

Criticare UK Ambulance Service



Independent Service Provider

Policy Document

Handling and Disposal of Sharps v1.3

Written: February 2013
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Approved: Board of Directors

1. Introduction

This policy has been developed as part of Criticare UK Ambulance Service's ongoing commitment to promoting high standards of infection prevention and control throughout the Company.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all services directly provided by the Company and all staff should familiarise themselves with the Policy.

The Company expects contractors to apply the principles of this policy as minimum standards within their services.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of this policy is to support and reinforce the Company's infection prevention and control strategy in order to help minimise the risks to patients, members of the public and our staff associated with the use of sharps.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, 'sharps' includes, syringes, needles, scalpels, razor blades, broken glass or any other sharp implement with the potential to cause a penetrating injury if not handled in a safe manner.

2. Arrangements

The Company recognises that exposure prevention is the primary strategy to reduce the risk of sharps injuries. All preventative efforts will be made to reduce the risk of occupational exposure by providing evidence based educational programmes and the provision of effective equipment.

In the event of a sharps injury being sustained, the area should be encouraged to bleed initially. The injury site should then be washed with warm soapy water and covered with a waterproof dressing. Any individual who sustains a sharps injury should report to the Accident and Emergency Department at their local hospital for further medical attention.

As required by the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995, all sharps injuries will be reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

All sharps containers should be correctly assembled on delivery. Sharps containers must be sealed when the contents have reached the fill line. The

Company has an arrangement with Direct Hygiene Limited to remove and appropriately dispose of all forms of clinical waste.

3. Responsibilities

The overall responsibility for ensuring that this policy is adhered to lies with the Board of Directors.

Operational Managers and Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that this policy is being routinely followed by all Company staff as part of the appraisal system.

The Company is responsible for providing sharps containers which comply with BS 7320: 1990 and UN3291.

The safe handling and disposal of sharps is the personal responsibility of the individual clinician using or disposing of the device.

4. Competence

All appropriate staff will receive information, instruction and regular training in the safe handling and disposal of sharps in accordance with local and national best practice.

5. Audit and Review

The Board of Directors will ensure that this policy is reviewed on an annual basis and receive the results of any audits which are carried out.

Review date: February 2014