

Health and Safety (Sharp Instruments in Healthcare) Regulations 2013 – Update (September 2015)

Currently, GP Practices receive sharps through Primary Care Support Services. We now have had confirmation that Primary Care Support Services are able to offer the sharps with the safer technology (B braun brand), if a practice orders these products. We have been informed that the product codes are as follows:

Needle hypodermic sterile with protection device

25g x 5/8 (0.5mm x 16mm) product code ftr1016

25 x 1" (0.5mm x 25mm) product code ftr1015 **(currently unavailable)**

23 x 1" (0.6mm x 25mm) product code ftr1013

21 x 1.5" (0.8mm x 38mm) product code ftr1008

19 x 105" (1.10mm x 38mm) product code ftr1005

Practices may require training on the safer sharp devices. The B braun company have offered to send supporting information, including posters, to practices. Further information will be sent to practices about any training events. It would be advisable for each practice to send a Practice Nurse Representative to any training events, wherever possible.

Further information can be found on the Medicines Management website at:

<http://mm.wirral.nhs.uk/OtherTopics/>

Background information - The EU Directive highlights that it is a breach of Health and Safety law for Healthcare Staff to use a traditional, unprotected medical ('non-safe') sharp in cases where there is a version of a 'safer sharp'. The term 'safer sharp' means medical sharps that incorporate features or mechanisms to prevent or minimise the risk of accidental injury. For further information about the EU Directive, please go to <http://www.hse.gov.uk/healthservices/needlesticks/eu-directive.htm>

GP Practices should be advised that it is the individual Practices' responsibility to ensure that they comply with this EU Directive and are either using or working towards using 'safer sharps'. As a commissioner of services, Wirral CCG would expect all providers of care to comply with any relevant legislation such as this Directive. All employers are required under existing health and safety law to ensure that risks from sharps injuries are adequately assessed and that appropriate control

measures are in place. The Sharps Regulations build on the existing health and safety law and provide specific detail on requirements that must be taken by healthcare employers and their contractors.

For primary care, it is expected that the following procedures may be affected:

1. Minor operations.
2. Corticosteroid injections (for musculoskeletal use).
3. Vitamin B12 injection.
4. Injectable antipsychotics (likely to be dependent upon the manufacturer).
5. Injectable analgesia.
6. Injectable antibiotics, including community pre-admission treatment for probable bacterial meningitis/meningococcal septicaemia.
7. Immunisations (likely to be dependent upon the manufacturer).
8. Initiation of insulin / GLP-1 analogues (only if insulin / GLP-1 analogues are being administered to the patient by a Healthcare Professional).

Please note this list is not exhaustive and so practices are expected to consider all of the clinical activities they undertake and ensure they risk assess/move to 'safer sharps' accordingly. 'Safer sharps' do not necessarily remove all the risks associated with the use of a sharp and there will be situations where 'safer sharps' are not appropriate. The EU Directive goes into this in more detail. Risk assessments should be undertaken for each procedure/individual patient and any decisions made recorded accordingly in the patient's clinical record.

Infection Control Audits being undertaken currently have highlighted to practices where they may be non-compliant with this EU Directive.

Using safer sharps (or working towards this) will enable practices to ensure compliance with this EU Directive. This will also support compliance with other areas such as infection Control and CQC.