

# What is needed to reduce sharp injuries in health care and medical services?

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## Background

- New directive, general demands
  - How can the directive be implemented?
- Still many sharp injuries
  - Why?
  - A lot of research
  - Need for intervention and implementation that reduces sharp injuries





## Aim for part 1 of the project

- Understand what factors contribute to sharp injuries
- Develop a strategy that handles the causes and reduces sharp injuries
- The strategy should effectively take into account and deal with the obstacles to preventing sharp injuries
- Report available (in Swedish, English summary)





## Project, part 2

- Implement the strategy developed in part 1
- Started in December 2012, two year project

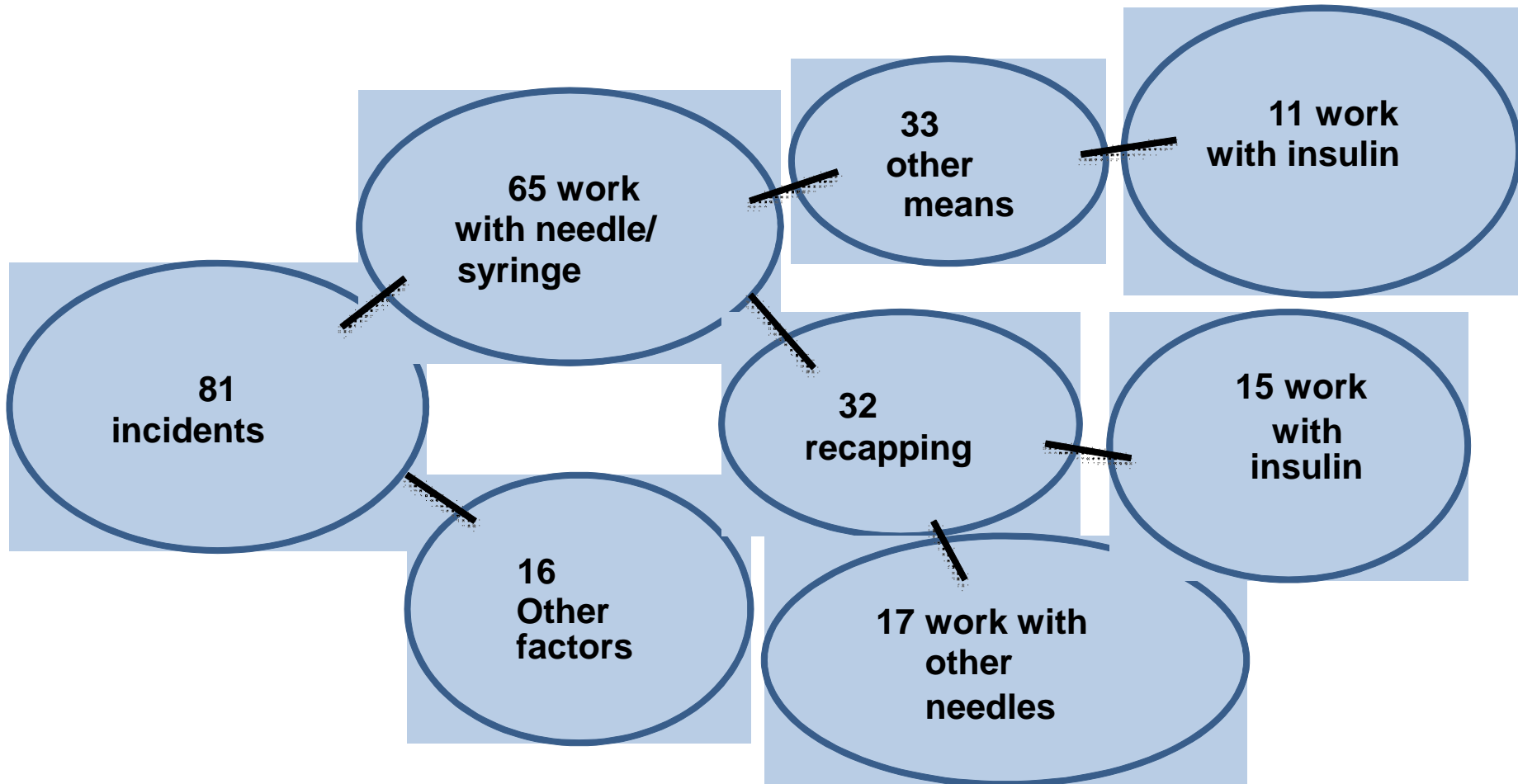




# Method 1 – identify causes of sharp injuries

- Telephone interviews with 81 employees about their sharp injuries
  - Contact via infection clinics at hospitals
  - Interviews about
    - How the sharp injury happened, context and contributing factors
    - What information was available prior to the accident
    - How the organization dealt with the accident
    - Knowledge and education about safe working procedures







## Some results from the interviews

- Incidents often lead to anxiety, fear of being infected
- Sometimes the injured blamed him-/herself
- **Behaviour**
  - Poor awareness of recapping not being allowed
  - Handling of the sharps bin
- **Organisation**
- Poor follow-up of incidents
  - Not discussed by managers
  - No measures to reduce risks of similar incidents
- **Technology and behavior**
- Unclear routines on safe working procedures
- Safety products





