

## Medicines Optimisation Position Statement

Position Statement	Insulin safety needles and safety lancets
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### Position Statement

Safety pen needles and safety lancet devices should NOT be prescribed on FP10 for use by healthcare professionals and employees; it is the employer's responsibility to provide them.

### Background

Safety needles and safety lancets incorporate automatic safety locks. These are for the benefit of healthcare workers to avoid needle stick injury. Employers have a duty of care to ensure their staff are kept safe so community services and care homes should provide these themselves.

Under the HSE Regulations 2013 employers must substitute traditional, unprotected medical sharps with a 'safer sharp' where it is reasonably practicable to do so. One of the requirements for employers under these regulations is to

*'have effective arrangements for the safe use and disposal (including using 'safer sharps' where reasonably practicable, restricting the practice of recapping of needles and placing sharps bins close to the point of use)'.*

In June 2019, NHS England produced guidance for CGGs about items which should not routinely be prescribed in primary care. This guidance states:

*'for patients that are not able to self-administer it may be appropriate that a safety needle is used by the health care professional, however this would not need to be prescribed on prescription.'*

### Appropriate and non-appropriate prescribing of safety needles and lancets on FP10

Safety needles or safety lancets should NOT be prescribed on FP10 for use by healthcare professionals and employees; it is the healthcare employer's\* responsibility to provide them. Safety needles should not be prescribed to individuals who self-administer.

Safety needles CAN be prescribed on FP10 for use for patients whose insulin is administered by a non-professional healthcare worker, e.g. non-paid carer or parent/ relative. Examples where prescribing safer sharps is appropriate for use by parents/carers (non-HCPs) include:

- People who also have a blood-borne infectious disease
- People who may become aggressive during administration.
- School staff administering insulin to younger children or those with special needs require safer sharps prescribed to enable administration during the school day. This is in addition to the standard needles required for administration outside the school setting by parents/carers.

Cost-effective brands of safety needles and lancets should be selected for prescription. The usual good practice on the safe disposal of sharps applies.

\* A healthcare employer is an employer whose primary activity is the management, organisation or provision of healthcare.

## References:

- Items which should not be routinely prescribed NHS England June 1019 <https://www.england.nhs.uk/medicines-2/items-which-should-not-be-routinely-prescribed/>
- Sharps Safety: RCN Guidance for the prevention and management of sharps injuries in health and social care settings. <https://www.rcn.org.uk/Professional-Development/publications/rcn-sharps-safety-uk-pub-010-596>
- Health and Safety (Sharp Instruments in Healthcare) Regulations 2013. Guidance for employers and employees <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hsis7.pdf>