



Needle and Syringe Program (NSP) Information Pack

This NSP Information Pack contains the following:

- Information for needle and syringe program (NSP) providers
- Why NSPs are necessary.
- Duties of the Coordinator of an NSP
- NSP Coordinator's Checklist
- Application for approval of needle and syringe program
- NSP Training
- NSP Guidelines
- NSP Ordering
- Reports and publications
- Resources
- Information and Referral Agencies

Website: www.health.wa.gov.au

Email: NSP@health.wa.gov.au

Tel: 08 9222 2355

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Information for NSP providers

Needle and syringe programs (NSPs) are a public health measure that aim to reduce the transmission of HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C by providing sterile injecting equipment to injecting drug users.

You can find consumer information at www.healthywa.wa.gov.au including:

- [Needle and syringe programs in WA \(healthywa.wa.gov.au\)](http://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au)
- [HIV and AIDS \(healthywa.wa.gov.au\)](http://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au)
- [Hepatitis B \(healthywa.wa.gov.au\)](http://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au)
- [Hepatitis C \(healthywa.wa.gov.au\)](http://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au)

NSPs can also provide:

- health and safer injecting information
- referrals to drug treatment, blood-borne virus testing and treatment
- referrals to legal and social services.

The Western Australian NSP is managed by the Department of Health Sexual Health and Blood-borne Virus Program (SHBBVP). To operate an NSP, government and non-government organisations require an NSP approval under the [Medicines and Poisons Act 2014 \(external site\)](#) and the [Medicines and Poisons Regulations 2016 \(external site\)](#)

Why NSPs are necessary

Needle and syringe programs:

- reduce the incidence of sharing and re-using of injecting equipment which in turn reduces the spread of HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C among people who inject drugs and the wider community
- reduce other health harms that may result from injecting drugs
- are often the only contact that people who inject drugs have with the health system
- provide people who inject drugs with information on safer injecting and drug treatment services
- encourage the safe disposal of needles and syringes
- work together with drug treatment and education services to reduce drug-related harm in our community
- are cost-effective:
 - if untreated, HIV can lead to AIDS and hepatitis C can lead to liver disease and other serious illnesses
 - treating these diseases costs far more than preventing them through programs like NSP
 - it was estimated that between 2000 and 2009 NSPs have avoided 32,050 HIV infections, and 96,667 hepatitis C infections resulting in \$1.28bn saved in healthcare costs (DoHA, 2009).

Duties of the Coordinator of an NSP

Each NSP must nominate a coordinator. The [Medicines and Poisons Regulations 2016 \(external site\)](#) state that to be eligible for consideration as an NSP coordinator a person must be:

- of good character and repute
- recognised as a fit and proper person to manage the NSP
- over 18 years of age
- must understand their duties as the coordinator of the program.

The duties of the coordinator of an NSP are listed in Regulation 110, [Medicines and Poisons Regulations 2016 \(external site\)](#)

In summary, you are required to:

- maintain a register of all persons participating in the program (i.e. staff and/or volunteers operating the program)
- ensure that persons who participate in the program understand the regulations and are appropriately instructed and trained
- report any irregularities in the program
- submit an NSP Annual Report at the end of the financial year.

Where on application, NSPs are assessed as having specific needs (e.g. training, referral resources) the coordinator, in consultation with the SHBBVP will develop specialised programs to facilitate effective NSP function.

It is the duty of the coordinator to inform the SHBBVP in writing of any changes in the NSP application (e.g. change of operating hours, change of coordinator, and change of location) that occur or are planned to occur, for an approved program to remain valid. This is particularly important in the event of staff changes when notification of the replacement coordinator should be lodged as soon as possible.

If you have any queries regarding the duties of the coordinator, please contact the Senior Policy Officer at the SHBBVP on (08) 9222 2355 or email NSP@health.wa.gov.au

NSP Coordinator's Checklist

At commencement of the program

1. Develop site guidelines and policies for establishment and operation of the NSP (for regional sites, your Regional NSP Coordinator can assist with this).
2. Develop reporting mechanisms for:
 - recording of brief interventions with clients
 - accidents and incidents associated with the NSP.
3. Maintain a register of all persons participating in the program (i.e. staff and/or volunteers operating the program) – henceforth known as 'NSP staff'.
4. Ensure adequate training and information are provided to NSP staff.
5. Recommend hepatitis B immunisation to all NSP staff.
6. Provide a list of suggested harm reduction brief intervention questions for NSP staff.
7. Provide a list of information and referral agencies for NSP staff.

Annually

Under the *Medicines and Poisons Regulations 2016* it is a condition of any NSP approval that the NSP coordinator submits an annual report by a specified date. The annual report gives NSP coordinators an opportunity to raise issues and report on trends that have occurred throughout the year.

The NSP annual report survey will be made available for completion online. Please note that the questions may vary from year to year, so be sure to check that you are using the correct version. At the point when reports are required to be submitted, the SHBBVP will circulate details of this, so please ensure that you have provided up-to-date contact details of your current NSP coordinator.

Should you experience any problems in accessing the annual report, please phone the SHBBVP on 9222 2355 or email NSP@health.wa.gov.au

In the event of changes within the program

- If the date of the approval of the NSP expires: Make a written submission stating that you would like to renew the approval. A new approval certificate will be issued.
- If the operation of the NSP changes (e.g. change in location/conditions): Make a written submission outlining the proposed changes to the existing NSP. Once approval has been granted, a new approval certificate will be issued.
- If the categories of staff operating the NSP change (e.g. inclusion of volunteers/more staff): Make a written submission outlining the proposed changes to the existing NSP. Once approval has been granted, a new approval certificate will be issued.
- If the NSP Coordinator changes: The employer or the coordinator should notify the SHBBVP in writing that there has been a change in coordinator, supplying the name of the replacement.
- Any other changes to the program (e.g. changes in operating hours) have to be applied for in writing with reasons for seeking change stated and are subject to the approval of the SHBBVP.



