

# Safe disposal of sharps at home or work

## Diabetes and Endocrinology Service

When you check your blood glucose levels or inject medication you need to dispose of used needles and lancets.

These items that can puncture your skin are called 'sharps'. You must handle and dispose of sharps safely to reduce the health risks to waste collectors, landfill workers, and the general community. Used sharps should be put in a strong container that they cannot pierce through after use. You must be able to seal the container. This means no one can be hurt by the used sharp.

### What is a suitable container?

You can buy an Australian standard yellow sharps container from a pharmacy, or you can use a strong container that cannot be pierced by a sharp, made from heavy/thick plastic and with a tight fitting or childproof lid. e.g. a plastic bleach bottle. (Do not use glass or aluminium containers as they are not puncture/shatter resistant).

- Write the words **Not recyclable—contains sharps** on the container with a black permanent marker.
- Do not over-fill the container with sharps. This can increase pressure on the lid and cause the sharps to spill out.
- Secure the lid to the container with heavy-duty tape such as electrical or duct tape.

### How do I dispose of the container?

You can dispose of Australian standard yellow sharps containers at the collection points shown on the following websites:

- [www.guild.org.au/qld\\_branch/professional-services/pharmacy-needle-syringe-program/find-participating-pharmacies](http://www.guild.org.au/qld_branch/professional-services/pharmacy-needle-syringe-program/find-participating-pharmacies)
- [www.health.qld.gov.au/qnsp/pdf/Loc\\_S\\_East.pdf](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/qnsp/pdf/Loc_S_East.pdf)

You can also dispose of home-generated sharps containers in a Sunshine Coast, Noosa or Gympie Council home wheelie bin (not recycle) provided the sharps are in a suitable sealed container described above.



**Standard 2**  
Partnering with  
consumers



**Standard 12**  
Provision of Care



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