

Eu Directive on the Prevention of Sharps Injuries in the Health Care Sector

David Haliki, Crescent Safety Consultancy Ltd

A Webber Training Teleclass

Eu Directive on the Prevention of Sharps Injuries in the Health Care Sector

The New Regulations
Getting the Point Across

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Hosted by Tracey Cooper
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- The new Regulations took effect on 11 May 2013, and similar new legislation has also been applied across the whole of Europe to implement the mandatory measures in EU Council Directive 2010/32 /EU(The Sharps Directive).
- This should be celebrated and remembered as a great day for the protection of healthcare workers from sharps injuries and the potential of contracting a deadly blood borne viruses

- “The everyday work of healthcare staff puts them at risk of serious infections from more than 30 potentially dangerous pathogens, including hepatitis B (HBV), hepatitis C (HCV) and HIV, through injuries with contaminated needles and other sharps.
- It is estimated that there are around 100,000 sharps injuries in the UK each year and four workers have died as a result of occupationally acquired HIV from a sharps injury in the NHS.

- All employers were required under existing health and safety law to ensure that risks from sharps injuries were adequately assessed and appropriate control measures were in place
- The Regulations implement aspects of the European Council Directive that were not specifically addressed in existing GB legislation provide specific detail on requirements that must be taken by healthcare employers and their contractors

- ### Interpretation
- “healthcare contractor” means an employer whose main activity is not the management, organisation or provision of healthcare, but who provides services under contract to a healthcare employer;
 - “healthcare employer” means an employer whose main activity is the management, organisation and provision of healthcare;
 - “injury” includes infection;

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Interpretation

- “medical sharp” means an object or instrument necessary for the exercise of specific healthcare activities, which is able to cut, prick or cause injury;
- “safer sharp” means a medical sharp that is designed and constructed to incorporate a feature or mechanism which prevents or minimises the risk of accidental injury from cutting or pricking/piercing the skin.

STATUTORY INSTRUMENT

2013 No. 645
HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Health and Safety
(Sharp Instruments in Healthcare) Regulations 2013

- Made --- 18th March 2013
- Laid before Parliament 21st March 2013
- Coming into force -- 11th May 2013

New Regulations Require Healthcare Employers and Employees to:

- Avoid the unnecessary use of sharps
- Use safer sharps, incorporating protection mechanisms
- Prevent the recapping of needles
- Use secure containers for safe disposal of medical sharps
- Provide health and safety information and training for staff

Avoid the unnecessary use of sharps – regulation 5(1)(a)

- Needles, scalpels etc will remain essential tools for effective medical care. However, the employer should ensure that sharps are only used where they are required.
- For example, organisations that have reviewed the use of sharps have identified staff using needles to carry out tasks for which they are not required (for example collection of urine samples from catheter bags).
- Needle-free equipment is available for certain procedures and should be used, where it is reasonably practicable to do so.

Use safer sharps (incorporating protection mechanisms) – regulation 5(1)(b)

- The employer must substitute traditional, unprotected medical sharps with a ‘safer sharp’ where it reasonably practicable to do so.
- The term ‘safer sharp’ means medical sharps that incorporate features or mechanisms to prevent or minimise the risk of accidental injury. For example, a range of syringes and needles are now available with a shield or cover that slides or pivots to cover the needle after use.

Prevent the recapping of needles – regulation 5(1)(c)



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Prevent the recapping of needles – regulation 5(1)(c)

- Needles must not be recapped after use unless the employer's risk assessment has identified that recapping is itself required to prevent a risk (e.g. to reduce the risk of contamination of sterile preparations).
- This will allow pharmacists etc to carry out the necessary procedures to prepare medicines.

Place secure containers and instructions for safe disposal of medical sharps close to the work area – regulation 5(1)(d)

- Regulation 7(6)(c) of COSHH requires systems to dispose of contaminated waste safely.
- The Sharps Regulations supplement this by requiring that clearly marked and secure containers be placed close to the areas where medical sharps are used.
- Instructions for staff on safe disposal of sharps must also be placed in those areas.



Sent To Kitchen



Sent To Kitchen



Found In Yellow Waste Bag



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- Incident 14-01-2013, Description : “Carrying full Yellow bag out to the rubbish area, when felt sharp scratch on my leg, looked at bag and saw needle sticking out, leg was bleeding”
- Incident 26-02-2013, Description: “Emptied yellow bag from treatment room, walking along corridor and felt sharp pain in leg, when looked saw that it was from yellow bag, pulled out injection sticking out from side of bag”.

Sharps Box Disposed of in Yellow Waste Bag



Information and Training

- The Sharps Regulations supplement existing requirements to provide health and safety information and training for staff by requiring that it includes those matters listed below (from Schedule 1 and 2 of the Sharps Regulations), to the extent that they are relevant to the employee’s work.

The information provided to employee – regulation 6

- Information may be provided in many forms, including safe operating systems, safety guides, posters, information on internal staff websites.
- The employer must work with any appointed safety representatives in developing and promoting the information to be given to workers (regulation 6(2) and (3)).
- This provision recognises the role of union and other safety representatives in helping to raise awareness of the risks from medical sharps.

The information provided to employee – regulation 6

The information provided to employees must cover:

- the risks from injuries involving medical sharps;
- relevant legal duties on employers and workers;
- good practice in preventing injury;
- the benefits and drawbacks of vaccination; and
- the support available to an injured person from their employer (see requirements on accident follow-up slide).

Employee training – regulation 6(4)

- Training should be in an appropriate form to ensure that employees know how to work safely and without risks to health with the specific sharps equipment and procedures that they will use.



