

Title of WI: Sharps Injury

Custodian: Group Managing Director

Version Number: 02

Issue date: 25.03.26

Review date: 25.03.29

**WORK INSTRUCTION (WI)**

<b>Title of WI</b>	Sharps Injury		
<b>What type of document is this?</b>	Work Instruction	<b>WI Reference Number</b>	HHH-W.I-083
<b>Purpose of WI</b>	The purpose of this work instruction is to provide guidance on what to do in the event of a sharps injury and how to reduce the risk of sharps injuries.		
<b>Role</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>		
	Carer	To ensure this sharps injury work instruction is followed when caring for a customer with sharps in the home.	
	Branch Staff	To ensure appropriate processes are followed in relation to this work instruction, provide support and guidance to carers in the event of a sharps injury, and complete a risk assessment where necessary.	
<b>Scope of WI</b>	This instruction applies to all employees who may handle or be exposed to sharps in the workplace.		

**1.0 What you need to know about Sharps**

**1.1 What are sharps?**

Sharps are needles, blades (such as scalpels), lancets for taking blood glucose readings, and other medical instruments that are necessary for carrying out medical procedures and could cause an injury by cutting or pricking the skin.

**1.2 What is a sharps injury**

A sharps injury is an incident in which a needle, syringe, lancet, or other medical instrument penetrates the skin. This is also known as a needlestick injury or percutaneous injury.

**WORK INSTRUCTION (WI)****2.0 What to do in the event of a sharps injury**

2.1 If you suffer an injury from a sharp which may be contaminated, you must:

- Encourage the wound to gently bleed, ideally holding it under running water
- Wash the wound using running water and plenty of soap
- Do not scrub the wound while washing it
- Do not suck the wound
- Dry the wound and cover it with a waterproof plaster or dressing
- Seek urgent medical advice as you may need treatment to reduce the risk of infection (contact your GP, NHS 111, or attend the nearest Accident & Emergency department)
- Inform your manager immediately, as the incident must be reported on the system as an accident/incident

2.2 The Regional Clinical Lead for the region should be made aware of the incident to review the clinical care plan and provide any support as needed.

2.3 Sharps injuries may be reportable to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under RIDDOR, depending on specific criteria, for example if the sharp is contaminated with a known high-risk blood-borne virus). Please check with the Health and Safety team via [RIDDOR@Helpinghands.co.uk](mailto:RIDDOR@Helpinghands.co.uk).

**3.0 What is the risk?**

3.1 The main risk from a sharps injury is the potential exposure to infections such as blood-borne viruses. This can occur where the injury involves a sharp that is contaminated with blood or bodily fluid from a customer. The transmission of infection depends on several factors including the type of sharp involved. There is a higher risk of infection from a sharp involving a hollow bore needle such as those used in cannulation, venepuncture and injections.

The blood borne viruses of concern are:

- Hepatitis B
- Hepatitis C
- Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)

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**4.0 How to reduce the risk**

4.1 Although the risk of a sharps injury is considered low within Helping Hands, as we do not undertake injections or blood tests for our customers, some customers and others within their household or working environment may self-inject, monitor their own blood sugar levels or use sharps devices for their treatment. In these instances, an environmental assessment should be carried out, and a description of how sharps are safely disposed of should be included in the support plan.

4.2 A yellow sharps bin should be used for the disposal of all sharps. Safe practices must be followed, including:

- Do not re-sheath needles
- Do not handle sharps from another person
- Dispose of sharps immediately at the point of use into a sharps bin
- Do not overfill sharps bins
- Ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for the safe disposal of clinical waste

<b>TRAINING</b>	
Is training required?	No
<b>COMPLIANCE</b>	
How is compliance with this document going to be monitored?	This work Instructions will be reviewed every 3 years by the document custodian, or more frequently if required due to changes in legislation, guidance, or operational practice.
<b>PROCEDURAL INFORMATION</b>	
Changes since previous version	Minor wording and formatting changes. No changes to the procedure or requirements.

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Who was involved in developing /reviewing/amending the document? (list titles)	Clinical Manager	
How confidential is this document	Restricted	Can be shared freely within Helping Hands but NOT outside of Helping Hands
References	<i>Reporting of Injuries, Diseases, and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013.</i>	
Associated Documents	<i>HH-SOP-005-Infection Control</i>	

CONTROLLED DOCUMENT