

## NEEDLESTICK, BLOOD OR OTHER BODY FLUID EXPOSURE POLICY

### Policy Statement:

**All Employees:** This policy applies to all persons working for or on our behalf of the McSence Group of Companies which includes the subsidiary companies - *McSence Communication Ltd, McSence Ltd, McSence Services Ltd & McSence Workspace Ltd* in any capacity including but not limited to:

- ✦ All employees at all levels, prospective employees, agency workers, seconded workers, temporary workers, contractors/sub-contractors, clients, agents, external consultants, volunteers, members of the public, group's supply chain, third-party representatives and/or business partners who will be referred to in our Group policies as "all employees".

**The Workplace:** This policy applies to all persons working for or on our behalf of the McSence Group of Companies in any capacity at the workplace(s) as defined below which includes but not limited to:

- ✦ McSence Premises, Offices, Units, Business Park, Client's Premises, External Meeting Places, Customers' Homes, Gardens, Sheltered Housing, Whilst On-Call, On-Duty, Emergency Cover, Working from Home including On-Line Meetings, Whilst Driving in Company Time, Working Public Areas (café's, trains, coffee shops, buses etc) and will be referred to throughout this policy as "the workplace".

As an employer, the McSence Group will need to take action to manage the risks for workers who:

- ✦ Use sharps to provide care or other services to people
- ✦ Provide care or other services to people who are likely to use sharps
- ✦ Are involved in handling such equipment after use including sterile services
- ✦ Are involved in handling waste disposal
- ✦ Are likely to inadvertently come across used sharps in house clearances; laundry; cleaning services
- ✦ Are involved in carrying out works in void/vacated properties

**Complete A Risk Assessment:** This will help identify the hazards; consider the nature of the work; evaluate the risks; and implement, monitor and review control measures to reduce the risk as follows:

**What is a Suitable and Sufficient Risk Assessment?** The assessment needs to be appropriate for the nature of the work. The more hazardous the work, the more in-depth the assessment should be. For example, procedures that have a higher risk of injury include intra-vascular cannulation, venepuncture and injections and involve the use of devices such as IV cannula, winged steel-butterfly-needles, needles, syringes and phlebotomy needles. These procedures should have detailed assessments. Who completes the assessment, and who it applies to, will depend on the nature of the work and the complexity. Consideration to risks to all those who may use the sharps including, where relevant, those who dismantle, sterilise, dispose of the medical sharps. Colleagues working in both void and/or vacated properties may be at risk if the tenants are or were drug users and it would be useful to get a much information about likelihood of such risk from landlords and if necessary carry out a pre-work check where required.

**Implementing Control Measures:** The risk control measures identified by the risk assessment should follow the hierarchical approach in the [Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations \(COSHH\) 2002](#).

**Preventing the Risk of Exposure:** McSence Group's primary duty is to prevent exposure to the risk of a sharp's injury.

**Controlling the Risk of Exposure:** If the risk cannot be prevented, then the risk of an injury must be adequately controlled where there is a general hierarchy of controls that needs to be considered as follows:

- ✦ The design and use of appropriate work processes, systems and engineering controls and the provision and use of suitable work equipment and materials, e.g., providing safer sharps devices
- ✦ The control of exposure at source, e.g., having a clinical waste policy which ensures safe collection, storage, transport and final disposal of waste.

- ✦ Where adequate control of exposure cannot be achieved by other means, provision of suitable personal protective equipment (PPE) in addition to the measures required by the above.

The hierarchy reflects the fact that eliminating and controlling risk by using physical engineering controls and safeguards is more dependable than relying solely on systems of work. Studies have shown that in the health and social care sector, a combination of training, safer working practices and the use of safer sharp products can prevent the majority of sharps injuries.

