

Elements of a Model Facility Policy on Healthcare Waste Management

- 1. General Policy Statement:** Protection of the environment is essential for a healthy community and enhances the safety and well-being of the Hospital staff and patients. The Hospital is committed to reducing the volume and hazardous nature of its waste, thereby minimizing the impact of healthcare activities on the environment, health workers, and the community. It is the policy of the Hospital that all waste generated will be segregated, handled safely, treated effectively, and disposed in accordance with Hospital *Guidelines* XXX, subject to the country's laws or regulations.
- 2. Policy Purpose:** The Hospital established this Policy to minimize the overall quantities of waste generated by the hospital, to ensure that healthcare waste is managed properly from its point of origin to its final disposal, and to eliminate as much as possible dioxins, mercury, and other toxic byproducts of waste disposal through the application of the best environmental practices and the best available technologies. Ultimately, the Policy is intended to protect people and the environment from hazardous exposure.
- 3. Risk for Noncompliance of Policy:** Ineffective or incorrect management of waste may result in the release of infectious or toxic substances into the environment, thereby posing a risk of exposure to patients, healthcare staff, and the community. The importance of correct segregation at the point of origin and the implications of non-compliance with this Policy must be fully understood by all staff in order to prevent risk of injury and illness to individuals, or the uncontrolled release of wastes into the environment.
- 4. Applicability of Policy:** This Policy is intended for use and compliance by all Hospital employees.
- 5. General Responsibility Policy Statements:**

Hospital Responsibilities:

- The Hospital is committed to minimizing waste by such means as environmentally preferable purchasing, recycling, re-use, or other waste minimization practices.
- The Hospital is committed to using the best environmental practices and environmentally sound technologies for waste management.
- The Hospital is committed to environmentally preferable purchasing. *[Or]* The Hospital is committed to building its capacity to meet the requirements for green public purchasing as specified in various EU communications, plans and directives.
- The Hospital is committed to being a mercury-free facility and will not purchase devices, materials, chemicals, or other products that contain mercury. *[Or]* The Hospital is committed to becoming a mercury-free facility by continuing efforts to replace mercury devices, materials, chemicals, or other products with mercury-free alternatives.
- The Hospital is committed to supporting a healthcare waste management committee and appointing staff to develop, maintain, monitor, and improve the healthcare waste management system.
- The Hospital is committed to providing training to the staff on healthcare waste management.

Staff Responsibilities:

- All staff have a responsibility to ensure that the waste they produce is handled and disposed of correctly by following the controls and procedures detailed in *Guideline XXX*.
- All staff have a responsibility to minimize waste by following waste minimization practices and procedures detailed in *Guideline XXX*.
- All staff have a responsibility to follow purchasing guidelines detailed in *Guideline XXX* to support the Hospital's environmentally preferable purchasing commitment.
- All staff have a responsibility to follow mercury guidelines detailed in *Guideline XXX* to support the Hospital's mercury-free facility commitment.

Individual Responsibilities:

- The *Waste Producer* shall ensure that waste arising from all processes is handled and disposed of safely and correctly by following appropriate procedures detailed in *Guideline XXX*.
- The *Waste Management Coordinator* shall ensure that the daily waste management and disposal operations are conducted in accordance with *Guideline XXX*.
- *The Hospital Administrator, Chief Medical Officer, Nursing Director, Heads of Departments, and other Supervisors* shall ensure that:
 - Sufficient and qualified human resources are assigned to healthcare waste management in their areas of responsibility;
 - Adequate supplies and equipment for healthcare waste management are available in accordance with the requirements in *Guideline XXX*;
 - All staff are adequately trained to manage waste (including spills) generated by their activities; and
 - The Waste Management Coordinator is made aware of any problem areas and that action is taken to improve performance.
- The *Hospital Director* shall ensure compliance with legal requirements relating to waste management and the environment.

6. Worker Health and Safety Policy Statements:**Hospital Responsibilities:**

- The Hospital is committed to ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of its employees by providing suitable policies and procedures, work equipment, personal protective equipment, and training, in accordance with *Guideline XXX*.
- The Hospital is committed to ensuring that all staff take appropriate precautions against any potential or actual risk posed by patient or specimen contact, and that the staff receive information, instruction, and training to this effect.
- The Hospital is committed to providing hepatitis B and tetanus vaccinations to all staff that may come in contact with potentially infectious waste.

Staff Responsibilities:

- All staff are responsible for ensuring that they do not place themselves or others at risk and for carrying out work safely by following proper procedures and using the required personal protective equipment.
- All staff are responsible for informing their supervisors as soon as possible of all accidents, incidents, or other problems resulting from non-compliances.