## Method 2 – deepen the understanding of causes

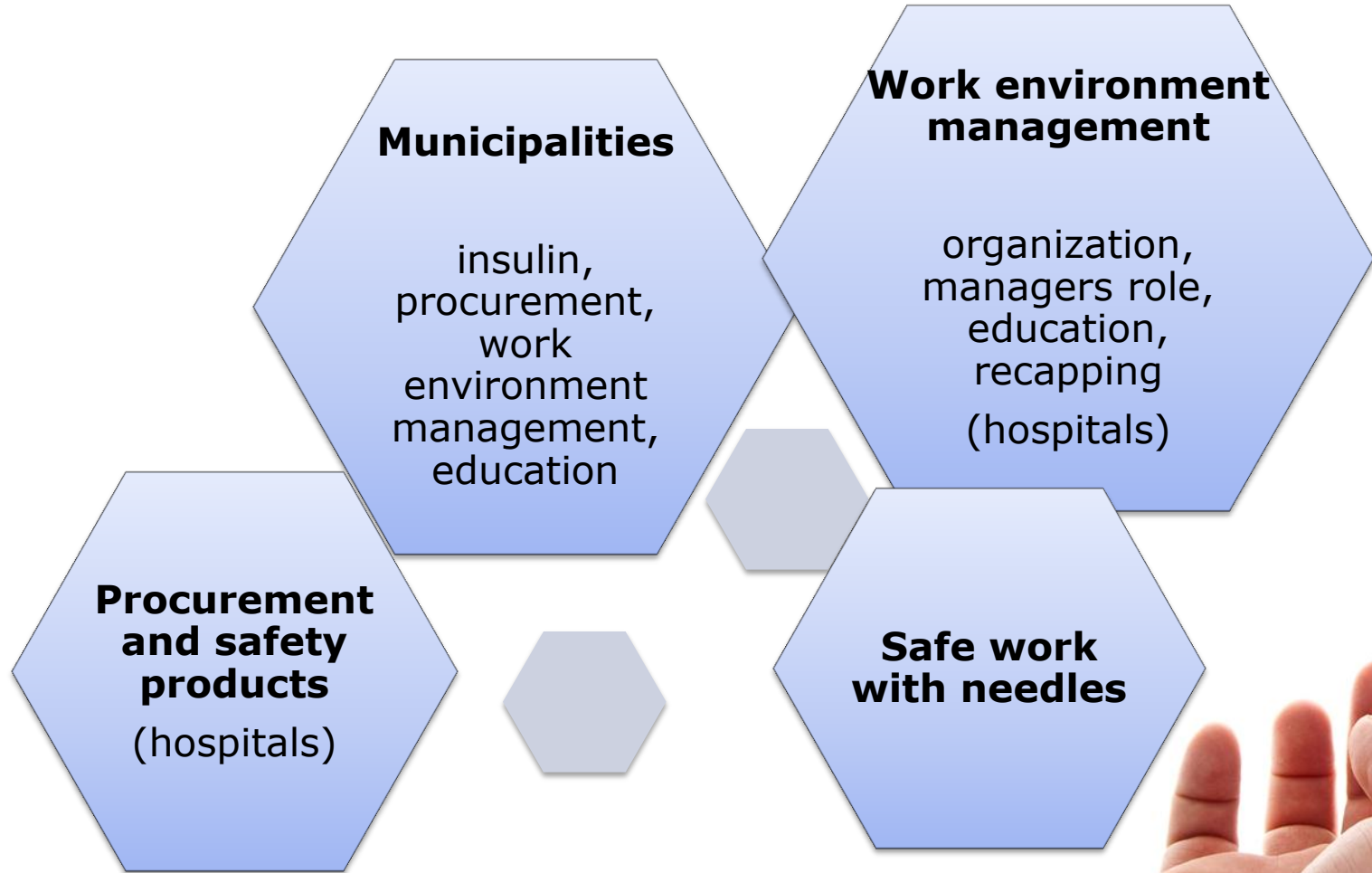
- Workshop with 5-10 invited participants with different perspectives
- Four one day workshops – four themes
- Discussions about results from interviews
  - Are the identified causes relevant?
  - Are there other causes?
  - How can the situation be improved?
  - Who can take the lead or assist?
  - What needs to be done at different levels of the organization?
  - What are the obstacles to prevention of sharp injuries?







