



Acacium Group

Needlestick Injury Community Setting

Procedure Reference | SOP INF CON 11

Version | V2.0

Procedure Name	Needlestick Injury Community Setting
Purpose of Document	To ensure all Acacium Group healthcare workers are aware of safe practice principles when using sharps and how to proceed if a sharps injury occurs in the community setting.
Target Audience	All Acacium Group workers in the community setting.
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Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form	Acacium Group is committed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and in line with our values, we strive to ensure that everyone that is part of the Acacium community is not disadvantaged or discriminated against given their individual need or characteristics. To support this, an Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken on this policy/procedure. This information is held centrally and can be requested from the Clinical Governance Team.
About Acacium Group	Details of all Acacium Group trading companies that this policy applies to are detailed within Appendix A

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1. Introduction

This SOP has been developed to inform Acacium Group workers of the correct way to manage Needle stick/sharps injuries and contamination incidents within the community setting and in doing so, to improve the safety and wellbeing of both workers and staff and clients.

It is also important to emphasize that prevention of these injuries by safe handling and disposal of sharps and the use of other relevant infection control procedures, appropriate hand hygiene and use of personal protective equipment.

Prevention of sharps injuries and contamination incidents is extremely important. Hepatitis B (HBV), Hepatitis C (HCV) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) can be transmitted by percutaneous injury e.g. where the skin is cut or penetrated by needles or other sharp objects (a Needlestick/'sharps' injury); or mucocutaneous injury (splash to mucous membranes or broken skin) from patients to health care workers. Therefore, Needlestick/sharps injuries and contamination incidents must be managed correctly

2. Aim

For all Acacium Group workers to be informed through this SOP of the risks and procedures to follow for safe practice and to take into account the Acacium Group Infection Prevention and Control Policy. are of this procedure

3. Definitions

Topic	Definition
Sharp	Is any object, which can puncture the skin and may be contaminated by blood or body fluids. This might include the following: hypodermic needles, suture needles, scalpel, blades, pieces of bone, teeth splinters, glass ampoules.
NSI	Needlestick injury or injury from a 'sharps' source.
Blood Borne Virus (BBV)	A virus which is carried in the blood of an infected individual and which can be transmitted to another person exposed to the individual's blood.
HBV	Hepatitis B Virus
HCV	Hepatitis C Virus
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HIV PEP (Post Exposure Prophylaxis)	HIV treatment medication given after a NSI / sharps injury from a known or high-risk HIV positive source patient to reduce the risk of seroconversion.
HSE	Health and Safety Executive - The Health and Safety Executive is a UK government agency responsible for the encouragement, regulation and enforcement of workplace health, safety and welfare, and for research into occupational risks in Great Britain.

4. Safe sharps practice

The use of sharps should be avoided where possible. When their use is essential, particular care is required in handling and disposal.

Sharps must only be disposed of in designated sharps bins which should be assembled and labelled correctly.

When a sharps bin has reached the capacity indicated on the side of the bin, it should be closed correctly and disposed of as indicated within the client's care plan. DO not overfill a sharps bin. Ensure this is always a spare sharps bin available for use.

5. Needlestick/Sharps Injury Process

If a worker has had a needlestick/sharp injury the following steps should be taken:

- Encourage the wound to gently bleed, ideally holding it under running water
- Wash the wound using running water and plenty of soap
- Do not scrub the wound while you are washing it
- Do not suck the wound
- Dry the wound and cover it with a waterproof plaster or dressing if available.
- Inform the operational team of the injury and detail whether you are a lone worker, what time your shift ends and discuss timescales of seeking treatment.
- Seek medical advice from a drop in clinical/GP/A&E at the earliest opportunity
- Make appointment for follow up bloods 6 weeks, 12 weeks, and 24 weeks - this may be at the GP or a clinic
- Complete reflection on the cause of the injury and report to the operational team anything you believe contributed to the incident occurring and how it could be prevented.

The protocol for bloods/follow up stated is as follows:

6 weeks	12 Weeks	24 Weeks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HBsAg – if a known non responder (2 full courses of vaccine) or not immunised • HCV RNA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HBsAg – if a known non responder (2 full courses of vaccine) or not immunised • HCV RNA • HIV antibody 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HBsAg if a known non responder (2 full courses of vaccine) or not immunised • HCV RNA antibody • HIV antibody

Consideration to be made whether the worker needs to be replaced on their shift, depending on the length of time there is remaining before they will have completed their shift (ie. Live in workers)

Contact the Clients GP to advise a needlestick injury has occurred and request bloods.

Report as an incident, in line with Acacium Group Incident Reporting Policy.

Provide support to the worker on the attendance to GP/A&E/Drop-in Clinic and record this on the worker database for reference.

Send Employee Assistance Programme details to the worker for additional support.

Assist candidates to find a clinic if required to have bloods taken if this is problematic and send list of clinics that could do this.

- <https://www.masta-travel-health.com/FindAClinic>
- <https://samedaydoctor.org/book-now/>
- <https://healthclinics.superdrug.com/services>
- <https://www.boots.com/health-pharmacy-advice/vaccinations/travelvaccination-health-advice-service>

- <https://www.citydoc.org.uk/make-an-appointment/>
- <https://tdlpathology.com/>
- <https://nationwidepathology.co.uk/>

Workers should be provided with support to access blood tests as it is of upmost importance to their welfare and to the welfare of others.

Ask Worker to complete a reflection on the cause of the injury and steps taken to ensure future risk is reduced. This should form part of the incident process.

Consider whether the commissioner of the service needs to be informed of the incident – this will depend on the individual circumstances surrounding the injury.

Call worker for welfare check at 6 weeks and 12 weeks and document this action

6 months after injury call worker for final welfare check.

If their blood status changes, they will need to complete a new OH questionnaire and OH fitness status.

If there are no further actions require by Bank Partners, the incident management/Datix entry can be closed.

NB. Working in the community setting, could mean that the worker is alone with a client in their home and providing sole care for an individual, which may affect the timescales in attending GP/ A&E /Drop in Clinic

6. Associated Policies / SOPs

Policies

ORG 03 Health and Safety Policy

CLIN 07 Infection Prevention and Control Policy

ORG 04 Incident Reporting Policy

CLIN 06 Consent

7. References

- Health and Safety (Sharp Instruments in Healthcare) regulations 2013. Guidance for employers and employees.
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations (2002)
- Health & Social Care Act (DH, 2008) Code of Practice for health and adult social care on the prevention and control of infections and related guidance.
- NHS Employer-Managing the risk of sharps injuries framework (2015)

Appendix A: About Acacium Group

Acacium Group consists of a number of trading companies, each providing services within core niche areas of the health and social care industries. Therefore, as this document is a Group Policy, the Policy herein applies to all trading companies detailed below:

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