



<b>Title</b>	Disposal of Sharps
<b>Document Type</b>	Guideline
<b>Version Number</b>	4.1
<b>Approved by</b>	Infection Control Committee
<b>Issue date</b>	January 2017
<b>Review date</b>	January 2019
<b>Distribution</b>	All NHS Borders Staff
<b>Prepared by</b>	Infection Prevention Control Team
<b>Developed by</b>	Infection Prevention Control Team
<b>Equality &amp; Diversity Impact Assessed</b>	No

# DISPOSAL OF SHARPS GUIDELINE

**Aim:** To dispose of sharps in a safe manner and in accordance with current legislation

## Standards

Sharps containers must be assembled correctly.

Do not detach needles except when necessary, for example, to discharge contents into a specimen tube.

Sharps boxes should be kept above floor level, out of the reach of children, preferably attached to a wall. The sharps disposal unit should be observable so far as is reasonably practicable and kept secure to prevent accidental or malicious access.

In areas such as Intensive Therapy and Operating Theatres, where there is a high volume of use and restricted public access, use of temporary closures may not be required subject to local risk assessment.

Sharps disposal units should be removed every 3 months as a minimum. There should be no protruding items. It is your responsibility as the user to ensure this happens.

When a sharps container is ready for disposal:

- the closure must be made permanent,
- the closed container must be stored in a secure area until ready for uplift

For further advice, consult the Infection Prevention Control Team or the Occupational Health Service.

Remember, while there may be a low risk of infection from sharps injury, the consequences can be significant. It is essential that you consult Occupational Health immediately for advice in cases of all needle stick/sharps injury.

## Adverse Event Recording

Follow Occupational Health policy on Needlestick / Sharps / Contamination Injuries and NHS Borders Adverse Event Management Policy.