



# RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICE POLICIES TO facilitate disposal of all used injection and non-injection equipment



## DISTRIBUTE SUPPLIES

- Distribute tamper resistant sharps containers in a variety of sizes
- Do not penalize or refuse to provide new supplies to clients who fail to return used drug supplies
- Provide access to safety devices for staff and procedures for first aid and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP)

## EDUCATE ABOUT

- Proper handling, securing, and disposal of used supplies
- Importance of hepatitis B (HBV) vaccination
- Encourage return and/or proper disposal of used injection, smoking, and snorting equipment

## DISPOSE

- Offer multiple sizes of biohazard containers for safe disposal
- Offer multiple, convenient locations for safe disposal in rural, remote, and urban settings
- Visually estimate the amount of returned equipment; never touch or manually count used supplies

## RISKS

- Previously used injection and smoking equipment may be contaminated with HIV, HCV, and/or HBV
- Transmission may result from injuries obtained when handling used injection and smoking equipment contaminated with HIV, HCV, and HBV
- The risk of transmission is low from injuries obtained when handling used injection and smoking equipment contaminated with HIV, HCV, and HBV from outdoor settings
- Handling of damaged crack cocaine smoking equipment may lead to an injury
- Handling of brass screens may cause cuts to the hands

## BEHAVIORS

- Community-acquired needlestick injury is can happen among:
  - people who use drugs in parks or other public spaces
  - people who pick up discarded needles
  - sanitation workers exposed to needles discarded in the garbage, sewers, or in toilets
- Recapping needles or placing syringes in non-puncture resistant containers or soft-walled bags can increase the chances of a needlestick injury
- People who experience homelessness may not be able to properly store and dispose of used equipment
- Improper disposal may be the result of lack of knowledge about proper practices
- Improper disposal of sharps by people who use drugs is associated with:
  - injecting in a public place
  - crack cocaine use
  - injection drug use