



Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise (PDSE)

Disposal of sharps

Version 4.0

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Policy will be updated as required in response to a change in national policy or evidence-based guideline.

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The Dental Education Facility Protocol on The Disposal of Sharps

1. **Personal Protective Equipment Required**

Full PPE is to be worn for all sharps handling procedures

- Clinical clothing
- Plastic apron
- Eye protection
- Gloves
- Mask

2. **General**

- Treat sharps bins with respect
- Dispose of sharps into the sharps bin as soon as possible – do not leave them lying around.
- It is the responsibility of the person using the sharp to dispose of it.
- Never try to retrieve an object out of the sharps bin.
- Caution must be taken when disposing of sharps into the container.
- Sharps bins must be checked daily and closed securely when found to be full to the black line.
- Do not overfill sharps bins.

3. **Protocol**

Under the Health and Safety (Sharps instruments in Healthcare) Regulations 2013

All disposable items that have the potential to cause a sharps injury must be disposed of as a sharps waste and placed into the yellow contaminated sharps box located in the bay.

Sharps waste includes (Not exhaustive)

- Local Anaesthetic Syringes – Safety plus syringes are used in all DEFs. They have a sliding needle guard and do not require the needle to be re-sheathed. Students are taught how to use them during their formal local anaesthetic training session, and sharps safety is included in this. Students are closely monitored and reminded that the device should be placed into the sharps bin needle end first. This is a safety measure in case the sheath has not been fully advanced.
- Endodontic Files - Students are trained that only the student working as the Dentist should handle the files, including putting into the sharps bin.
- Irrigation Needles - Needles should not be removed from the syringes or re-sheathed. The whole equipment should be placed into the sharps bin needle end down.
- Etch - The blue blunt needles, supplied with the etchant, must not be used on the clinics. We have yellow plastic dispensing tips called Flowthru, they can be discarded in the clinical waste. A pink plastic dispensing tip is also used for Oralseal.
- Oraquix - The needle should not be re-sheathed, it should be placed needle end down, into the sharps bin. The Oraquix needle should only be removed from the dispensing gun using a pair of mosquito forceps which are part of the Oraquix Kit.

Never remove the needle using your fingers.

- Scalpels - Disposable scalpels are to be placed immediately after use into the sharps bin. Only disposable scalpels are used by students on clinic. Removable scalpels are used by some academics.
- Matrix Bands - Siqveland, Tofflemire and Omni matrix bands are all available on the clinics. Omni matrix bands are single use: please dispose into the sharps bin after use.

Siqveland and Tofflemire bands are assembled and dismantled by the nurse on the clinics. The metal bands are discarded into the sharps bin and the matrix retainer is sent for sterilization.

- Burs - Students are taught, and then monitored to remove the bur from the handpiece between points of use, or lay the handpiece with the bur on to the bracket table. This helps to reduce the possibility of scratch injuries caused by reaching over the handpiece with a bur in place. After use all burs, with the exception of the Acrylic trimming burs, Polishing

burs and Mandrels are put straight into the sharps bin. Acrylic trimming burs and Polishing burs and Mandrels are sent for sterilisation.

- Stainless steel crowns and orthodontic wires - Crown trimming or wire cutting should be carried out away from the patient and over a paper towel or another receptacle to catch any trimmings which are then all placed into the sharps box.
- Metal interproximal polishing strips - Metal polishing strips should be placed straight into the sharps bin after use.
- Suture Needles - After use, all suture needles must be disposed of into the sharps box using tweezers.
- Extracted teeth without amalgam - All extracted teeth without amalgam in them must be disposed of in the sharps bin.
- Broken Instruments - Broken instruments must be disposed of into the sharps bin. All broken instruments should be reported to the Clinical Team Leader who will inform the team in SDU who will replace any missing instruments from the treatment kits.

All sharps bins are checked on a daily basis on clinic by the bay nurse. When the sharps bin is full to the black line, (no more than 2/3rds full) the student must inform a member of the nursing staff who will dispose of it, and replace it accordingly.

3.1 Disposal

- Sharps bins on clinic should always be kept in a semi- permanent locked position.
- When full, the lid should be put to the locked position, signed and dated by the nurse closing the box, this is recorded on the front of the sharps bin.
- The locked sharps bins should be placed under the dental chair, ready for collection by the cleaners.