



Issue Date: 19<sup>th</sup> February 2018

## SAFETY ALERT NOTICE.

Drug / Product / Device : **Vehicle Sharps Containers**

### Identified Issue / Concern / Problem/ Evidence of harm.

A review of a recent report whereby a member of our staff acquired a needle stick injury indicates that we may need to reinforce / refresh certain actions and behaviours.

This incident occurred when a sharp was being placed in the sharps container after use, and it appears that a sharp was protruding from the sharps bin.

### Actions Required / Risk Treatment strategy

- 1) Ensure that all staff are familiar with the instruction on sharps bin and our safe work practice sheet 6 Sharps Safety and Sharps Poster.
- 2) Ensure that the sharps container fill level and sign off are checked as per Daily Inspection.
- 3) Ensure all safe work practice sheets and posters are in place at all NAS sites.

Please fill in all detail on Sharps bins.

Please tag and dispose of in our yellow bin when sealed.



Please do not fill beyond 3/4 full, Seal, Sign, Tag and place in secure station yellow bin.



Quality, Safety & Risk Document

### SAFE WORK PRACTICE SHEET #6

National Ambulance Service North Leinster

Task: Basic Sharps Safety

Date of Issue: August 2016

Sharps include: any item which may puncture the skin e.g. needles, lancets, intravenous cannula's, blades, glass ampoules, surgical instruments, intravenous administration sets, teeth or bone splinters.

Further information can be found in policy folders and NAS website.

- Extra care and vigilance must be taken during the use and disposal of sharps instruments – be aware of their use by colleagues and others around you.
- Avoid the use of sharps where possible.
- Use safety cannulae, blunt drawing up needles, Needleless IV systems, ampoule openers, retractable needle syringes.
- It is the responsibility of the person who uses a sharp to dispose of it safely. Do not pass sharps
- Used sharps must be discarded into a sharps container at the point of use by the person who used it. Dispose of sharp immediately
- Used needles must never be bent, broken or resheathed
- Drop sharps into approved sharps container. Never insert fingers/hands past the level of the lid
- Seek assistance prior to giving injections or intravenous fluids to uncooperative patients
- Sharps containers must be correctly assembled and securely closed when ¾ full, or when the fill line is reached. Tag containers with clinical waste tag
- Sharps boxes should be wall mounted where possible, and not left on the floor
- Keep sharps containers in an area, which excludes risk of injury to staff or patients. Never place sharps containers at floor level or at a height where children have easy access to them
- When using sharps during a procedure, ensure that they do not become obscured by dressings, paper towelling or drapes
- Never discard needles, syringes or other sharps in a waste bag