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**SUNY CORTLAND
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
AND SAFETY OFFICE**

HYPODERMIC NEEDLE AND SYRINGE PROGRAM

PROGRAMS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES

Inception Date: July 28, 2010
Latest Revision / Review: April 12, 2022
Previous Revision / Review: July 12, 2021

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1. Introduction

This program outlines requirements and guidelines for the use and control of hypodermic needles and syringes at SUNY Cortland. The primary objectives of this program are to promote safe work practices, and prevent unauthorized use of hypodermic needles and syringes. This program applies to all personnel using hypodermic needles and syringes.

2. References

- New York Education Law Section 811
- New York State Controlled Substances Act, Article 33, §3381
- New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement
- SUNY Cortland's Bloodborne Pathogen Program

3. Definitions

Sharps – Items capable of causing wounds or breaks in the skin. Examples include: hypodermic needles; hypodermic syringes with attached needles (regardless of use); surgical needles; Pasteur pipettes; and scalpels. Other potential sharps include: capillary pipettes; razor blades; and broken glass contaminated with infectious agents. Contaminated microscope slides and cover slips are included.

Biohazard Sharps Container – A rigid, leak-proof, puncture-resistant container that is labeled with the biohazard symbol and/or the word “Biohazard”. Red containers are designated for the disposal of sharps contaminated with infectious material, human or animal body fluids, or biohazardous microorganisms.

One-handed “Scoop” Technique – A technique for recapping a hypodermic needle. This technique consists of using one hand to hold the syringe with the attached needle, then scooping or sliding the cap which is lying on a horizontal surface onto the needle. Once the point of the needle is covered, the cap is secured by either pushing the cap against a solid object, or pulling the base of the needle cap onto the hub of the needle. When this technique is employed, the free hand should never touch the needle or syringe.

4. Certificate of Need

Except for workers in the Student Health Service Department, a Certificate of Need is required for procurement, use, and possession of hypodermic needles and syringes. The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) does not differentiate the use of a hypodermic needle or syringe for use to inject subcutaneously or for other research purposes, such as measuring fluids, injection into an instrument, or any other purpose. Any use or possession of a hypodermic needle or syringe must be covered by a Certificate of Need which is filed with the NYSDOH and the New York State Education Department. This form must be filed with both departments within 30 days of any change in any of the terms of the form. Potential users for hypodermic needles and

syringes should contact the Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) Office at extension 2508 or at environmentalhealth@cortland.edu for assistance with addressing the Certificate of Need.

5. Authorization Requirements

Hypodermic needles and syringes must be evaluated and approved by the EH&S Office prior to procurement and use. This authorization review promotes safe use, storage and disposal practices, and ensures that regulatory requirements are implemented. This review will generally be conducted within 24 hours and will not be used to restrict the user's autonomy.

6. Use, Storage and Disposal

The following requirements, precautions, and guidelines must be observed for use, storage, and disposal of hypodermic needles and syringes:

1. Limit use to authorized personnel only. In most instances, hypodermic needles and syringes are used in laboratory settings and in SUNY Cortland's Student Health Service Department.
2. Store supplies of hypodermic needles and syringes in a secure place, such as a locked drawer, cabinet, or room that has controlled access. Spring or combination dial locks must not be used to secure hypodermic needles and syringes. Double-locking systems are preferred, as in a locked drawer in a locked storeroom.
3. An accurate log of hypodermic needles and syringes must be maintained by the user. This log must indicate:
 - a. type, size, and number of each item purchased;
 - b. distributions made;
 - c. balance on hand;
 - d. date of receipt; and
 - e. date of disposal. SUNY Cortland's Hypodermic Needle and Syringe Log is provided on page 4. In addition to maintaining the aforementioned records, an annual physical inventory must be taken each year before the end of June and entered in the running inventory record. This effort will be coordinated by the EH&S Office in April of each year.
4. Work with only one uncapped hypodermic needle at a time. Keep all other uncapped needles and syringes in view.
5. Do not remove disposable needles contaminated with blood or blood products from their original syringes. Dispose of the entire assembly in a sharps container.
6. Do not recap needles unless it is absolutely necessary. Needles contaminated by blood or blood products should never be recapped. If it is necessary to recap a needle as part of a protocol, or if a sharps container is not available, use a one-handed "scoop" technique as defined in Section III of this program, or use tools such as forceps or pliers to replace the cap.
7. In the event of a needle stick:

- a. flush the affected area with water and antiseptic soap for several minutes;
 - b. notify your supervisor and the EH&S Office as soon as possible; and
 - c. file a SUNY Cortland *Employee Injury, Illness, Medical Emergency* form (Form WC-1) and an Exposure Incident Report if the exposure involved human blood, body fluids, or blood contaminated specimens. (contact the EH&S Office for assistance with obtaining these documents). In the event of a needle stick that involves exposure to blood, bodily fluids, or other hazardous substances, workers are required to seek medical attention immediately.
8. For sharps intended for immediate disposal, maintain a sharps container within an arm's reach of the area where the sharps are used. Position the container such that openings are easily seen. In areas where biohazardous materials are used, the container should either be labeled "Biohazard" and/or with the biohazard symbol. Never put syringes containing biohazardous substances in a sharps container. First, expel the biohazardous substance into an appropriate container for decontamination or disposal, and then place the syringe in a sharps container. Users of biohazardous substances are requested to contact the EH&S Office at extension 2508 for guidance on disposal of sharps and biohazardous substances
 9. Immediately dispose of used hypodermic needles and syringes as a unit directly into a sharps container without any other manipulation. Avoid bending, breaking, shearing, or removing needles from syringes. Store reusable sharps in a puncture-resistant container to prevent injuries. Contaminated reusable sharps should be stored in a suitable disinfectant solution until processed.
 10. Hypodermic needles and syringes, and sharps containers must not be disposed of in the general trash. These materials are disposed of as Regulated Medical Waste (RMW).
 11. Do not handle broken, contaminated, or unidentified needles or syringes by hand, even with gloves. Use tools such as forceps, pliers, or tongs to retrieve and place the needle and/or syringe into a biohazard sharps container.
 12. Discard sharps containers when they are three-quarters full. Always maintain a sharps container in an upright position. Do not compact the needles and syringes to attempt to place more in the container. Since these containers are considered RMW, they must be disposed of through the university RMW program.

Locations for collecting sharps containers are in

- Bowers Hall (Rooms 239, 1204 and 1319),
- Park Center Athletic Training Room (Room 1210),
- Professional Studies Building (Room 1144),
- Stadium Training Room,
- Student Life Center (Room 1115), and the
- Student Health Service Office.

Owners of sharps containers are requested to contact the EH&S Office at extension 2508 for assistance with pick-up and disposal of sharps containers.

Appendix A – Hypodermic Needle and Syringe Log

