

# Sullivan County Department of Public Health

<p><b><u>Title:</u></b> Medical Waste and Sharps Transport/ Disposal</p> <p><b><u>Number:</u></b> CP-04</p> <p><b><u>Page Number:</u></b> 1 of 2</p>	<p>Original Approval: 12/92</p> <p>Reviewed/ revised: 9/99, 9/05, 5/09, 12/16, 2/24</p>
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**Statement/ Purpose:**

To eliminate or minimize employee injury and exposure to bloodborne pathogens. To appropriately dispose of medical waste and sharps.

**Authority:**

OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen standard (29 CFR 1910.1030), IPC.4.I

**Application:**

All clinical staff

**Terminology:**

*Sharp*- an object that can penetrate the skin, such as a needle, scalpel, or lancet.

*Bloodborne pathogen*- pathogenic microorganisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans. These pathogens include, but are not limited to, hepatitis B virus (HBV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

**Responsible Party:**

Training and Quality Improvement Coordinator

**Cross-Reference:**

SCPHS Adverse Events Reporting via NYPORTS  
Accident/Incident Reporting  
Medication and Biological Management Policy- Diagnostic and Treatment Center  
Applicable Immunization Policies and Procedures  
Exposure Control Plan

**Procedure:**

1. Guidance for clinical staff to promote safe sharps disposal in a patient's home:

**Containment:**

- a. Containers for contaminated sharps must be puncture-resistant. The sides and the bottom must be leakproof. Containers must be appropriately labeled and if possible color-coded red to warn everyone that the contents are hazardous. Containers for disposable sharps must be closable (that is, have a lid, flap, door, or other means of closing the container), and they must be kept upright to keep the sharps and any liquids from spilling out of the container.
- b. After a syringe or lancet has been used, immediately place it into the container. Sharps disposal containers must be readily accessible and located as close as feasible to the area where sharps will be

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used. Keep the container in a secure place- out of the reach of children.

- c. Contaminated sharps must never be sheared or broken.
- d. Containers must be replaced routinely and not be overfilled, which can increase the risk of needlesticks or cuts.
- e. Before sharps disposal containers are removed or replaced, they must be closed to prevent spilling the contents. If there is a chance of leakage from the disposal container, the container should be placed in a secondary container that is closeable, appropriately labeled and constructed to contain all contents and prevent leakage during handling, storage or transport.
- f. If patients are disposing of their own sharps containers, instruct them to call their doctor, pharmacy, or clinic and ask if they accept sharps for disposal. Effective July 1, 1995, hospitals and nursing homes in New York State are required to accept properly-contained home medical waste for disposal. New York State law allows disposal of household sharps, along with household trash. **The SCDPH cannot accept filled sharps containers from patients.**

### 2. Transporting of Sharps by clinical staff:

- a. Used sharps shall be transported only in closed red sharps containers carried in the trunk of the vehicle.
- b. Sharps containers, when 3/4 full, are to be closed tightly and given a Disease Surveillance and Investigation (DSI) nurse for disposal between 8am-5pm, Monday-Friday. If there is no DSI nurse to take the sharps, do not leave the container. Return with the container when someone is available.
- c. Sharps containers for clinic use are kept in the locked supply room in the clinic area.

### 3. Disposal of medical waste and sharps:

- a. A designated DSI staff member will monitor the storage of medical waste and will contact the SCDPH waste disposal company to schedule waste pick up.
- b. Medical waste is stored in the locked closet located in the DSI suite.