

## Waste Management Policy

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## Introduction

The Practice has a duty to ensure, as far as reasonably practical, the health and safety of employees and other people who may be affected by the storage, handling or disposal of waste products.

## Definitions

- Waste is anything that is discarded by a business.
- Hazardous waste is defined as waste having the potential to harm persons or the environment.
- Clinical waste is waste that consists wholly or partly of human tissue, blood or other body fluids, excretions, drugs or other pharmaceutical products, swabs or dressings, syringes, needles, or other sharp instruments. It is waste that unless rendered safe may prove hazardous to any person coming into contact with it. It is classed as hazardous.
- Non-clinical waste includes general waste such as paper or packaging. It may be non-hazardous or hazardous.
  - Non-hazardous non-clinical waste includes printing paper, stationary, paper rolls from examination couches and paper hand towels.
  - Hazardous nonclinical waste includes fluorescent light tubes, some electrical components, solvents, used chemicals.
- Confidential waste is any waste which includes information about any of our patients. This may be apparent e.g., anything with patient names, NHS numbers, or telephone numbers; clinical correspondence; visit print-outs; photographs. It would also include any waste containing any information which may be traceable to any patient, even if they are not named. Confidential waste also includes any sensitive information relating to the business e.g. staff names, payroll documents, management accounts.

## General precautions

Staff should wear appropriate clothing when disposing of waste. Waste should be placed in the appropriate container.

## Clinical waste

When handling clinical waste, staff should wear gloves. Where there is risk of spillage onto other body areas or clothing, extra precautions should be taken as appropriate e.g. use of an apron or goggles.

Single use disposable gloves are available in all clinical rooms. Single use disposable aprons and multi-use goggles are available in the treatment rooms and in the nursing area. The goggles should be cleaned and replaced after use.

Clinical waste bins should ONLY be used for clinical waste and not, for example, for paper sheets from examination couches or hand towels, unless contaminated by body fluids.

Clinical waste bins must not be used for sharp materials e.g. needles, lancets, blades or surgical instruments.

Clinical waste bins will be bagged up in orange clinical waste bags and these bags will then be placed in the large clinical waste bin in at the rear of the building ready for collection. The large clinical waste bin will be kept locked securely in the waste storage area.

Clinical waste bins will be emptied by and collected by an authorised contractor. Clinical waste will be collected regularly by the contractor. Clinical waste containers (sacks, sharps bins etc) will be provided by the contractor.

All waste transfers will be supported by a Waste Transfer Note. Waste transfer notes will be provided by the contractor. Completed waste transfer notes will be filed and retained for 3 years.

## Sharps Bins

Sharps bins are provided by the waste contractor and are available in each clinical room and in the dispensary. They should not be overfilled. Spare sharps bins are available in the store.

## Sharps returns

The practice will endeavour to provide sharps bins on repeat prescription to all patients to whom we prescribe needles relevant devices and explain how they can arrange safe disposal of them.

Patient will be encouraged to dispose of their sharps bins by arrangement with the dispensing pharmacy.

## Sharps bins and orange bags

In line with the infection control policy all sharps bins should be assembled correctly, and the label completed detailing the person and date when bin was assembled. They should be lock when they are under the fill line, and replaced at least every 3 months.

Orange bags should be tied by hand and not been over filled.

## Confidential Waste

All confidential waste should be placed in a shred it bin. These are provided in all clinical and clerical areas.

The contents of the Shred It bin should be regarded as confidential and should be treated in a similar way to the patient notes. For example, it would usually not be appropriate to be reading any of the papers in a Shred It bin. Similarly Shred It should not be left unattended in an area open to the public.

Shred it bins should ONLY be used for confidential waste. The safe storage and disposal of confidential waste represents a significant cost to the NHS and the practice and so it is important to use this service judiciously. Reasonable efforts should be made to separate confidential waste from general waste at the time of disposal. Confidential waste will be collected by Shred It.

## Other waste

Other general waste bins will be emptied by the cleaning contractors and collected by the Council.

## Sanitary Units

Sanitary waste units are available in each toilet and are managed and emptied by an authorised contractor.

## Medicines returns

From time to time patients may approach a member of staff to dispose of unused medicines. Such medicines will not be accepted. Patients will be directed to their local pharmacy who will be able to safely dispose of any unwanted medicines.