**Providing Safer Sharps Services:** Factors to consider when selecting appropriate safer sharps:

- ✦ The reliability of the device which must not compromise patient care
- ✦ The care worker should be able to maintain appropriate control over the procedure
- ✦ Other safety hazards or sources of blood exposure that may arise from use of the device
- ✦ Ease of use (taking into account the existing clinical practices commonly in use by the relevant health professionals – but not assuming custom and practice is safest)
- ✦ The design of the safety mechanism is suitable for the application, taking account of the following issues:
  - ❖ If activation of the safety mechanism is straightforward, it is more likely to be used
  - ❖ If the safety mechanism is integral to the device (i.e., not a separate accessory) it cannot be lost or misplaced
  - ❖ for many uses, a single-handed or automatic activation will be preferable
  - ❖ an audible, tactile or visual signal that the safety mechanism has correctly activated is helpful to the user; a
  - ❖ the safety mechanism is not effective if it is easily reversible
- ✦ Involving the relevant staff in the selection of safer sharps will help ensure that they use the new equipment safely, and that any reduction in the number of sharps injuries is maintained for longer.

**Needlestick Injury and/or Exposure to the Blood or Other Body Fluid:** If a colleague experiences an injury from a sharp, needlestick injury, were exposed to the blood and/or other body fluid during the course of work, immediately follow these steps:

- ✦ Encourage the wound to bleed, ideally by holding it under running water
- ✦ Wash the wound using running water and plenty of soap
- ✦ Do not scrub the wound while you're washing it
- ✦ Do not suck the wound
- ✦ Dry the wound and cover it with a waterproof plaster or dressing
- ✦ Flush splashes to the nose, mouth, or skin with water
- ✦ Irrigate eyes with clean water, saline, or sterile irritants
- ✦ Report the incident to your supervisor/line manager
- ✦ Seek urgent medical advice as may need treatment to reduce the risk of getting an infection (for example from your occupational health service) as effective prophylaxis (medicines to help fight infection) are available or otherwise call your GP, NHS 111 or go to the nearest accident and emergency (A&E) department

**NHS & HSE Guidance:** For NHS & HSE guidance and further information please click on these links:

[What should I do if I injure myself with a used needle? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\):](https://www.nhs.uk/what-should-i-do-if-i-injure-myself-with-a-used-needle/)  
<https://www.hse.gov.uk/healthservices/needlesticks/>

**Sharps Disposal:** The safe management of sharps waste is vital to eliminate the risk of sharps injuries and ensure compliance with hazardous waste regulations where sharps disposal plays a critical role in workplace and community safety. Properly managing and disposing of sharps, such as needles and syringes, is essential for preventing injuries, infections, and environmental harm. Following current safer sharps legislation and using specialised containers, helps to prevent sharps injuries and associated health risks within the workplace. Rentokil Initial Medical & NWH are our current preferred suppliers who both provide a comprehensive range of sharps containers, uplift and disposal according to the HSE & SEPA guidelines - contact details are shown below:

- ✦ Rentokil Initial - <https://www.rentokil-initial.com/>
- ✦ NWH Group – 0333 320 4000 | <https://www.nwhgroup.co.uk/>

**Company Intranet – Staff Zone:** All the McSence Groups policies, procedures, handbooks are available on-line to all employees on the McSence Group's Staff Zone Intranet via our website [Login | McSence](#)

---

**Compliance:** Failure to comply with the provisions of this Policy may result in Disciplinary proceedings.



*McSence Group Signatory:*

**David Maxwell | Chief Executive**

**McSence Group - *McSence Communication Ltd, McSence Ltd, McSence Services Ltd & McSence Workspace Ltd***

**T: 0131 454 1500 | E: [mail@mcsence.co.uk](mailto:mail@mcsence.co.uk) | W: [www.mcsence.co.uk](http://www.mcsence.co.uk) | FB: [www.facebook.com/McSenceGroup](https://www.facebook.com/McSenceGroup)**

*Policy Amendments & Revisions: This policy will be reviewed annually and, if necessary, revised in the light of legislative or organisational changes. Improvements will be made by learning from experience and the use of an established annual review. Should any amendments, revisions, or updates be made to this policy it is the responsibility of the Company Senior Management Team (SMT) to see that all relevant employees receive notice and training if necessary.*

POLICY