 Department of Health Government of Nunavut		NURSING POLICY, PROCEDURE AND PROTOCOLS	
		Community Health Nursing	
TITLE:		SECTION:	POLICY NUMBER:
Sharps		Infection Control	10-009-00
EFFECTIVE DATE:	REVIEW DUE:	REPLACES NUMBER:	NUMBER OF PAGES:
February 10, 2018	February 2021		3
APPLIES TO:			
Community Health Nurses			

POLICY:

Every employee is responsible for the safe handling and safe disposal of all sharps.

DEFINITIONS:

SHARPS include any of the following that are either used or of an unknown use status (i.e. sharps no longer in their protective packaging):

- Needles
- Scalpel blades
- Broken glass
- Ampoules
- Plastic items

PRINCIPLES:

Whenever possible, safe sharp supplies should be used.

Safe handling and safe disposal of sharps ensures that no injury or transmission of contagious diseases occurs to any of the staff members or the clients.

RELATED POLICIES, GUIDELINES AND LEGISLATION:

Guideline 10-009-01 Safe Handling and Disposal of Sharps



GUIDELINES 10-009-01

Sharps Containers

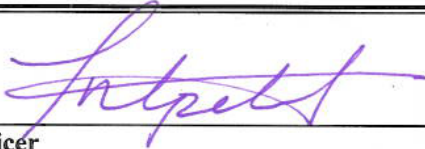

1. Sharps containers are yellow with a black biohazard sign and are made from puncture proof material
2. There must be sufficient numbers of sharps containers in each work area which are located out of the reach of children.
3. Used disposable sharp articles and instruments are placed in this container.
4. Once the container reaches three quarters (3/4) full, the container is sealed and stored safely before disposal or transport. Never fill beyond this limit. Overfilling increases the risk of injury.
5. Transportation or disposal of sharps containers will follow regional protocols (e.g. transport to Regional Health Centre for incineration).

General Guidelines for Handling Sharps

1. The person, who generates the sharp, disposes of the sharp. Sharps should never be left for housekeeping staff to dispose of.
2. If a sharp is found on the floor or near the bin, it is picked up with care using protective equipment and placed in the sharps container. The staff member who found the sharp is to report the incident to the Supervisor.
3. Avoid rushing when handling needles and sharps.
4. Use extreme care when handling needles and sharp instruments. Obtain assistance when giving injections, starting intravenous lines, and for any other procedure that requires the use of needles and sharp instruments when the patient is uncooperative.
5. Dispose of all needles and other sharps promptly in a sharp container. It is imperative that these items not be left in patient care areas, on food trays, or inadvertently deposited in trash containers.
6. Contaminated needles should not be recapped by hand, removed from disposable syringes by hand, or purposefully bent, broken, or otherwise manipulated by hand.
7. In the event recapping is unavoidable, the one-handed scoop technique or a needle-recapping device should be used.
8. Biological wastes and sharps containers are sent to the Regional facility for incineration.



RELATED POLICIES, GUIDELINES AND LEGISLATION:
Policy 10-009-00 Sharps

Approved by:		11 FEB 2011	Effective Date: April 1, 2011
Chief Nursing Officer		Date	
	February 11, 2011	Date	
Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services			

