COMMUNITY PHARMACY MEDICINES WASTE AND SHARPS WASTE SERVICE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q. What does the service involve?**

A. There are a few parts to the service:

1. **Medicines Waste**- Patients will continue to return unwanted medicines to community pharmacies. These medicines should be placed into a 30L blue lidded bin following your company SOP if applicable. Any cytotoxic medicines which are returned by a patient should be placed into a 30L purple lidded bin. Since November 2021, the frequency of waste collection by NHS Lothian has reduced from 6 to 4 weeks. Contractors who are not signed up to this service will continue to have their collections every 13 weeks.

2. **Sharps Waste-** Patients will be able to return sealed sharps bins to the community pharmacy. Returned sharps bins should be placed in either a 30L blue lidded bin or in a 30L purple lidded bin if they contain cytotoxic waste. Please note that patients can put cytotoxic waste in to a sharps bin that has an orange/yellow lid- the important part is that when that bin is returned to the pharmacy it must be put in to a purple lidded 30L bin ahead of uplift.

3. **Patient sharps bins**- Patients will be able to collect a sharps bin from community pharmacies. These will be available in 0.6L or 4L sizes. Sharps bins should be offered to patients as they are having prescriptions dispensed. Patients may also come in and request a sharps bin.

If you are giving a patient a sharps bin for cytotoxic waste, it may be worth writing “cytotoxic sharps” on the side of the bin so that it is easily identifiable as such when it is returned to the pharmacy. Remember that even though the patient can put cytotoxic waste in to an orange/yellow lidded sharps bin, these bins must then be put in to a 30L purple lidded bin when they are returned to the pharmacy.

**Q. Can a patient return a sharps bin larger than the 0.6L or 4L bins we provide as part of the service?**

A. Yes. Patients can return any size of sharps bin. It must be marked appropriately with the required details and placed in to the 30L pharmacy sharps bin. Any sharps containers which are too big (e.g. 7L bins) to go in to your 30L bin will still be collected by Facilities provided the patient has completed the details on the label on the bin.

**Q. What details do patients need to complete on their returned sharps bins?**

A. The patient must complete the sticker on the sharps bin with:

 - date and signature of when sharps bin was assembled

 - date and signature of when sharps bin was sealed

 - CHI number. If CHI number is unknown, the pharmacy contractor code should be used

**Q. Can we mix medicines waste and sharps waste in the same 30L bin?**

A. No. You will need to have a separate bin for medicines waste and sharps waste. Please refer to the waste segregation chart.

**Q.** **What details should be completed on the 30L pharmacy sharps bins before uplift?**

A. -date and signature of when sharps bin was assembled

 - date and signature of when sharps bin was sealed

 - contractor code

 -“sharps waste”

 -“LQ”

 - bins must be sealed ahead of uplift in order to reduce any risk of injury/infection.

**Q. What should we do if a patient returns sharps which are not in a sharps bin?**

A. If the returns will fit in to either a 0.6L or 4L sharps bin then the patient should be provided with a bin and asked to put their returns in to it and then seal the bin. If the returns will not fit in to either a 0.6L or 4L bin, the returns could be placed directly in to a 30L bin by the patient.

**Q. Do we need a separate 30L sharps bin for cytotoxic sharps waste?**

A. Yes, any cytotoxic sharps waste must be in a purple lidded 30L bin.

**Q. What details should be completed on the 30L returned medicines waste bins before uplift?**

A. -contractor code

 -“Medicines waste”

 -“LQ”

**Q. How do we order more 0.6L, 4L and 30L bins if we run out?**

A. You will now be getting a six weekly collection for your waste until 15th November 2021, when the frequency of collection will change to every four weeks. The driver will be able to give you replacement bins when your waste is collected, however if you run out in the meantime you should e-mail TransportClinicalWasteEnq@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk to request a further supply.

**Q. Who do we contact if we have a query about waste collection?**

A. E-mail TransportClinicalWasteEnq@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk