

Safety pen needles and safety lancet devices - Commissioning statement

Commissioning Statement

Safety pen needles and safety lancet devices should NOT be prescribed on FP10 for use by healthcare professionals and employees; it is the employer's responsibility to provide them. [1]

Safety pen needles and safety lancet devices CAN be prescribed on FP10 for use by people who are not healthcare professionals and are not employees in the healthcare sector if there is a risk of disease transmission (e.g. HIV and hepatitis).

The cost-effective choice is GlucoRx Safety Pen Needles 30G x 5mm and GlucoRx safety lancets 28Gx1.8mm.[3]

Background

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) issued regulations – (Sharp Instruments in Healthcare) Regulations 2013 on the use of safer sharps - which came into effect on 11 May 2013. The regulations have been introduced to implement a European Directive 2010/32/EU (the Sharps Directive). [2]

These state that 'employers must substitute traditional, unprotected medical sharps with a 'safer sharp' where it is reasonably practicable to do so'. Safer sharps are medical sharps which incorporate features or mechanisms to prevent or minimise the risk of accidental injury.

Implementation

Employers will be expected to procure safer sharp devices to protect their employees from sharps injuries. Devices can be obtained from medical equipment suppliers and pharmacies. A number of devices are available and employers should ensure that staff are trained in the correct use and disposal of their chosen product. [3]

Useful information

- Ensure patients are educated about the safe disposal of needles via a sharps bin.
- Sharpsguard yellow 1litre / Sharpsafe yellow 1 litre are suitable for insulin needles and lancets and are available on FP10
- Needles are available in different sizes; Use needles of shorter length and smaller diameter. to prevent IM injection.[4]
- The Forum for Injection Technique (FIT) UK considers the 4mm needle to be the safest pen needle for adults and children regardless of age, gender, and Body Mass Index (BMI). Using needles of a shorter length helps to prevent intramuscular injection of insulin. (IM injection of insulin should be avoided as it can result in unpredictable blood glucose levels). [4]

Examples of Safety Pen Needles

Needle	Size
GlucoRx Safety Pen Needles	30G x 5mm
Mylife Clickfine AutoProtect	31G x 5mm
BD AutoShield Duo Needles	30G x 5mm

Examples of Safety Lancets

Lancet	Mechanism	Size
GlucoRx safety lancet	Pressure activated	28G x 1.8mm
Unistik Comfort 3	User activated	28G x 1.8mm

1. Items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: Guidance for CCGs. NHS England and NHS Improvement. Updated August 2023. Available from <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/items-which-should-not-routinely-be-prescribed-in-primary-care-policy-guidance/>
2. Directives. Implementing the Framework Agreement on prevention from sharp injuries in the hospital and healthcare sector concluded by HOSPEEM and EPSU. Official Journal of the European Union. COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 2010/32/EU [10 May 2010] . Available from <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:134:0066:0072:EN:PDF>
3. Drug Tariff. NHS Business Services Authority. February 2024. Available from <https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/pharmacies-gp-practices-and-appliance-contractors/drug-tariff>
4. The UK Injection and Infusion Technique Recommendations. FIT UK Forum for Injection Technique UK. 4th Edition. October 2016. Available from <https://fit4diabetes.com/>
5. <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hsis7.htm>

Acknowledgment. Safety Pen Needles – Position Statement. 2017. Waltham Forest CCG.