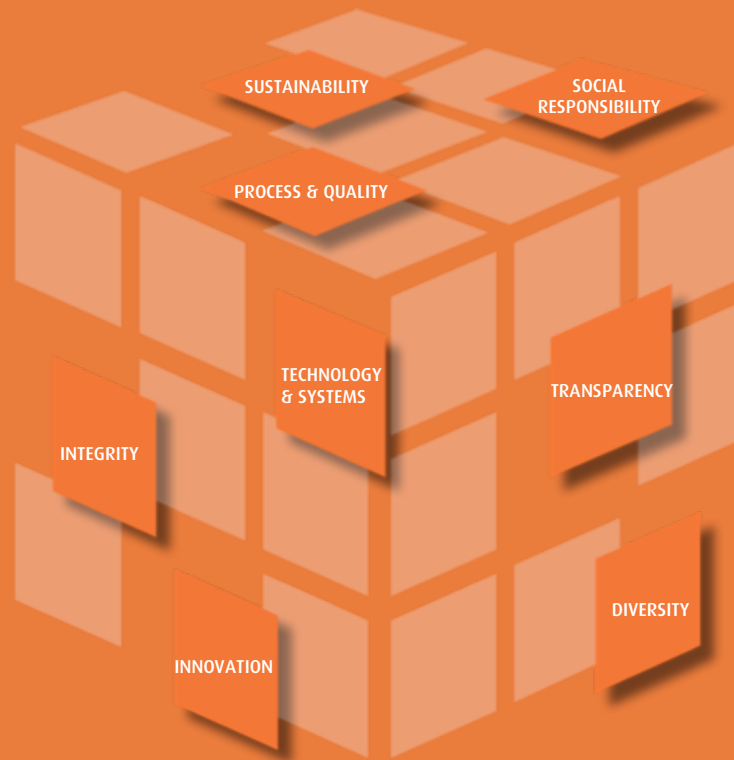


# Needlestick and Sharps Injury Prevention



As the drug and opioid use continues to increase in the US, so will ATALIAN's potential exposure to various discarded needles or sharps with the potential to cause injury or illness. Our clients range from health care, education, commercial, and industrial settings. The potential for exposure exists in all markets of ATALIAN's organization.

It is estimated that 600,000 to 800,000 needlestick and other percutaneous injuries occur annually among just health care workers. About half of these injuries go unreported. The data suggests that for an average hospital, approximately 30 needlestick injuries occur per year for every 100 beds.

Of the reported needlestick injuries, approximately 41% occur for the following reasons:

- Improperly disposed sharp;
- Disposal-related causes;
- Collision with health care worker or sharp; and
- Cleanup

**To reduce the risk of needlestick and other injuries, the following control measures are recommended to protect the employee:**

- Always wear personal protective equipment necessary to do the task safely to protect your skin, work clothes, and mucous membranes from contact with potentially infectious materials
- A gown or apron should be worn if there is a possibility of contact with infectious materials on your work clothes.
- A mask and goggles or eye protection should be worn if there is a possibility of contact with infectious materials in your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Gloves should be worn to protect your hands from contact with chemicals and potentially infectious materials.
- Wear puncture resistant gloves when performing high risk tasks (e.g., changing out or moving needle boxes, cleaning up broken glass, handling infectious waste containers).
- Report to management any needles or other sharp items not properly disposed of by the client site.

### **\*\*If this is not part of the requirements on your site, move to the next slide**

- Puncture resistant leak-proof containers for sharps and needle disposal should be located in convenient areas.
- Ensure that sharps and needle disposal containers are emptied before they become full.
- Report to management any sharps containers that are mounted too high or are not easily accessible to for changing out.
- Use a brush and dust pan to pick up broken glass which may be contaminated with blood or other body fluids.
- Handle contaminated laundry including sheets as little as possible. Do not shake out these items. Hold them away from your body and place in the linen hamper without pressing down on them.
- Carry red bags or other containers of medical waste away from your body.
- When cleaning up contaminated areas, minimize splashing, spraying, and spattering.

- Bandage any cuts on your hands before putting on gloves.
- If latex gloves are worn, always wash and remove them after cleaning a patient's room or any other potentially contaminated area.
- Dirty gloves should never be worn after the cleaning job is done - wearing them around the hospital contaminates surfaces and spreads disease among the patients.
- Always wash hands after removing gloves and whenever they are dirty.
- Always wash hands in between bathrooms and health care patient rooms.
- Follow safe work practices (e.g., do not eat, drink, smoke, apply lip balm, or handle contact lenses where there might be exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials).
- Keep food and drinks away from areas where blood or other potentially infectious materials are present.
- Report needlestick injuries and other potential bloodborne pathogen exposures to the infection control staff at your health care facility.

### Needle and Sharp Prevention

To prevent or minimize exposure from a sharp:

- Always wear personal protective equipment
- Never push trash down in the barrel
- Never sling trash bags over your shoulder
- Use a barrier device, such as a broom/shovel when cleaning up
- Cleanup of bodily fluid is to be done by **trained personnel only**
- Locate puncture resistant disposable containers for contaminated sharps, needles and broken glassware, utilized at job sites.
- Identify readily accessible hand washing facilities
- Locate emergency eye wash stations in industrial settings.
- Review ATALIAN safety guidelines for prevention of needlesticks and sharps
- Do not throw needles or sharps into the trash or down the toilet.

### Injured by a Needlestick or Sharp?

- Determine what stuck you.
  - Medical professionals can analyze this to see if it's infectious
- Immediately wash with soap and water
- Flush affected area with water (nose, mouth, or skin)
- Report the incident to your supervisor or manager

If you experienced a sharps injury during your work, immediately follow these steps:

- ✓ **Wash** wound with soap and water
- ✓ **Flush** out mouth, nose, or skin with water
- ✓ **Irrigate** eyes with water, saline, or sterile irrigates
- ✓ **Report** the incident to your supervisor or manager
- ✓ **Immediately seek medical treatment at the nearest ER or treatment facility.**