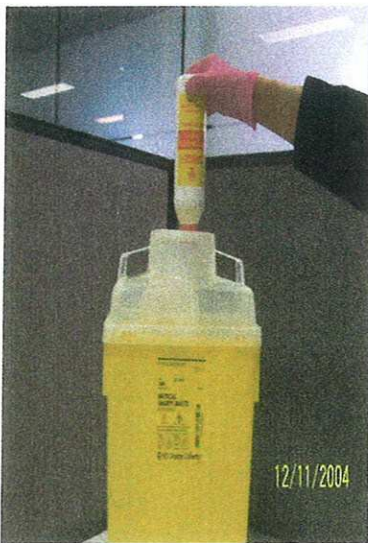


Needle and syringe distribution and exchange programs have been established to reduce the spread of blood borne viruses and infections such as Hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV among injecting drug users.

Sometimes needles and syringes are discarded improperly rather than exchanged or disposed of in appropriate containers. This creates concern for people in the community who find them.

While the risk of catching HIV or other diseases through injuring yourself with a discarded needle is extremely low, it is important to take care by following these steps when handling and disposing of them.



### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

Do not dispose of needles and syringes in your rubbish bin or recycling bin. The contents of your rubbish bin are composted and the presence of needles will contaminate the truckload of rubbish rendering it unusable for composting. The contents of your recycling bin are hand sorted and the presence of needles will pose a risk to employees at the recycling plant.

The City of Melville Health Services collects all needles and syringes found in the area and utilises Medi-Collect to collect and incinerate all discarded sharps so that they are removed from the usual waste stream.

### **WHAT TO DO IF YOU FIND A DISCARDED NEEDLE AND SYRINGE.**

- Do not be alarmed.
- Get a container with a well secured lid, preferably screw top. Rigid plastic containers are better than glass, which may shatter, or aluminium cans which can be squashed.
- Don't touch the sharp point of the needle with your fingers or hands, and do not attempt to re-cap the needle.
- Pick up the used needle and syringe by the blunt end, away from the point.
- Put the needle and syringe, point first, into the container. More than one may be placed in the container, but do not overfill. Do not carry the needle and syringe unless it is in a secure container.
- Make sure the container is tightly sealed.
- Contact Security Services at the City of Melville, so that the discarded needle can be disposed of by incineration by Medi-Collect.

### **WHAT TO DO IF YOU INJURE YOURSELF WITH A DISCARDED NEEDLE**

- Wash the area gently with soap and running tap water as soon as possible.
- Apply an antiseptic and a clean dressing.
- Obtain prompt medical advice from your local doctor or hospital emergency department, preferably within 24 hours.

### **REMEMBER**

**DON'T PANIC, TAKE REASONABLE CARE AND FOLLOW THE ABOVE STEPS.**

**TELL CHILDREN NEVER TO PICK UP A NEEDLE, BUT TO TELL AN ADULT.**

**IF YOU ARE HAVING CONCERNS ABOUT SHARPS IN A PUBLIC AREA PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL COUNCIL ON 93640666.**