

## Pharmaceutical Waste Disposal Policy and Procedure

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### Highlights

- The NEW Pharmaceutical Waste Disposal [Policy](#) and [Procedure](#) have been posted on the intranet Policies and Procedures page under Medication Systems.
- The policy and procedure provide clear direction on proper disposal of medications, packaging, supplies used to prepare, carry, and administer medication.

### Key Updates

Focus	Updates
General medication waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>No medication is to be wasted into yellow sharps containers.</b></li><li>• All medication must be wasted into appropriate pharmaceutical stream containers.</li></ul>
Narcotics and controlled substances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Narcotics and controlled substances must be wasted in specific controlled substance denaturing containers.</li><li>• The primary container to be used in Island Health are the <a href="#">Stericycle CsRx container</a>.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Some areas may already be using Cactus controlled substance waste containers and may continue to do so.</li></ul></li><li>• Individual sites/facilities/care areas are responsible for implementing Stericycle CsRx controlled substance waste containers.</li></ul>
Non-controlled medication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Non-controlled medications must go into a pharmaceutical specific container, though not mandatory to be a controlled substance denaturing container.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Areas with large volumes of non-controlled medication waste may choose to have separate containers for controlled versus non-controlled medications to reduce the overall cost associated with the controlled substance denaturing containers.</li><li>○ Areas with low to moderate volumes of non-controlled medication waste may choose to waste ALL medication in the controlled substance denaturing containers to simplify unit processes and reduce the space required for separate containers.</li></ul></li></ul>
Hazardous Drugs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Group 1 Hazardous Drugs <b>must</b> be wasted into red cytotoxic containers.</li><li>• Group 2 Hazardous Drugs can be wasted in the regular or controlled substance pharmaceutical waste containers.</li></ul>

### Impacted Programs, Professions, Networks

- **Scope:** The Pharmaceutical Waste Disposal policy and procedure apply to all employees, health care professionals, students, contractors, researchers, and other service providers who handle pharmaceuticals and are responsible for pharmaceutical wastage at any Island Health site, including Hospital at Home, health units and primary care sites.
- **Exceptions:** Medications dispensed by retail pharmacy and prescribed for use in the client's residence are the property of the client, and the client or client's delegate is responsible for the safe disposal of pharmaceutical waste and waste containers.

### Implementation

- Individual sites/facilities/care areas are responsible for implementation.
- Medication Safety is available to attend site/network leadership meetings to present an overview and provide implementation and education resources for distribution or posting.
- Nursing leadership is responsible for sharing information with staff to ensure understanding of pharmaceutical waste requirements.

### Education

- Read the [Policy](#) and [Procedure](#) to review disposal streams and requirements for different types of pharmaceutical waste.
- Refer to the [Pharmaceutical Waste Intranet Site](#) for implementation manuals, user guides and education resources.

**Questions?** [medicationsafetyconsultants@islandhealth.ca](mailto:medicationsafetyconsultants@islandhealth.ca)