# Workshops/focusgroups about clustered themes from the interviews

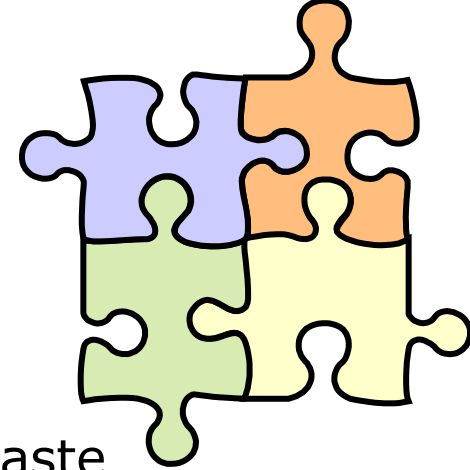




## Method 3 – search for good solutions

- Workplaces with
  - effective preventive work resulting in reduced sharp injuries or
  - Had implemented actions that were identified as needed
- Initial group of about twelve organizations, short interviews, four selected
- Visits, interviews
- Result
  - Better understanding of good solutions
  - Better understanding of the obstacles to be overcome





## Conflicts that have to be handled

- Environment – safety products means more waste
- Hygiene – how to handle the sharps bin?
- Patient safety and wellbeing – safety products must also be good for the patients
- Economy - safety products are more expensive
- Organizational responsibilities
  - Procurement, insulin users in municipality sector, equipment selected by doctor for private use, not safety products
  - Follow-up of accidents
  - Who will follow up that the prohibition against recapping is implemented?



# Conclusion 1: What is needed to reduce sharp injuries

Sharp injuries are caused by ...

Behavioural factors

Organizational conditions

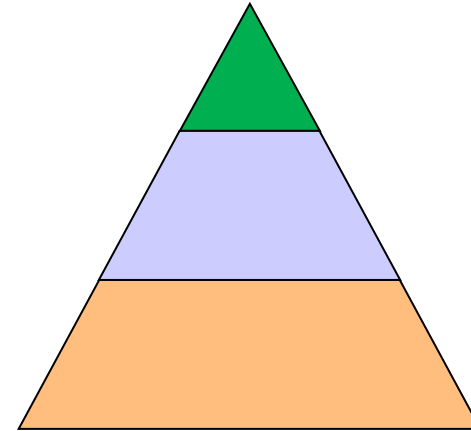
Technical conditions





## Conclusion 2: What is needed to reduce sharp injuries

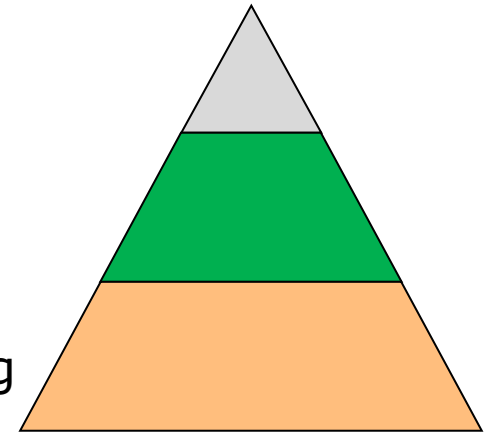
- The **policy level** and how the organization manages the risk of sharp injuries
  - **Policy** for use of safety products and safe working procedures
  - **Procurement** of safety products
  - Need to handle **economic arguments** “safety products too expensive”
  - **Communication** with managers and support for managers to implement safe working procedures





## Conclusion 3: What is needed to reduce sharp injuries

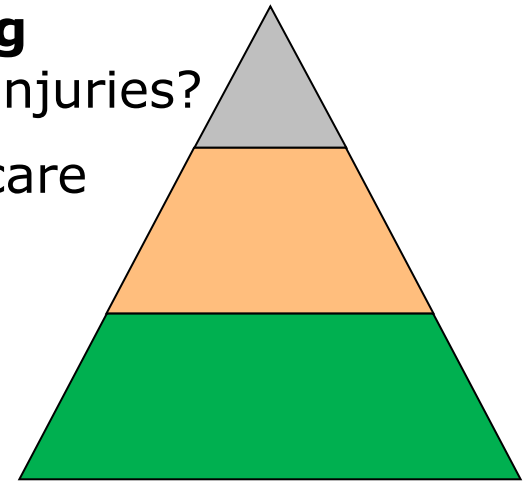
- The **organization** and how **managers** can support safe working procedure
  - Knowledge about and routines for
    - Selection of safety products and training in using new products
    - Implementing the policy, education in safe working procedures and controlling that policy is implemented
    - How to analyze incidents and accidents
    - Work environment management incl. risk assessment
    - Routines for delegation (municipalities)
- The importance of staff health and safety (not only patients health and wellbeing)





## Conclusion 4: What is needed to reduce sharp injuries

- How can the staff implement **safe working procedures** that reduce the risk of sharp injuries?
- Include safe work in **education** of health care professionals (nurses, assistant nurses)
  - “Vårdhandboken” – guidelines used both in education and daily work in health care
  - Detailed advice on safe working procedures, showed in short films
- **Education** (and possibly compulsory tests) **for employees** in the health care sector





## And a major challenge

- We will develop information available on a web-site.  
**How can this be disseminated and implemented?**
- Need for cooperation with **strategic allies!**
  - Organisation for hygiene in health care
  - Medically responsible nurses in municipalities
  - Suppliers of safety products
  - Procurement departments in counties
  - Clinical training centers at hospitals
  - “Vårdhandboken”
- **Cooperation, researchers and the social partners**

