

## ▲ DISPOSAL OF SHARPS/SHARPS INJURIES

### ▲ NQS

**Element 2.1.2** Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.

**Element 2.2:** Each child is protected.

**Element 2.2.2** Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practiced and implemented

**Education and Care Services National Regulations:** 77(1-3) (a), 85-89, 90-96, 168(2) (a,b)

### ▲ PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to detail the requirements to be adhered to in the disposal of sharps located at the centre and to provide guidelines for First Aid response in respect of a person who has been injured by a sharp at the centre.

### ▲ POLICY

It is the policy of the centre to follow appropriate procedures in disposing of sharps in order to protect themselves, children in care and visitors to the centres from risk of injury or infection. Educators must also know how to appropriately respond to a situation where a person is injured by a sharp at the centres and do so.

All sharps have the potential to cause injury or wounding. In addition, sharps can potentially be contaminated with many different forms of micro-organisms, which can infect a person wounded by a sharp.

### ▲ PROCEDURES

#### DISPOSAL OF SHARPS

- All centres must have a sharp disposal kit.
- Do not touch the sharp retrieving the sharps disposal equipment unless it poses an immediate threat to others in its vicinity; the safest way to handle a syringe if it is absolutely necessary to do so is to hold the barrel of the syringe in a gloved hand.
- Secure the location of the sharp from contact and warn others of the threat.
- Notify the Centre Director or Responsible Person immediately of the finding of the sharps.

- The centre director will retrieve the sharps disposal kit, take it to the sharp and wear the puncture resistant gloves.
- Open the sharps container and place it on a stable, level surface; do not hold the container.
- Do not attempt to bend, break or recap a needle.
- Using tongs, pick up the sharps.
- Carefully place the sharp into the sharps container and seal it.
- Contact the local council or health service for information on appropriate disposal of a syringe; record that information and dispose only in accordance with those instructions unless there has been a skin penetrating injury from the syringe and it is required by a registered medical practitioner.
- Wearing impermeable gloves, clean the tongs and puncture resistant gloves with detergent and warm water; immerse the tongs in a bleach solution for at least one (1) minute; air dry the equipment and restore for further use.

### **MANAGEMENT OF A SPI (SKIN PENETRATING INJURY)**

In the event a person receives a SPI from a sharp, the Centre Director or Responsible Person is to ensure that support is provided, First Aid is immediately performed, and medical treatment is sought as soon as practicably possible as follows:

- The injured person, the person performing First Aid and those assisting or observing the giving of First Aid shall maintain calm.
- Using sterile gloves and encourage the wound to bleed by gently squeezing if there is no foreign body lodged in the wound.
- If a foreign body, such as a needle, is lodged in the wound, do not attempt to remove it; treat the wound appropriately to avoid further penetration and ensure that the person obtains immediate medical advice from a registered medical practitioner and if the injury has been caused by a syringe or needle, provide that syringe or needle to the medical practitioner if so required.
- Wash the area with cold running water and soap if available.
- Apply an antiseptic and cover the wound with a Band-Aid or dressing.
- Ensure that the person obtains immediate medical advice from a registered medical practitioner and if the injury has been caused by a syringe or needle, provide that syringe or needle to the medical practitioner if so required.
- The Centre Director or Responsible Person must obtain instructions from the Managing Director on the provision of counselling (if any).

### **REPORTING AND DOCUMENTING SHARPS INCIDENTS**

The Centre Director or Responsible Person at the time a sharp is located on centre premises must:

- Notify the Head Office of the finding and any subsequent action as soon as practicably possible after disposal and the provision of any First Aid to an injured

person and

- Complete and sign the Incident Report Form.

The Managing Director must ensure that any report of a sharps incident required by law is made to the appropriate authorities within the time frame required by law.

## ▲ SOURCES AND FURTHER READING

- Children Education and Care Services National Law Application Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- National Code of Practice for the Control of Work-Related Exposure to Hepatitis and HIV (Blood Borne) Viruses (NOHSC:2010 [2003]):  
[http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/SWA/about/Publications/Documents/263 / NationalCodeOfPractice\\_Control\\_WorkRelatedExposure\\_Hepatitis\\_HIVViruses\\_NOHS\\_C2010-2003\\_PDF.pdf](http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/sites/SWA/about/Publications/Documents/263/NationalCodeOfPractice_Control_WorkRelatedExposure_Hepatitis_HIVViruses_NOHS_C2010-2003_PDF.pdf)
- Australian Safety Council: <http://safeworkaustralia.gov.au>

## ▲ ASSOCIATED POLICIES

- Safety Checks and Maintenance of Buildings and Equipment
- Health and Safety
- Hazardous Items and Substances
- Administering First Aid and CPR

## ▲ POLICY REVIEW

- The Centre (together with educators) will review this policy every 12 months.
- The Approved Provider and Centre Director ensure that at all times all educators maintain and implement this policy and its procedures.
- Families are encouraged to collaborate with the Centre to review the policy and procedures.
- **Last review:** 27.06.2023
- **Next review:** 26.06.2024