



## State of New Jersey

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES**  
DIVISION OF EPIDEMIOLOGY, ENVIRONMENTAL AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH  
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To: All Healthcare Providers  
From: Barbara Montana, MD, MPH, FACP  
Date: August 16, 2010  
RE: Diabetes Care and Infection Control

The New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services (NJDHSS) would like to emphasize the need to adhere to the standards of practice to prevent patient-to-patient transmission of blood borne pathogens (i.e., hepatitis B, hepatitis C and human immunodeficiency virus) when using glucose meters and supplies. Patient-to-patient transmission of blood borne pathogens is a well known risk when lancets, needles, and syringes are reused between patients. However, patient-to-patient transmission of pathogens facilitated through the use of devices such as glucose meters may not be as well known.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has published recommendations for infection control and safe injection practices to prevent patient-to-patient transmission of blood borne pathogens. All healthcare providers should evaluate practices related to glucose meter, lancet, and needle use, especially related to insulin administration as breaches of infection control may facilitate transmission of blood borne pathogens.

Following are specific infection control recommendations based on those published by the CDC that focus on diabetes-care procedures in healthcare and group residence settings. Please see the full document available through the CDC website at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5409a2.htm>:

- Prepare medications such as insulin in a centralized medication area; multiple dose insulin vials should be assigned to individual patients whenever possible and labeled appropriately.
- Never share insulin pens among patients even if needles are changed between patients; they are designed for single-patient use only. Insulin pens must be labeled with the name of the patient and other required identifying information. The pens should be labeled on the part containing the needle and insulin reservoir, not the cap.
- Never store together insulin pens or dedicated insulin vials from multiple patients. The outer surfaces of the pens or vials may be contaminated and lead to cross contamination among patients. Place each patient's supplies in a labeled individual plastic bag or container.
- Never reuse needles, syringes, or lancets.
- Restrict use of fingerstick capillary blood sampling devices to individual patients.
- Consider selecting single-use lancets that permanently retract upon puncture.
- Dispose of used fingerstick devices and lancets at the point of use in an approved sharps container.

- **Assign glucose meters to individual patients whenever possible.** If glucose meters are shared among patients, the devices must be cleaned and disinfected **between each patient use**. Do not place potentially contaminated glucose meters on medication carts or surfaces where medications for injection are prepared. Use an appropriate EPA-registered product to immediately clean and disinfect any surface upon which a potentially contaminated glucose meter has been placed.
- Maintain patient-dedicated glucose meters within individual patient rooms, if possible.
- Keeps carts and any trays used to deliver medications or supplies to individual patients outside patient rooms.
- Do not carry supplies and medications in pockets. Because of possible inadvertent contamination, unused supplies and medications taken to a patient's bedside during fingerstick monitoring or insulin administration should not be used for another patient.
- Wear gloves during fingerstick blood glucose monitoring, administration of insulin, and any other procedure involving potential exposure to blood or body fluids.
- Change gloves between patient contacts and after every procedure that involves potential exposure to blood or body fluids, including fingerstick blood sampling.
- Perform hand hygiene with soap and water or alcohol hand sanitizer immediately after removing gloves and before touching medical supplies used on other patients.
- Decontaminate environmental surfaces and equipment such as glucose meters regularly and any time contamination with blood or body fluids occurs or is suspected. **To emphasize, every effort should be made to assign glucose meters to individual patients.** If glucose meters must be shared among patients, the devices must be cleaned and disinfected **between each patient use**. The manufacturer's instructions should always be consulted as **cleaning guidelines for multi-patient use vary among manufacturers and models**. Always use an appropriate EPA-registered product or dilute bleach solution of 1:10 to 1:100 concentration. If the manufacturer does not have specific requirements, CDC guidelines for environmental care in healthcare facilities can be found at: [http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/pdf/guidelines/Enviro\\_guide\\_03.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/pdf/guidelines/Enviro_guide_03.pdf)

Additional information regarding diabetes care recommendations and other activities can be accessed through the CDC website at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/Settings/GlucoseMonitoring.htm> or  
[http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/Populations/PDFs/diabetes\\_handout.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/Populations/PDFs/diabetes_handout.pdf).

Items from the CDC website can be printed as poster-type documents to be displayed in facilities.

Information regarding infection control is available as the following sites:

APIC position paper: Safe injection, infusion, and medication vial practices in health care available at  
[http://www.apic.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Position\\_Statements&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=15088](http://www.apic.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Position_Statements&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=15088)

NJDHSS Communicable Disease Service at [http://www.state.nj.us/health/hepb\\_investigation.shtml](http://www.state.nj.us/health/hepb_investigation.shtml)

FDA Information for Healthcare Professionals: Risk of Transmission of Blood-borne Pathogens from Shared Use of Insulin Pens at:

<http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/DrugSafety/PostmarketDrugSafetyInformationforPatientsandProviders/DrugSafetyInformationforHealthcareProfessionals/ucm133352.htm>