

# Health Care Waste Management

## Health Worker Safety Training Module 3

# Topics

- What is health care waste?
- Safer handling of hazardous waste
- Waste segregation
- Waste collection
- Waste storage
- Final waste disposal



# What is Health Care Waste?

- All waste generated by health care activities
- Includes infectious and non-infectious waste



# People At-Risk from Health Care Waste

- Health workers
- Patients in hospitals or receiving home care
- Visitors to health care facilities
- Workers in support services (e.g. laundry and waste transportation)
- Incinerator operators and waste pickers
- The local community



# Waste Segregation

- **Waste Segregation:** Separation or sorting of waste by classification
- Segregation is key for effective management of waste and is the responsibility of the waste producer.
- Waste segregation
  - should take place as close as possible to the waste origin
  - should be maintained in storage areas
  - should be maintained during transport to the final disposal site

# Waste Segregation

- Should be done in color-coded receptacles, including color-coded bags or liners, where possible
- The following coding classifications are recommended:

Category	Color of Receptacle		Examples
<b>Non-infectious</b>		Blue/Black	Paper, packing materials, food, plastic bottles
<b>Infectious and highly-infectious</b>		Red	Gloves, dressings, specimen receptacles, blood, body fluids, organ waste
<b>Sharps</b>		Yellow safety boxes	Syringes with needles, scalpels, blades

# Safer Handling of Hazardous Waste

- Use protective gear (PPE) to avoid cuts and contact with open skin.
- Avoid handling needles after injections and dispose of used needles in a puncture-proof sharps container.
- Store and dispose of waste properly to avoid contact with the community.
- Ensure that all workers are trained in safe waste handling methods and have access to and use PPE when handling waste.

# Waste Collection

- Receptacles:
  - Must have lids that can be easily opened
  - Must be lined with plastic bags that overlap the rims of the receptacle
  - Bags should be tied once the receptacle is 75% full
- A routine collection schedule should be established
  - Waste should be collected daily, or as frequently as possible, and transported to a central storage site
  - Waste should be collected during off-peak times (e.g. at night) when wards are less busy
- Maintaining waste segregation
  - No bags of waste should be removed from the ward unless labeled with the name of ward or department
  - Bags or containers should be replaced immediately

## Storage of Waste

- Waste can be stored for 48 hours during cool weather and 24 hours during warm weather.
- Waste storage facilities should be locked to prevent access by unauthorized persons.
- The storage facility should be inaccessible to animals, insects, and birds.



# Final Disposal of Health Care Waste

The World Health Organization recommends the following methods of disposal:

- Autoclaving
- Controlled burial
- Controlled dumping
- Incineration at temperatures above 850°C



**Thank You**

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