

Clinical Waste Update for Primary Care

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Clinical Waste Update Objectives

The aims of this session is to

- Update colleagues on the NHS COVID-19 waste management standard operating procedure published in November 2021
- Give resources for training purposes
- Support IP&C Leads in ensuring primary care staff know who to segregate all waste appropriately

Clinical Waste Update

The management of healthcare waste is an essential part of ensuring that health and social care activities do not pose a risk of infection.

To manage healthcare waste effectively, health and social care providers will need to consider:

Infection control and health and safety legislation;
Environment and waste legislation; and,
Transport legislation.

The Department of Health published guidance on the [Safe management of healthcare waste](#). - (HTM 07-01) Management and disposal of healthcare waste in 2013.

- This details the legislative and practical requirements of managing all healthcare waste.
- **HTM 07-01** details the environmental benefits of the safe management and disposal of healthcare waste, It also presents opportunities for cost savings, safer working practices and reducing carbon emissions related to the management of waste.
- It includes guidance for different health and social care sectors such as ambulance services, research laboratories, community healthcare, community pharmacies, general practices and health centres and dental practices (HSE 2021).

NHS E&I have also published the COVID-19 waste management standard operating procedure

- Version 6 published in November 2021
- This document sets out the waste management approach for all healthcare facilities including primary care facilities and testing facilities in England.



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The Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens designates waste arising from COVID-19 patients as infectious clinical waste (EWC code 18 01 03*). It must be packaged in UN-approved orange bags in accordance with the safe management of healthcare waste (HTM 07-01). The transport categorisation for this waste is Category B. Sharps and pharmaceutically contaminated items should continue to be segregated into appropriate containers sent for incineration; these should not enter the orange bag stream.

- **All outer packaging** must be removed and recycled, where possible, before an item is taken onto any ward or clinical area.
- **All waste** produced in a healthcare setting should be correctly segregated.
- **All confidential waste** must be put into confidential waste bins.
- **All sharps** and anatomical waste must be put into the relevant receptacle with an appropriately coloured lid as per HTM 07-01, and these do not need to be put into an orange bag
- infectious clinical waste including waste visibly contaminated with **respiratory secretions** (such as sputum or mucus from the mouth and nose) generated from an individual who had tested positive for COVID-19 and is still within their required isolation period, should be treated like any other infectious clinical waste.

- Waste generated in **general practice** from a person who has been confirmed or is suspected to have COVID-19 must be disposed of as infectious waste and disposed of in an orange waste bag.

Clinical staff working in people's homes

- Where clinical staff are providing services in the home of a patient who has tested positive for COVID-19 and is still in their isolation period, then PPE can be left behind in a bag. Waste should only be considered infectious clinical waste if it is visibly contaminated with respiratory secretions such as sputum or mucus from the mouth and nose. If the patient's bin is due to be collected in the next 72 hours, the contaminated waste should be put in a bag and put out after the bin has been collected.

Key points for non-COVID-19 areas

- Where areas are COVID-19 secure, e.g. **offices** and food preparation areas, masks and face coverings should be discarded in the domestic waste stream if no longer required.
- Masks and face coverings worn by **patients, visitors and non-clinical** staff who have entered a clinical area should be discarded in the offensive waste stream if no longer required. Bins for these should be located at the entrances and exits where masks are given to those who do not have them.
- **Clinical staff** should dispose of the surgical face mask in the offensive or infectious waste streams, depending on the procedures they undertook while wearing the mask.

NHS SOP Waste Segregation Guide

| Colour Code | Waste Type | General Description | Receptacle |
|-------------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| | Offensive Waste | Including non Infectious Soiled dressings, swabs, vomit bowls, incontinence pads, PPE | Tiger stripe bags |
| | Known infectious Waste | Known Infectious inc COVID-19 Soiled dressings, swabs, vomit bowls, incontinence pads, PPE | Bags & sharps boxes not contaminated with medicines |
| | Infectious Healthcare / Sharps | Infectious Healthcare Waste inc Needles, sharps contaminated with pharmaceuticals & Cat A | Bags, sharps boxes & rigid containers contaminated with medicines |
| | Cytotoxic Cytostatic Waste | Any waste contaminated with Cytotoxic / Cytostatic medications | Bags, sharps boxes & rigid containers |
| | Anatomical Waste | Recognisable Human tissue | Rigid containers |
| | Medicinal Waste | Time expired, surplus medicines and pharmaceuticals inc bottles & blister packs | Rigid containers |
| | Domestic Waste | Non-Recyclable items | Bins / Bags |
| | Recyclable Waste | Cardboard, outer packaging & other recyclable items. | Bins / Bags |
| | Confidential Waste | Identifiable Patient Data | Bins / Bags |

* All sharps to be placed in tested / approved sharps bins

Vaccination programmes

- Vaccinations delivered in hospitals or GP surgeries: classification of the sharps and vials is 18 01 03*/18 01 09
- Outer and secondary vaccine packaging poses a significant security risk from theft and therefore must be destroyed through the confidential waste stream: this should be done via your existing confidential waste streams.
- All PPE must be consigned as offensive waste no matter the site of delivery
- Primary care services should continue to contact their local commissioner in the first instance if difficulties arise on somccg.generalpractice@nhs.net or contact the CCG IP&C team for advice.

Poster resources

- <https://www.property.nhs.uk/news-insight/insights/how-to-dispose-of-waste-correctly/>
- [waste-segregation-posters.pdf \(property.nhs.uk\)](#)



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| YES PLEASE | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|---|---|--------------------|--|
| | | | | | |
| Non-recyclable materials | Food tins and drink cans | PPE contaminated with infectious / chemicals / medicine waste | Infectious PPE | Non-infectious PPE | PPE contaminated with cytotoxic / cytostatic waste |
| | | | | | |
| Small quantities of food waste | Mixed plastics | IV bags | Infectious dressings, plasters, bandages etc. | Nappy waste | Items contaminated with cytotoxic / cytostatic waste |
| | | | | | |
| | | Swabs | | Non-infectious | Dressings, |

References

- [Coronavirus » Primary care \(england.nhs.uk\)](https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/primary-care/)
- **COVID-19 waste management standard operating procedure**
https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/04/C1446_COVID-19-Waste-Management-Standard-Operating-Procedure-Version-6_16112021.pdf
- **(HTM 07-01) Management and disposal of healthcare waste**
[NHS England » \(HTM 07-01\) Management and disposal of healthcare waste](https://www.england.nhs.uk/htms/07-01/)
- **Health and Safety Executive - Management of Healthcare Waste (2021)** [Management of healthcare waste \(hse.gov.uk\)](https://www.hse.gov.uk/waste/)