Handling, using and disposing of needles and sharps

1. Policy Statement

UWSELL centres will minimise risk of accidental injury and transmission of blood borne infections by safe handling, use and disposing of needles and sharps that have been contaminated by blood or body fluids.

2. Legislative Requirements

The NSW Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and the NSW Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011

Australian Standards for reusable and non-reusable containers for the collection of sharp medical items.

3. Who is affected by this policy?

a) Children
b) Staff
c) Parents
d) Management

4. Implementation

To minimise the risk of accidental injury and transmission of blood borne infections by safe handling, use and disposing of needles and sharps that have been contaminated by blood or body fluids, centres should:

UWSELL will ensure there are adequate and accessible resources for disposal of sharps, and which comply with Australian Standards:

A. AS/NZS 4261: ‘Reusable Containers for the Collection of Sharp Medical Items Used in Human and Animal Applications’,

B. AS 4031: ‘Non Reusable Containers for the Collection of Sharp Medical Items Used in Health care Areas’.

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that staff:

A. Dispose of needles, syringes and sharps immediately after use by discarding directly into an impermeable and puncture resistant container designated for disposal of sharps (there are commercially available yellow biohazard containers) that comply with Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 4261 (reusable containers) or AS 4031 (non-reusable containers).

5. Sources

• The Australian Immunisation Handbook, NHMRC, 2000;

6. Review

The policy will be reviewed annually. Review will be conducted by management, employees, parents and any interested parties.

Reviewed: 05.08.12
Date for next review: 04.08.13
Version 1 05.08.12