



FLASH FRIDAYS



January 19, 2024

Flash Fridays will be distributed weekly on Fridays to prepare you for upcoming surveys like The Joint Commission or State of WI surveys. The Continual Readiness information provided will pertain to all areas within NCHC, from Behavioral Health to Skilled Nursing Care, however some information may be more specific to one survey. Some may only pertain to clinical staff, but always read it thoroughly. If you have questions, ask your Team Leader to explain how the topic relates to your program or department.

THE JOINT COMMISSION IS COMING SOON! SURVEY WINDOW: NOW THROUGH AUG. 5, 2024

Proper Disposal of Healthcare Waste

PHARMACEUTICAL, MEDICAL, INFECTIOUS, SOLID, AND HAZARDOUS WASTE

Healthcare providers generate many types of wastes, including pharmaceutical, medical, infectious, solid and hazardous waste. While hazardous waste can be a relatively small percentage of the waste generated by healthcare providers, it must be identified and managed appropriately.

What Does NOT Go in a Sharps Container?		
Infectious waste	Discarded PPE	Expired pills
Hazardous Bulk Meds	Medication aerosols and inhalers	Unused drugs and vaccines

Sharps Disposal

Devices with sharp points or edges that can puncture or cut skin are disposed of in puncture proof sharps containers. What does not go in a sharp's container? Infectious waste, discarded PPE, expired pills, hazardous bulk meds, medication aerosols and inhalers, unused medications and vaccines.

Biohazard Disposal

Any waste saturated with liquid or semi-liquid blood or other potentially infectious materials (OPIM) that has the potential to cause harm or infect humans is disposed of in red biohazard containers. What is placed in red biohazard bags for disposal? Items saturated or visibly contaminated with blood or other potentially infectious materials. Per North Central Health Care's Handling Biohazardous Waste Policy, urine is to be poured down the toilet and flushed. Urine containers are to be rinsed out and thrown into regular trash. Stool is to be flushed down the toilet. The containers can be rinsed and thrown out with the regular trash.

What is Pharmaceutical Waste? Partial vials, partial IV's, partial syringes, discontinued medications, unadministered/expired medications, patient prescriptions, ointments/creams, and medication samples. Items not to be placed in pharmaceutical waste containers are hazardous and chemical waste, sharps, fluorescein, red bag waste, controlled substances, batteries, fixatives and preservatives, garbage, and radioactive waste. Under s. NR 666.505, Wis. Adm. Code., all healthcare facilities are banned from discharging hazardous waste pharmaceuticals into a sewer system (i.e., disposing of them down a sink or toilet drain). The DNR recommends all facilities avoid sewerage any pharmaceuticals, regardless of their solid or hazardous waste classification.

Rx Destroyer

Medications that may be placed in Rx Destroyer on program units include the following: non-controlled medications and non-hazardous medications.

- Controlled substance destruction should follow the guidelines outlined in the Medication Controlled Substance Disposal procedure
- Dosage forms which can be placed in the Rx Destroyer include, tablets, capsules, liquids, lozenges, transdermal patches, used Fentanyl patches, and suppositories.
 - Outer shell of capsules and patch material may not dissolve.
- Do not place effervescent or antacid medications (gassing), syringes or drugs known to react with one another such as sodium bicarbonate and aspirin in the Rx Destroyer.
 - Consult with Pharmacy or program director/supervisor with questions regarding combinations which may produce gasses prior to use.
 - If bottle swells, effervescent or gassing additives have been inadvertently introduced, do not open container. Place bottle in plastic bag, tie closed and place in large garbage receptacle.

How to Use the Rx Destroyer

- Ensure cap is tightly replaced
- Gently shake to mix solution over medications
- Store in a safe and secure location.
- Bottle is full when contents are within 2 inches from cap, do not overfill
- Discard bottle and its contents in the regular garbage
- Replacement Rx Destroyer can be obtained from Pharmacy

SHARPS Red Sharps Container	BIOHAZARD Red Container or Red Liner in Container	TRACE CHEMO Yellow Container
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Needles ✓ Ampules ✓ Broken Glass ✓ Blades ✓ Razors ✓ Staples ✓ Trocars ✓ Guide Wires ✓ Other Sharps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Infectious Waste ✓ Blood Products (albumin, etc) ✓ Contaminated Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) ✓ IV Tubing ✓ Cultures, Stacks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Empty vials, ampules ✓ Empty Syringes, Needles ✓ Empty IVs ✓ Gowns ✓ Gloves ✓ Tubing ✓ Aprons ✓ Wipes ✓ Packaging
RCRA HAZARD Black Container	PHARMACEUTICAL Blue Container	RADIOACTIVE Shielded Containers with Radioactive Symbol
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Hazardous meds (RCRA) ✓ Half/Partial doses (RCRA) ✓ Hazardous bulk meds ✓ P-listed drugs, packaging ✓ Bulk chemo ✓ Pathological Waste (Incineration Only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Pills ✓ Injectables ✓ Antibiotics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Fluorine-18 (F-18), 110 minutes half life. ✓ Technetium-99 (T-99m), 6 hours half life. ✓ Iodine-131 (I-131), 8 days half life. ✓ Strontium-89 (Sr-89), 52 days half life. ✓ Iridium-192 (Ir-192), 74 days half life. ✓ Cobalt-60 (Co-60), 5.3 years half life.

Questions? Contact your manager or team leader and ask them about your role in the survey process.