

<b>Talk No:</b> 55	<b>Title:</b> SHARPS
<p><b>Introduction:</b> Any object that can puncture or penetrate the skin is classified as a sharp. Discarded needles / syringes have the potential to carry viruses which may be transmitted to humans on contact, leading to infections such as hepatitis B and C and also HIV.</p>	
<p><b>Main points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Be aware that sharps may present in your working environment</li> <li>– Always wear the correct PPE; in particular, boots and gloves</li> <li>– Always wear heavy duty gloves or sharps gloves when handling waste, this is especially important when the contents are unknown</li> <li>– Be especially vigilant if you can't see what you are doing with your hands</li> <li>– If you see a sharps or signs of drug use, report it.</li> <li>– Quarantine any sharps and the area it was found in – there may be more that you can't see</li> <li>– Raise a Near Miss even though no one was injured</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions to take if discarded needles or syringes are found</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Do not touch them</li> <li>– Report location to Site Manager / Supervisor and / or Security Control</li> <li>– Stay at location and request assistance. Do not leave it unattended. (This is particularly important if the area can be accessed by others)</li> <li>– If available, use a yellow sharps box to put needle or syringe into</li> <li>– Ensure that heavy duty gloves or a mechanical litter picker are used to pick up discarded needle or syringe</li> <li>– Once discarded needle or syringe has been placed in the sharps box, report fact to Site Manager / Supervisor so that correct disposal can be arranged</li> <li>– Ensure that hands are thoroughly washed with soap and water.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions to take if a needle or syringe injury is sustained:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Do not panic; gently squeeze the area around the wound to encourage bleeding</li> <li>– Do not suck the wound; clean the wound under running water or cleansing wipes provided in first aid kits</li> <li>– Cover the wound with a dry plaster or dressing</li> <li>– Contact with a needle can cause infection or spread disease so always seek medical advice and treatment immediately</li> <li>– Report all exposures and hazards to your supervisor/line manager</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>DON'T PUT YOUR HANDS WHERE YOU CAN'T SEE</b></p>	
<p><b>Notes:</b></p>	