

Stick- och skärskador inom hälso- och sjukvården

Förebyggande insatser för skador
och smitta p.g.a. vassa
instrument

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Summary

Sharp injuries are common in health care, both in Sweden and other European countries. A conservative estimate suggests that about 5 000 to 10 000 injuries occur annually among health care workers in Sweden and about one million in Europe. The long-term aim of this project is to reduce sharp injuries in health care and medical services. A reduction of the injuries requires:

- An understanding of the causes of sharp injuries
- A strategy to manage or prevent these causes.

To study the causes of sharp injuries, 81 interviews were conducted with health care employees that had experienced sharp injuries. In addition, successful measures to reduce sharp injuries were studied at selected workplaces. The results were discussed at four workshops, with the purpose of investigating why sharp injuries occur and what measures effectively can reduce the number of injuries. Based on this, a strategy has been developed to reduce sharp injuries. The strategy includes:

- Implementation of laws, directives and provisions, through concrete and detailed advice to workplaces on how to reduce the risk of sharp injuries.
- Usage of safety products combined with reviews on whether unsafe products can be substituted with safety products
- Implementation and increased clarity about safe working procedures in combination with safe procedures that are practical and adapted to the working conditions, e.g. routines for selection of safe equipment and the appropriate handling of needle, syringe, knife, containers for used needles as well as personal safety equipment. The resulting standardized working procedures (good practice/best practice) also need to be adapted to demands for patient safety, hygiene and the environment.

To implement these measures, an organizational support is needed

- On top management level in municipalities and county councils or hospitals, a common base for policy decisions about sharp injuries is required which reflects the management perspective and includes policy for procurement of sharp products as well as economic aspects.
- On the workplace level, support is needed for managers working with
 - Selection and education on the use of safety products.
 - Introduction and training on safe working procedures as well as an explicit attitude and policy for safe working procedures.
 - Ensuring that employees have required knowledge about safe working procedures and safety products.
 - Making risk assessments for sharp injury risks.
 - Follow-up on accidents and near-accidents in order to learn from them and undertake control measures.
 - Routines for delegation that ensure that employees have sufficient knowledge to conduct their tasks safely.