7. Training Requirements:

Hospital Responsibilities: The Hospital shall provide healthcare waste management training for all staff at the time they are hired, during changes of work function, and at least annually, as detailed in *Guidelines XXX*. The Hospital shall maintain records of the training.

Nursing Director Responsibilities: The nursing director shall ensure that nursing staff are adequately trained to complete their responsibilities in accordance with *Guidelines XXX*.

Supervisor Responsibilities: Supervisors' training shall consist of supervisory responsibilities for implementing the *Guidelines XXX* as well as staff training. Supervisors shall ensure that staff are adequately trained to complete their responsibilities in accordance with *Guidelines XXX*. Supervisors shall document training and the documentation shall become part of the staff personnel records.

Staff Responsibilities: All staff shall receive training in waste management according to their level of involvement as detailed in *Guidelines XXX*.

8. Monitoring and Compliance with Policies

Accountability: All staff have a monitoring and compliance role and are responsible for seeking the assistance of the Waste Management Coordinator regarding any problems of non-compliance whether due to accidents, inadequate working practices, or lack of resources.

The Chief Medical Officer, Nursing Director, and Heads of Departments must ensure that all supervisors and departments under their control have an up-to-date copy of this Policy and *Guidelines XXX*.

Policy Effectiveness: A yearly audit shall be conducted to promote and improve compliance with this policy. The audit procedures, detailed in *Guidelines XXX*, describe the measurable indicators used to monitor policy effectiveness and the methods to analyze root causes of non-compliance. Recommended actions derived from the audit shall be implemented in a participatory manner to improve performance.

Review: The Policy will be reviewed annually by the Hospital Administration and revised as necessary.

9. **Authority to Establish Policy:** The Hospital Administration has the authority to establish this policy under ... *[cite governing bylaws or rules of the Hospital Administration]*. This Policy was established in keeping with the following laws and regulations: *[cite relevant local or national laws and regulations, if any]*.

[Date of Issuance]

ANNEX TO THE POLICY

DEFINITIONS:

Best Available Technologies (BAT): latest state-of-the-art processes or technologies developed on a scale which allows implementation under economically and technically viable conditions, taking into consideration the costs and advantages, in order to limit pollution discharges, emissions and waste

Best Environmental Practices (BEP): the application of the most appropriate combination of environmental control measures and strategies

Dioxins: refers to polychlorinated dibenzodioxins, a family of compounds that are persistent and bioaccumulate in the environment, highly toxic at very low concentrations, and produced as a byproduct of, among others, healthcare waste incineration

Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP): the procurement of products or services that have the least negative effect on the environment and human health in consideration of the acquisition of raw materials, manufacturing methods, packaging, distribution, recyclability, operation, maintenance and final disposal; also known as green purchasing

Mercury: an environmentally persistent, toxic metal commonly found in thermometers, blood pressure devices, gastrointestinal tubes, some laboratory chemicals, and electrical devices

Personal protective equipment (PPE): specialized clothing or equipment designed to create a barrier against health and safety hazards. PPE include gloves, face masks, safety goggles, face shields, respirators, aprons, and boots; PPE must be provided in a variety of sizes and styles and must fit the person using them

Point of Origin: the point at which waste is first produced. Note that waste can be minimized by actions taken before the waste is generated, such as through environmentally preferable purchasing

Waste minimization: a process or policy of reducing the amount of waste generated, to the extent feasible, through such practices as EPP, source reduction, product changes, process changes, good working practices, re-use, recycling, composting, etc.

Waste Producer: any person whose activity produces waste

Waste Segregation: the systematic separation of different categories of waste at the point of origin and maintaining the separation throughout the process of collection, transport, storage, and treatment

NOTE TO THE NATIONAL TECHNICAL CONSULTANTS:

Under the UNDP GEF Project, the national technical consultants or coordinators, with the assistance of the global project team, will work with the model hospitals to develop specific guidelines or procedures related to healthcare waste management. The guidelines will be compiled into “Guideline XXX” which is referred to in the above model facility policy template.

The guidelines may include the following:

- *Classifications of healthcare waste, definitions*
- *Handling and processing of healthcare waste*
 - *Waste segregation*
 - *Collection*
 - *Labeling*
 - *Storage*
 - *Transportation*
- *Treatment and disposal of healthcare waste*
- *Local waste policies (if the hospital has several branches)*
- *Management of mercury-contaminated waste and mercury-containing devices*
- *Waste minimization*
- *Environmentally preferable purchasing*
- *Training*
- *Occupational safety measures*
- *Monitoring, inspection forms*
- *Audit procedures, which should include measurable indicators for:*
 - *Availability of plastic bags and bins*
 - *Availability of personal protective equipment*
 - *Proper segregation*
 - *Proper containment*
 - *Training coverage of staff*
 - *Competency of waste handlers*
 - *Compliance with the policy*

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