



# Waste Management Policy and Procedure

## Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to ensure participants, Invicta Care staff and others are protected from harm as a result of exposure to waste, infectious or hazardous substances generated during the delivery of supports.

It applies to all staff and meets relevant legislation, regulations and Standards as set out in Schedule 1, Legislative References. It should be read in conjunction with Invicta Care' Work Health and Safety Policy and Procedure.

## Applicable NDIS Practice Standards

### Management of Waste

#### Outcome

Each participant, each worker, and any other person in the home is protected from harm as a result of exposure to waste, infectious or hazardous substances generated during the delivery of supports.

#### Indicators

- Policies, procedures and practices are in place for the safe and appropriate storage and disposal of waste, infectious or hazardous substances that comply with current legislation and local health district requirements.
- All incidents involving infectious material, body substances or hazardous substances are reported, recorded, investigated and reviewed.
- An emergency plan is in place to respond to clinical waste or hazardous substance management issues and/or accidents. Where the plan is implemented, its effectiveness is evaluated, and revisions are made if required.
- Workers involved in the management of waste and hazardous substances receive training to ensure safe and appropriate handling. This includes training on any protective equipment and clothing required when handling waste or hazardous substances.

## Definitions

**Bulk** - free flowing liquids normally contained within a disposable vessel or tubing, not capable of being

12 Waste Classification Guidelines Part 1: Classifying waste, NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA), November 2014

13 Clinical and Related Waste Management for Health Services, NSW Department of Health, August 2007

safely drained to the sewer.

**Chemical Waste** – waste generated by the use of chemicals in medical, veterinary and laboratory procedures. Chemical waste should be classified in accordance with the step-by-step waste classification process in the ADG Code.

**Clinical and related waste** - waste resulting from medical, nursing, dental, pharmaceutical, skin penetration or other related clinical activity, being waste that has the potential to cause injury, infection or offence. It includes:

- clinical waste;
- cytotoxic waste;
- pharmaceutical, drug or medicine waste; and
- sharps waste.

**Clinical waste (including pathological waste)** - waste that has the potential to cause sharps injury, infection or offence. Includes:

- sharps;
- human tissue (excluding hair, teeth and nails);
- bulk body fluids and blood;
- visibly blood-stained body fluids and disposable material and equipment;
- laboratory specimens and cultures; and
- animal tissues, carcasses or other waste arising from laboratory investigation or for medical or veterinary research.

**Cytotoxic waste** - material contaminated with residues or preparations containing materials toxic to cells, principally through action on cell reproduction. This includes any residual cytotoxic drug, and any discarded material associated with the preparation or administration of cytotoxic drugs.

**Generator of waste** – a person conducting work in a Invicta Care workplace, including participants' homes, where waste (for the purpose of this Policy and Procedure) is created.

**Hazardous waste** - waste arising from medical, nursing, dental, veterinary, pharmaceutical or similar practices, and wastes generated in clinical or other facilities resulting from the investigation or treatment of patients or research projects. Typical hazardous waste includes sharps, anatomical waste, clinical waste, chemically contaminated waste, infectious waste, human tissue, cytotoxic waste, pharmaceutical waste, animal waste, laboratory waste, chemical waste and radioactive waste (or items contaminated with this material such as paper towels, gloves, etc).

**Pharmaceutical waste** - pharmaceuticals or other chemical substances specified in the Poisons List. Pharmaceutical substances include expired or discarded pharmaceuticals, filters or other materials contaminated by pharmaceutical products.

**Sharps** - any object capable of inflicting a penetrating injury, which may or may not be contaminated with blood and/or body substances. This includes needles and any other sharp objects or instruments designed to perform penetrating procedures.

## Policy

Invicta Care may generate waste that is unsafe to dispose of with general waste, as part of its delivery of NDIS supports. Appropriate waste disposal is important for infection control. Different types of waste have different waste management procedures that need to be followed.

When specific waste is appropriately handled and contained through safe work practices and the use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), the risk of exposure to infection, chemical contamination, radiation exposure or other health and safety issues is minimised.

Staff involved in the management of waste and hazardous substances are trained to ensure safe and appropriate handling. This includes training on any protective equipment and clothing required when handling waste or hazardous substances.



## Procedures

Staff must ensure they dispose of waste as per the procedures described below. Any instances where they are not able to do so should be reported to the Operations Manager or Director, and any waste incidents (e.g. exposure) should be reported immediately in accordance with Invicta Care's Incident Reporting Policies and Procedures.

Invicta Care will develop and implement a Waste Management Plan relevant to the types of waste it is likely to generate. The Waste Management Plan must be developed in consultation with other co-located services such as pathology services, and will cover:

- who has overall responsibility for the plan as well as the functions/responsibilities within the plan;
- strategies for:
  - ensuring waste is disposed of safely - to prevent contact with people and minimise environmental risks
  - minimising waste;
  - training and waste management promotion;
  - work health and safety requirements;
  - auditing;
  - measuring waste management performance; and
  - incident management;
- procedures for segregating, collecting, transporting, storing and disposing of waste from various areas of the service;
- spills management;
- contract management, including contractor details, contact arrangements, auditing, safe operating and spill management procedures; and relevant insurances.

## Minimum Requirements for Waste Disposal

Disposal of any contaminated or hazardous waste generated by Invicta Care activities must:

- be disposed of in accordance with the legislative requirements for the type of waste;
- be conducted and implemented in consultation with relevant staff; and
- occur based on a risk management process that is used when planning and implementing hazardous waste disposal.

### Disposal

This Policy and Procedure covers disposal of waste, given this is the waste most likely to be produced in the delivery of Invicta Care' NDIS supports.

Should general waste be mixed or contaminated with any of the above listed waste it must be then treated as the contaminated or hazardous waste.

