce the risk of sharps injuries by incorporating simple to use trays kickabouts, holders and brackets to bring the SHARPSGUARD® container range closer to the point of use.



SHARPSGUARD®

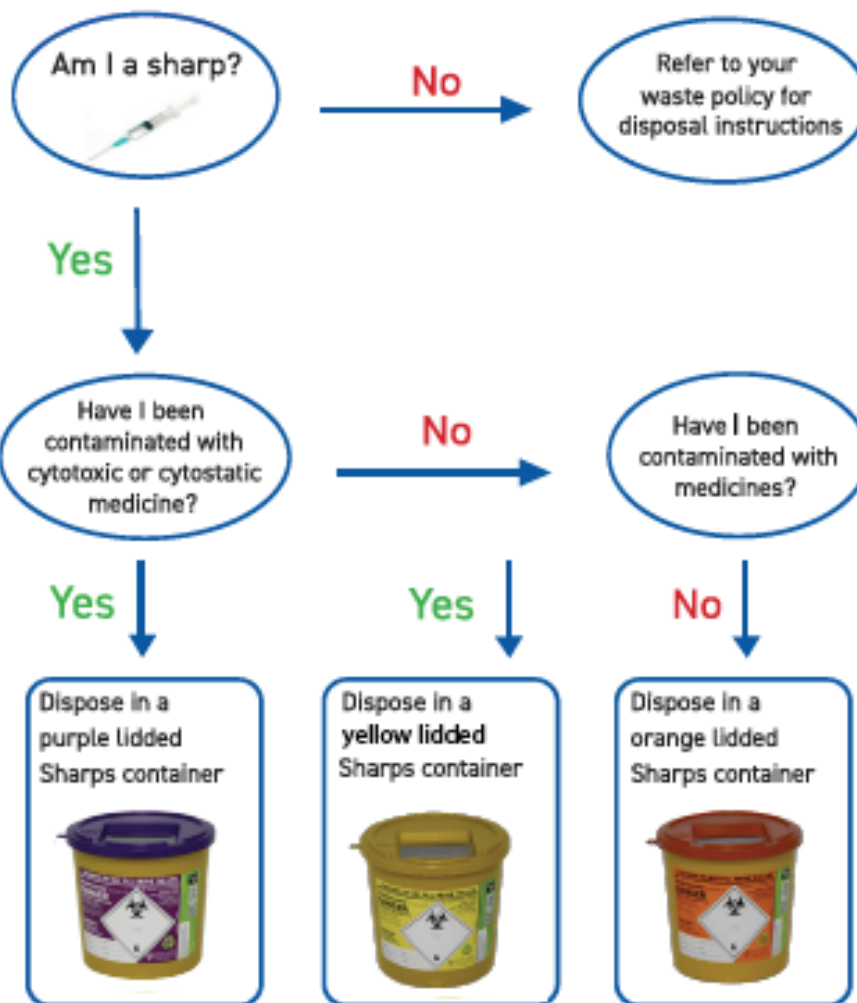
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**d.**  
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## Sharps Waste Segregation



If you have questions or need further information, please contact your local Area Manager or our Customer Service Team on +44 1706 754980 or [info.healthcareuk@mauserpackaging.com](mailto:info.healthcareuk@mauserpackaging.com) and visit our website [www.daniels.co.uk](http://www.daniels.co.uk).



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