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Employee training – regulation 6(4)

Under the Sharps Regulations, the training provided to employees must cover:

- the correct use of safer sharps;
- safe use and disposal of medical sharps; and
- what to do in the event of a sharps injury (see requirements on accident follow-up slide);
- the employer's arrangements for health surveillance and other procedures.

Arrangements in the event of injury



Arrangements in the event of injury

- The Sharps Regulations require employers to take specific actions in the event of a sharps injury.
- This means they need to have procedures in place to ensure that they can respond effectively and in a timely manner when an injury occurs.

Injured employee's duty to notify their employer of a sharps accident regulation 8

- An employee who receives a sharps injury at work must notify their employer as soon as practicable.
- The employer will need to ensure they have sufficiently robust arrangements to allow employees to notify them in a timely manner, including where the employee works out-of-office hours or away from the employer's premises.



Recording and investigating the incident – regulation 7(1)

- Employers must make a record of the sharps injury when they are notified of it, whoever provides that notification.
- They must investigate the circumstances and causes of the incident and take any action required.
- The injured person is required to provide sufficient information to their employer to allow them to carry out this investigation.

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Treatment and follow-up of a sharp injury – regulation 7(2)

The employer must ensure that, when notified of any incident in which an employee has been injured by a sharp that has or may have exposed them to a blood-borne virus, the employee:

- has immediate access to medical advice;
- has been offered post-exposure prophylaxis and any other medical treatment, as advised by a doctor; and
- the employer has considered whether counselling would be appropriate for the employee.

5th April 2013 - Healthcare and other workers at risk of psychiatric trauma from needlestick injuries shows new research

- A new study published in the scientific journal Occupational Medicine has found that those who experience needlestick injuries can suffer persistent and substantial psychiatric illness or depression.
- The physical health effects of a needlestick injury are well known but this new research has demonstrated the mental health consequences of sharps injuries.

- The researchers found that those affected suffered psychiatric trauma that is similar in severity to trauma caused by other events such as road traffic accidents.
- This had a major impact on work attendance, family relationships and sexual health.
- The duration of the psychiatric symptoms were linked to the length of time the person injured by the sharp had to wait for blood test results.

Review procedures regularly – regulation 5(2)

- The Sharps Regulations follow the same principles as any successful health and safety management regime, including reviewing procedures to ensure their continuing effectiveness.
- However, the Regulations specifically require employers to review, at suitable intervals, the procedures that are in place to implement the following risk control measures:

Review procedures regularly – regulation 5(2)

- use of medical sharps at work is avoided so far as is reasonably practicable;
- when medical sharps are used at work, safer sharps are used so far as is reasonably practicable;
- needles that are medical sharps are not capped after use at work unless the risk of injury to employees is effectively controlled by use of a suitable appliance, tool or other equipment;

Review procedures regularly – regulation 5(2)

- in relation to the safe disposal of medical sharps that are not designed for re-use:
- written instructions are available for employees; —and
- clearly marked and secure containers are located —close to areas where medical sharps are used at work.

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Review procedures regularly – regulation 5(2)

A suitable review would involve gathering information on:

- the degree of compliance with the relevant procedures (if the procedures are not being followed there is usually a reason why, such as lack of training, or a genuine practical problem with the procedure itself);
- any areas where procedures are absent or inadequate. New 'safer sharps' may have become available for certain applications or guidance may have been issued from a relevant authoritative body;
- consultation with the relevant staff and their representatives; and
- injury and incident data.

Regulations Not Applicable to:

- School Nurses employed directly by the school;
- Medical Staff providing care in prisons, employed by the prison itself.
- Non-healthcare contractors to a healthcare employer
- Businesses that are contracted to provide non-healthcare services to healthcare employers, such as catering and building or plant maintenance, will only be required to act if those who work for them on the healthcare employer's premises may be exposed to medical sharps while they are working there.

Health Services Information Sheet 7 (HSIS7)

Guidance for employers and employees on the Health and Safety (Sharp Instruments in Healthcare) Regulations 2013

- This guidance is issued by the Health and Safety Executive. Following the guidance is not compulsory, unless specifically stated, and you are free to take other action. But if you do follow the guidance you will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Health and safety inspectors seek to secure compliance with the law and may refer to this guidance.

Health Services Information Sheet 7 (HSIS7)

- This publication is available at: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hsis7.htm.
- You can find more advice at: www.hse.gov.uk/healthservices/index.htm.

HSE Enforcement of the New Regulations

- HSE will follow and apply its existing criteria for investigating complaints and reports of injuries to HSE made under the RIDDOR scheme.
- HSE Inspectors may take action if they identify sharps as a "matter of evident concern" during investigations or inspections.



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Coming Soon

- 12 June *(South Pacific Teleclass)*
QUALITY AND SAFETY AND INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL
 Speaker: Dr Sally Roberts, Auckland Hospital, New Zealand
- 20 June **PATIENT'S EXPERIENCE OF MRSA SCREENING – WHAT CAN WE LEARN?**
 Speaker: Dr. Carol Pellowe, King's College, London
- 10 July *(FREE ... WHO Teleclass - Europe)*
RISK ASSESSMENT AND PRIORITY SETTING IN INFECTION CONTROL IN LOW- TO MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES
 Speaker: Dr. Nizam Damani, Queen's University, Belfast, UK
- 11 July **SEVERE SEPSIS: EARLY RECOGNITION AND MANAGEMENT SAVES LIVES**
 Speaker: Kathleen Vollman, Advanced Nursing LLC, Michigan
- 25 July **IMPROVING HAND HYGIENE BEHAVIOUR: THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL INFLUENCE AND LEADERSHIP**
 Dr. Anita Huis, Radboud University, The Netherlands

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