### Clinical Waste

Clinical waste is generally categorised as an Infectious Substance, and staff should minimise the handling of waste bags and avoid decanting waste from one bin to another. When clinical waste bags must be handled, they should be held away from the body by the closed top of the bag and placed directly into a bin appropriate to the waste. Gloves, apron and protective eyewear must be worn. If a participant has symptoms of a communicable disease (e.g. gastroenteritis), face masks must also be worn.

Waste bags must not be filled to more than two-thirds of their capacity and contents are to be secured within the bag when closing. Before closing the bag, excess air should be excluded without compacting the waste in the bag. Waste bags should be taken out to the Council bin as soon as possible, or at the end of the shift.

## Pharmaceutical Waste

### Disposal

Pharmaceutical waste must be disposed of safely and in a manner that is not harmful to the environment. Medication to be destroyed (i.e. out of date, no longer required or incorrectly dispensed) must be labelled and disposed of in an appropriate bag and returned to the local pharmacist for disposal under the Returned Unwanted Medicine program.

If the participant, their supporter or family is unable to return pharmaceutical waste, Invicta Care' staff will dispose of it on their behalf. Invicta Care will provide staff with address and contact details of nearby pharmacies that are registered to accept unwanted medicines.

### Labelling

Pharmaceutical waste packages/containers must be marked with the label PHARMACEUTICAL WASTE. No symbols or signage are required.

### Sharps Waste

Sharps injuries are a common cause of getting infected by a blood-borne virus. The following basic requirements should apply if sharps are used or found:

- whoever uses the sharp, disposes of it;
- don't pass sharps by hand, use tongs;
- use disposable sharps;
- don't put a used needle back in its cover, put it in a sharps container;
- don't separate a needle from a syringe;
- don't break, burn or manipulate a sharp;
- don't clean re-usable sharps by hand, use a long-handled brush and tongs;
- don't put hands or fingers into garbage bags, laundry bags, crevices etc. where you suspect there are sharps – use tongs;
- don't manually compress garbage bags – use the tie-straps to lift and carry the bag; and
- ensure that any containers are kept out of reach of children.

### Disposal

Sharps must be disposed of in an approved sharps disposable container (yellow with biohazard symbol). Sharps containers that are resistant to impact, penetration and leakage, are stable, have integrity of the handles/other carrying features and closure device, and have a capacity indicator (fill line) marked on the outside wall of the container must be used. PPE must be worn at all times when handling sharps, including gloves and safety glasses.

Staff MUST NOT use drinks cans, bottles or cardboard boxes to dispose of sharps – they may find their way into domestic waste and present a hazard to council workers and the public.

Staff should never try to retrieve anything from a sharps container, or press down on the contents to make more room.

Containers must be labelled and regularly emptied.

### Labelling

Sharps disposable containers must bear the Division 6.2 label: and be marked with the label CLINICAL SHARPS.



### Chemical Waste

#### Disposal

When disposing of chemicals and containers that have contained hazardous chemicals:

- check the label for advice on disposal of chemicals or containers;
- triple rinse empty containers to remove all traces of the chemical; and
- uncap, puncture and/or crush all rinsed containers.

Ensure that appropriate PPE (e.g. gloves and safety glasses) are worn before handling or rinsing the empty containers.

#### Labelling

Chemical waste packages/containers must be labelled with the product identifier (name) and the relevant hazard pictogram/symbol depending on the type of hazard classification (e.g. corrosive, flammable, toxic). It must also include the Australian name, address and contact details of the manufacturer.

Labelling requirements do not apply to household consumer products, however, if the original label is faded, worn or illegible, a replacement label/sticker must be applied so that the contents can be easily identified.

See also Invicta Care' Chemical Use and Storage Policy and Procedure for further details.

#### Internal Transport and Tracking

Invicta Care must optimise the waste collection process, reduce handling and transportation, and promote safe work practices.

When removing waste, staff should avoid walking through food preparation and heavily used areas (e.g. kitchen) taking a direct route to the outside bin if possible. This further reduces the risk of contamination should an accident occur (e.g. slip/trip/fall).

#### Managing Spills

Invicta Care must ensure that:

- its Waste Management Plan sets out procedures for waste spills;
- staff involved in spill management are trained in emergency procedures and handling requirements, including use of spill kits;
- spill kits are readily accessible and clearly labelled and mapped;
- it stocks PPE and emergency spill kits appropriate to the waste handled;
- spill kits are disposed of with the relevant waste; and
- spill kits are restocked with the necessary components immediately after use, returned to their locations and regularly inspected for malfunctioning or missing components.

#### Personal Protective Equipment

Invicta Care will supply the necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the types of waste that may be handled. Staff must use appropriate PPE when handling waste, including gloves, safety eyewear and in some cases, an apron.

#### Reporting

Incidents relating to waste management and disposal should be reported in accordance with Invicta Care' Incident Management Policies and Procedures.

Workers who sustain a needlestick injury or are exposed to blood and/or body fluids may need to be notified to the Regulator – refer Invicta Care' Workplace Incident Reporting Policy and Procedure for further guidance.

## Supporting Documents

Documents relevant to this policy and procedure include:

- Waste Management Plan
- Work Health and Safety Policy and Procedure
- Risk Register
- Infection Control Policy and Procedure
- Medication Management Policy and Procedure
- Workplace Incident Management Policy and Procedure
- Participant Incident Management Policy and Procedure

## Monitoring and Review

This policy and procedure will be reviewed at least annually by the Director. Reviews will incorporate staff, participant and other stakeholder feedback.

Invicta Care' Continuous Improvement Register will be used to record identified improvements and monitor the progress of their implementation. Where relevant, this information will be considered as part of Invicta Care' service planning and delivery processes.

