

Title of Document	Sharps Injury
Name of Department	Clinical Team

What type of document is this?	Work Instruction (WI)	This is a simple guide to follow in order to complete a particular task	
Which Helping Hands policy/SOP does this WI relate to?	N/A	Index number of policy/SOP	N/A

Which Operational Priority/Priorities does this document link to?	Superior Client Care	People, Performance & Culture		

Custodian of document	Clinical Team	Committee/Group responsible for this document	Quality & Governance Committee
Approval date and committee chairperson signature	01.06.2023	When is its next scheduled review?	01.06.2026

Who does it apply to?	All Helping Hands staff					
	Does it apply to bank workers?	Yes	Does it apply to agency staff?	Yes	Does it apply to third party contractors?	No

Purpose of the Work Instruction	The purpose of this work instruction is to provide guidance what to do in the event of suffering a sharps injury and how to reduce the risk of sharps injuries.
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## **Content of Sharps Injury Work Instruction**

### **1.0 What you need to know about sharps and a sharps injury**

#### **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 which causes a needle, syringe, lancet, or other medical instrument to penetrate the skin. This is also known as a needlestick injury or percutaneous injury.

### **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 you are washing it
- Do not suck the wound
- Dry the wound and cover it with a waterproof plaster or dressing
- You should seek urgent medical advice as you may need treatment to reduce the risk of getting an infection, seek advice either from your GP, NHS 111 or go to the nearest accident and emergency department
- Inform your manager of the incident as it needs to 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.**

#### **2.3 Sharps injuries are reportable to the Health and Safety Executive under RIDDOR under certain criteria so please check with Health and Safety at [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 blood borne viruses of concern as:

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

3.2 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 and the use of intravenous cannula.

#### 4.0 How to reduce the risk

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

4.2 A yellow sharps bin should be used for the disposal of all sharps, we should adhere to safe practices, such as not re-sheathing needles, handling sharps from another person and ensuring that the sharp is disposed of at the point of use into a sharps bin. Sharps bin should not be overfilled and there should be appropriate arrangements in place for the safe disposal of the clinical waste.

**Note – Equality Impact Assessments are not required for Work Instructions**

What was the previous version number of this document?	N/A	
Changes since previous version	This is a new work instruction	
Author of the document	Regional Clinical Lead	
Who was involved in developing / reviewing/ amending this work instruction?	Clinical Manager	
How confidential is this document?	Public	Can be shared freely within and outside of Helping Hands
Associated Documents	HHH-SOP-005 – Infection Control	