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Iechyd Cyhoeddus  
Cymru  
Public Health  
Wales

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## **SHARPS & EXPOSURE INJURY & SAFE MANAGEMENT OF SHARPS POLICY**

### **Policy Statement**

This policy outlines the commitment of Public Health Wales to adhere to current guidance advising on the management of occupational exposure to blood and high-risk body fluids and the prevention of exposure injury through recommended sharp safety practice. This policy is required as Public Health Wales staff may undertake clinical procedures and require current evidence-based guidance to advise how best to avoid injury and the appropriate action to take should injury occur. This policy and associated procedure document should be adopted, for infection prevention and control practices and procedures.

The information in the supporting procedure documents provide:

- A clear, evidence-based framework to ensure safe practice in the use of clinical sharps devices.
- A clear procedure for the management of inoculation or exposure injury where blood to blood contact may have occurred.

### **Policy Commitment**

This policy affirms the commitment of Public Health Wales to ensuring the safety of staff within the workplace by providing current guidance on the management of occupational exposure to blood and high-risk body fluids and the prevention of exposure injury through sharp safety. This policy is relevant for all staff involved in clinical practice within the organisation to ensure PHW is compliant with Health & Safety legislation.

The associated Procedure document aims to provide best practice guidance on the management of occupational exposure to blood and high-risk body fluids and the prevention of exposure injury through the sharp safety to staff.

### **Supporting Procedures and Written Control Documents**

[All corporate policies and procedures are available on the Public Health Wales website](#)

This Policy will be supported by the following Public Health Wales's Policies and Procedures:

- On the Clinical Governance and Infection Control Policies intranet page ([Clinical Governance and Infection Control Policies - Public Health Wales \(nhs.wales\)](#)):
  - Sharps and Exposure Injury & Safe Management of Sharps Policy
  - Sharps and Exposure Injury Procedure
  - Infection Prevention and Control Policy
- On the Risk Management, Health & Safety and Estates Policies intranet page ([Risk Management, Health and Safety and Estates Policies - Public Health Wales \(nhs.wales\)](#)):
  - Incident Reporting Policy and Procedure
  - Personal Protective Equipment Policy
  - Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Policy
- Guidance on the management of human bite injuries  
<https://phw.nhs.wales/services-and-teams/harp/infection-prevention-and-control/guidance/accordians/docs/health-protection-team-guidance-for-the-management-of-human-bite-injuries-in-wales-2019/>
- Health & Safety Guidance Microbiology division, additional SOPs:  
[http://nww2.nphs.wales.nhs.uk:8080/QualityManagementDocs.nsf/1f8687d8da97650980256fa30051b0be/80257235003e6975802573d000686e05/\\$FILE/MDHS005%20health%20and%20Safety.\(F\)doc.doc?open&date=14-11-2019.1231](http://nww2.nphs.wales.nhs.uk:8080/QualityManagementDocs.nsf/1f8687d8da97650980256fa30051b0be/80257235003e6975802573d000686e05/$FILE/MDHS005%20health%20and%20Safety.(F)doc.doc?open&date=14-11-2019.1231)
- National Infection Prevention and Control Manual  
[NIPCM - Public Health Wales \(nhs.wales\)](#)

**Applicable legalisation and guidance is as follows:**

- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations (2002)  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/>
- European Waste Codes (EWC), 18-01-01,03,09 and 18-02-01,02,08  
<https://www.gov.uk/how-to-classify-different-types-of-waste/healthcare-and-related-wastes>
- Guidance on management of potential exposure to blood borne viruses in emergency workers. PHE, 2019  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/blood-borne-viruses-managing-potential-risk-in-emergency-workers>
- Health and Care Standards for Wales (2015).  
<https://www.gov.wales/health-and-care-standards>
- Health and Safety at Work Act etc (1974)  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/37>
- Health and Safety (Sharp Instruments in Healthcare) Regulations 2013  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hsis7.htm>
- Human Tissue Act, 2004. GMC.  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/30/contents>
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999)  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1999/3242/contents/made> .
- ISO 23907-1:2019 (2019) Sharps injury protection — Requirements and test methods — Part 1: Single-use sharps containers.  
<https://www.iso.org/standard/71506.html>

- Loveday et al (2014) epic 3: National; Evidence-Based Guidance for Preventing Healthcare-Associated infections in NHS Hospitals in England. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24330862>
- NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership (2013) WHTM 07-01 Safe management of healthcare waste. <https://nwssp.nhs.wales/ourservices/specialist-estates-services/specialist-estates-services-documents/whtms-library/whtm-07-01-safe-management-of-healthcare-waste-pdf/>
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at Work Regulations (2002) <http://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/ppe.htm>
- The European framework on Prevention of Sharps injuries in Hospital and Healthcare Sector Council Directive 2010/32/EU (May 2010) <https://osha.europa.eu/en/legislation/directives/council-directive-2010-32-eu-prevention-from-sharp-injuries-in-the-hospital-and-healthcare-sector>
- The Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act (2020) <https://www.gov.wales/health-and-social-care-quality-and-engagement-wales-act-summary>
- The National Institute for Health and Clinical excellence (2012) Infection Prevention and control of healthcare associated infections in primary and community care <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg139>
- United Kingdom Surveillance of Significant Occupational Exposures to Blood borne Viruses in Healthcare Workers. PHE 2014. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bloodborne-viruses-eye-of-the-needle>

## Scope

All staff employed by Public Health Wales who work on or in clinical settings (inclusive of those on honorary or temporary contracts, and contractors on site).

<b>Impact Assessments</b>	An Equality, Welsh Language and Health Impact Assessment has been completed and can be viewed on the policy webpages.
<b>Approved by</b>	Quality, Safety and Improvement Committee
<b>Approval Date</b>	13/12/2023
<b>Review Date</b>	13/12/2026
<b>Date of Publication:</b>	January 2024
<b>Group with authority to approve supporting procedures</b>	Leadership Team
<b>Accountable Executive Director/Director</b>	Executive Director of Quality, Nursing and Allied Health Professionals
<b>Author</b>	Lead Nurse for Infection Prevention & Control (Corporate)

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### **Summary of reviews/amendments**

<b>Version number</b>	<b>Date of Review</b>	<b>Date of Approval</b>	<b>Date published</b>	<b>Summary of Amendments</b>
2	2023	13/12/23	January 2024	Changes reflect the separation of the combined related procedure into two documents for ease of use. References updated.
1	2021	14/04/21	14/04/24	First version