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| **Authorized/Reviewed by** | Individual or Committee Name |
| **Standard** | 22VAC40-61-290B1.c |

**Definition and Overview (define the infection control practice**)

Injection safety, or safe injection practices, is a set of measures taken to perform injections in a manner that is optimally safe for participants, center staff, and others. A safe injection is harmless to the participant, keeps the provider safe from avoidable risks, and prevents dangerous waste (e.g., through inappropriate disposal of injection equipment).

**Purpose (why this policy/procedure is important)**

The purpose of this policy is to provide staff with guidance on following safe injection practices. It is the center’s duty to protect participants and staff by ensuring safe practices are followed when preparing and administering injectable medications.

**Responsibility (who is responsible for following this policy/procedure)**

For the purpose of this policy, “staff” refers to those in the center who hold credentials to prepare and administer injectable medications.

**Policy Content Considerations**

* Guidance to where medication preparation may occur, including use of a private space to administer medications to participants.
* Maintain adequate supplies in all designated medication preparation areas, including who is responsible and appropriate practices (e.g., frequency of checking supply levels).
* Guidance about proper response if unsafe injection practices are identified. If a center has a policy that references Blood Borne Pathogens protocols as they relate to infection control and/or employee health, reference the location of those protocols in your center’s policy.

*Note: Other policies and procedures should reinforce safe injection practices. For example, your policies and procedures addressing pharmacy considerations may incorporate guidance about purchasing appropriately sized vials to limit the sharing of multi-dose vials between participants.*

**Procedure Content Considerations (outlines the steps/supplies for performing the practice)**

Examples of safe injection and sharps safety practices, to minimize potential exposure to pathogens, should include:

* Preparation of injectable medications in designated clean area(s).
* Adherence to aseptic (clean) technique. Aseptic technique refers to the manner of handling, preparing, and storing medications and injection equipment/supplies (e.g., syringes, needles) to prevent microbial contamination and infection.
* Proper storage and use of insulin pens and other similar devices.
* Proper disposal of used injection equipment (e.g., syringes, needles) in readily accessible sharps containers.
* Proper identification and handling of medication containers.
  + Single-dose and single-use containers
  + Multi-dose vials
* Proper storage of medications in accordance with the manufacturer’s recommendations (e.g., temperature requirements, expiration date, beyond-use date).

**Policy**

It is the policy of this center to adhere to evidence-based protocols and practices for injection safety, both to reduce the risk of transmitting infectious diseases and to ensure the safety of the participant receiving the medication and the staff administering the injection.

**Procedure**

Medication preparation should occur in a private area to protect the participant’s dignity. Medication is verified with the manufacturing date to ensure it is within the use date (not expired). Insulin pens and Epi Pens should be pulled from their appropriate storage space, prepared, and administered to the participant.

Follow Safe Injection Practices and Follow Aseptic Technique

1. Prepare medications in a clean designated area.
2. Perform proper hand hygiene, using alcohol-based hand sanitizer or soap and water, prior to preparing and administering medications. Don gloves.
3. Disinfect the workspace using alcohol gel or spray (if a workspace is utilized).
4. Perform proper hand hygiene and don new gloves.
5. Open supplies.
6. Do not use needles or syringes for more than one participant, including prefilled syringes and insulin pens. *One needle, one syringe, one time.* Insert a new needle from a new syringe into medication vials, even when obtaining additional doses for the same participant.
7. Use aseptic (clean) technique when preparing and administering medications to prevent contamination.
8. If using a multi-dose vial, disinfect the rubber septum with alcohol before accessing.
9. Single-dose or single-use medication vials, including manufactured prefilled syringes such as insulin pens and Epi Pens, are used for only one participant.
10. Insulin pens are reusable and should not be disposed of until all medication is used (or expired).
11. Never recap needles. Dispose of them immediately after use in a designated and appropriate sharps disposal container.

**Guidelines, Standards, and Resources for Policy/Procedure Development**

Safe injection practices should be incorporated into all practices related to the preparation, administration, and storage of injectable medications. These policies and procedures should be developed using evidence-based guidelines or national standards, such as resources from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Please refer to the following resources for developing Injection Safety policies and procedures for your center:

* [Isolation Precautions | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/isolation/index.html)
* [Injection Safety | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/injectionsafety/index.html)
* [Safe Injection Practices to Prevent Transmission of Infections to Patients | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/injectionsafety/ip07_standardprecaution.html)
* [Bloodborne Pathogens and Needlestick Prevention | OSHA](https://www.osha.gov/bloodborne-pathogens)

**Notes and Recommendations**

* Consider addressing Occupational and Safety Health Administration (OSHA) standards for prevention and management of exposure to bloodborne pathogens through injection safety practices.
* For all staff and volunteer training, use quizzes/tests at the conclusion of training, return demonstration, or teach back of content to ensure comprehension.
* Use an audit tool for compliance with injection safety and implement an auditing schedule for ongoing sustainment of this policy.
* All sources, standards, guidelines, and resources should be verified annually, or more frequently as your center policy dictates, to ensure the most up to date information is provided.
* Centers who administer injectable medications other than insulin should consider updating the language in this policy to include the use of those specific types of medications and not leave the broad term of “medications” in the policy. For example, does your center administer Epi pens? If so, include the name of this specific medication in your policy.
* Consider outlining where sharps container locations are within your individual center and include that information in your policy.
* If the staff from your center is administering additional injections to include flu shots, COVID-19 vaccines/boosters, and other similar medications, then follow guidance for single-use vials: they should be accessed one time only and for one participant only. The remaining contents of the vial should be discarded.
* For centers that use multi-dose vials, include this section in your center’s policy:
  + Follow the medication order, including participant name, medication, dose, and time.
  + Ensure you have the correct medication vial, including checking the concentration and verifying that the vial is truly multi-dose.
  + Inspect the multi-dose vial for any obvious signs of contamination and discard the vial if there is any potential for contamination.
  + Verify the expiration date and beyond-use date have not been exceeded. If the multi-dose vial is being accessed for the first time, label it with the beyond-use date.
  + Perform hand hygiene.
  + Prepare the injection, using aseptic technique, in a designated clean area free from any potential sources of contamination.
  + Disinfect the rubber septum with an alcohol wipe.
  + Remove the new sterile needle and sterile syringe from their packaging.
  + Insert a sterile needle using a sterile syringe into the vial and withdraw the appropriate dose of medication per the medication order.
  + Return the multi-dose vial to the designated clean storage area. Multi-dose vials are dated when they are first opened and discarded within 28 days, unless the manufacturer specifies a different (shorter or longer) date for that opened vial. Multi-dose vials are dedicated to individual participants whenever possible
* In the event of a needlestick, breach in injection safety, or injury, consider adding handling guidance to your center policy:
  + Wash the impacted area with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand rub.
  + Apply first aid.
  + Notify your supervisor, or member of management, and follow center specific reporting guidance regarding completing an incident report form, etc.
  + Seek treatment by a doctor or hospital emergency department if indicated.
* Your center may also consider including guidance on ways to reduce the risk of needle stick injuries:
  + Staff who may come in contact with blood or body fluids should be vaccinated
  + Follow all safety procedures in the workplace
  + Minimize your use of needles
  + Remember that latex gloves don’t protect against needle stick injuries
  + Don’t bend or snap used needles
  + Never re-cap a used needle
  + Follow safety precautions and procedures for disposing of needles
  + Place used needles into a clearly labeled and puncture-proof sharps approved container