



Sustainable Hospitals Program

A Project of the Lowell Center for Sustainable Production, University of Massachusetts Lowell

How to Make an Inventory List of Sharps Devices for Your Facility *Why you need one and what it might look like*

Most hospitals and healthcare providers have no single list or inventory of sharps devices that are purchased and used in their facility. However a sharps device inventory can be a powerful tool to complement your existing sharps injury prevention plan.

Why? Our work with hospitals has shown:

- Facilities continue to reorder old-style sharps devices that lack an integral sharps injury prevention (safety) feature. This is often unintentional and happens because there is no easy way of recognizing which products are safety devices and which are conventional devices. *(Note: in this fact sheet, the terms "conventional" and "standard" refer to older designs lacking an integral safety feature to protect against sticks or blood exposures).*
- For many injuries, it was only after a needlestick injury occurred that administrators realized a conventional device was still being used. 61% of the injuries reported to the Massachusetts Sharps Injury Surveillance System in 2003 involved standard devices without an engineered sharps injury prevention feature.
- In cases where a conventional device was flagged because of an injury, it was often found that manufacturers had a similar, readily available, user-friendly device with an engineered safety feature built in to the product.
- Having too many different kinds of safety devices can be a risk factor, in itself, for injury. Why? The use of a safety feature becomes second nature with training and experience. Repeatedly switching between different types of safety features compromises the ease of use that becomes intuitive when using a smaller number of safety devices.

These observations send a clear message that healthcare facilities need to have an easy way to understand what they are purchasing in order to select up-to-date, safe, appropriate products.

Developing and maintaining a sharps list can augment your existing sharps injury prevention program by clearly identifying the number of different devices in your facility and showing where conventional sharps devices are still used. The list can serve as a tool to help you:

- Identify and investigate the use of conventional devices that lack safety features.
- Contact manufacturers for alternatives with engineered safety features.
- Work with your clinicians to understand why conventional devices are still used. In some cases, there may be no viable alternatives. For these cases, the list can help ensure you have properly documented your exceptions to OSHA and certain state regulations. (For example, Massachusetts hospitals must obtain an exemption from the Department of Public Health to use devices without an integral safety feature).
- For each conventional device without a viable alternative, establish the next review date at which time the availability of new devices and practices will be re-investigated.
- Provide a copy of the list to key committees, including the Safety Committee and Product Evaluation Committee, to keep them apprised about the status of safety device use.

Two sample list formats are shown on the following page. Think about how you might use it, and start building a list tailored to your needs. Consider using a spreadsheet, so you can easily sort the list in different ways, such as by department, by conventional vs. safety device, or by the next review date.

Style 1. Exclusion List

This is a list of devices for which a safety alternative is (or was) not available or appropriate, and it shows the use and phase-out status of conventional devices. This is a good basic list that provides an effective way of documenting exceptions to OSHA or state regulations. As more devices are converted to safety devices, the list becomes shorter and shorter. (For example, you might decide to remove a converted product from the list after the completion of 2 satisfactory follow-up user surveys).

ABC Clinic – Sharps Exclusion List

Last Updated: 12/04

Old Product* (Conventional device)	New Product* (With integral safety feature)	Date Implemented	Date of Next Review	Review/Comments
Blood Gas Kits				
Marquest Non-safety Blood Gas Kit	Marquest Safety kit	5/04	11/05	4/04 staff surveys 11/05 – survey to be conducted
Debridement Kit				
	Medline Safety	4/04	-	7/04 staff survey 4/05 survey to follow
Huber Needle				
Churchill Medical Infusion Wing Huber Needle	Churchill Medical Huber Safety Needle	9/04	7/05	7/05 – Medical Oncology to trial Braun product
Syringes				
BD309625	Not available	-	9/05	1cc TB 26g 3.8" Reviewed 9/04
BD309574	BD309593	8/04	8/05	3cc, 22g, 1½"; 8/05 staff survey
BD309626	BD305554	8/04	8/05	1cc TB 25g 5/8"; 8/05 staff survey
BD309571	BD309594	8/04	8/05	3cc LL 23g 1"; 8/05 staff survey
BD309570	BD309592	8/04	8/05	3cc LL 25g 5/8"; 8/05 staff survey
<i>Etc.</i>				

* Note: Example only. There is no implied endorsement or judgment of any product or manufacturer.

Style 2. Comprehensive List of Sharps Devices Used in Facility

This is a longer, more comprehensive list that shows all sharps used throughout a facility. When organized as a spreadsheet, it is easy to sort the information in different ways. For example:

- *Sort to show conventional devices in use, to flag exceptions to OSHA or state regulations.*
- *Sort by review date, to plan upcoming reviews of devices.*
- *Sort by device type or ID number, to show the number of different devices used in the hospital.*

Hospital XYZ – Sharps Device List

Last Updated: 6/05

Department	Type of Device	Device ID*	Safety (S) or Conventional (C)	Date for Next Review	Comments
Home Care	Debridement Tray	Medline BYNJ08831	C	6/05	Currently evaluating Medline Tray with safety scalpel*; #DYNJ08831
ICU	IV Insertion	BD 38336 (Saf-T-Intima)	S	-	20g 1"
	Blood collection	BD 303380	S	-	Blood collection assembly; plastic cannula
	Medication delivery	Baxter 2N3379	S	-	Injection site interlink
	Medication delivery	BD 30401	S	-	Interlink vial access cannula
	<i>Etc.</i>				
<i>Etc.</i>					

* Note: Example only. There is no implied endorsement or judgment of any product or manufacturer.

More information is available on the SHP Website:
<http://www.sustainablehospitals.org>

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