Application for approval of needle and syringe program

In accordance with Regulation 108 of the *Medicines and Poisons Regulations 2016*, please provide the following information:

Applicant Name:	
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Name of agency or organisation that will be operating the needle and syringe program:

The program will: [specify precisely the activities, and the persons or class of persons conducting the activities, that constitute the program]

The program will be conducted at: [<i>specify place or places</i>]

The program will be conducted between the following times: [<i>specify times</i>]

The Coordinator of the program will be:	
Name:	
Position:	
Postal Address:	
Email Address:	
Telephone Number:	

Signature of Coordinator

Signature of Applicant

Date: _____

Date: _____

Please return to: Sexual Health and Blood-borne Virus Program
Communicable Disease Control Directorate
Department of Health

Contact: Tel: (08) 9222 2355 Email: NSP@health.wa.gov.au



NSP Training

- **Needle and Syringe Program Online Orientation and Training:** This ten-module comprehensive training resource for NSP Coordinators is provided by the Mental Health Commission at [Mental Health Commission website \(external site\)](#).
- **WACHS Needle and Syringe Program LMS training course:** An introduction to the NSP for WACHS staff. This training course is for Emergency Department clerical staff, nurses and orderlies, Community Health, Mental Health, and Remote Area Clinic staff.
- **NSP Coordinator Training:** The SHBBVP holds a two-day, face-to-face NSP coordinator training annually. For more information on the next training please email NSP@health.wa.gov.au

Please contact your Regional NSP Coordinator for any other training opportunities that may be available. Alternatively, if you have any queries regarding training, please contact the Sexual Health and Blood-borne Virus Program on (08) 9222 2355 or email NSP@health.wa.gov.au.

NSP Guidelines

The following Guidelines have been developed on the operation of NSP across WA and the provision of needle and syringe vending/dispensing machines from sites across WA:

- [Guideline: Provision of Needle and Syringe Programs \(NSP\) in Western Australia](#)
- [Guideline for the Operation and Maintenance of Needle and Syringe Vending Machines \(NSVM\) and Needle and Syringe Dispensing Machines \(NSDM\)](#)
- Guidelines Template for the Establishment and Operation of a Needle and Syringe Program (please contact NSP@health.wa.gov.au for more information about this template)
- WACHS Policy: [Needle and Syringe Program provision from WA Country Health Service facilities Policy](#).

NSP Ordering

The Department of Health WA – Sexual Health and Blood-borne Virus Program (SHBBVP) supply needles and syringes to Regional Hospitals free of charge. The needles and syringes are distributed via the Fitstick® pack. Fitstick® packs come in boxes of 100 from the supplier.

When an order needs to be placed, please email NSP@health.wa.gov.au and include the following template:

Organisation	(Name of service)
Attn	(Name of NSP coordinator / whomever is responsible)
Quantity	XX box of 100 (Fitstick 5 pack DS - 146)
Delivery Address	XX
Courier Company	XX
Courier Account Number	XX
Comment	

The SHBBVP will then order through the supplier, and the packs requested should be delivered within 10 business days.

Reports and publications

Reports and publication on the NSP, including the annual NSP report, can be found at [Sexual health and blood-borne viruses – reports and publications](#).

Resources

There are a range of resources that can be accessed in relation to the NSP, BBVs and STIs including:

- Department of Health's [Online Ordering System \(getquickmail.com\)](#) to order a variety of printed resources
- Department of Health's ACE [\(Access, Care and Empowerment\) app \(external site\)](#).
- free condoms can be ordered from WAAC at [Free Condoms & Safe Sex Resources | WAAC](#) (postage costs may be applied)
- free condom dispensers can be applied for at [Condom Dispenser Application | Get the Facts \(health.wa.gov.au\)](#)
- the community based organisations below may also be able to provide health promotion resources
- for regional sites, your Regional NSP Coordinator can assist with accessing resources..

Information and Referral Agencies

Information and support services

- Communicable Disease Control Directorate
Department of Health
Health Direct: 1800 022 222
Web: <http://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/>
Email: cdcd@health.wa.gov.au

Provides information about a range of communicable diseases and issues relating to injecting drug use. For queries relating to the NSP, please contact the SHBBVP on (08) 9222 2355 or email nsp@health.wa.gov.au

- HepatitisWA
134 Aberdeen Street, Northbridge WA 6003
Tel: (08) 9227 9800
Hepatitis Helpline: (08) 9328 8538
Email: info@hepatitiswa.com.au
Web: www.hepatitiswa.com.au
Country Callers (free): 1800 800 070

Confidential telephone information and support for those infected with and affected by hepatitis C. Public meetings, community education, client advocacy, individual counselling, library services, education resources for professionals and the community.

- Peer Based Harm Reduction WA
Perth:
Suite 21 & 22, 7 Aberdeen Street, Perth WA 6000
Tel: (08) 9325 8387
Email: info@harmreductionwa.org
Web: www.harmreductionwa.org

South West:
97 Spencer Street, Bunbury, WA 6230
Tel: (08) 9791 6699

Provides support, education, advocacy, and referral to people who inject drugs via in-house sessions with clients and/or outreach interactions. Focus on the prevention of BBV and STI via peer education and a fixed-site needle and syringe exchange program. Develops and distributes informational materials in partnership with other organisations and agencies. Peer Based Harm Reduction WA also offers BBV and STI testing and hepatitis B vaccinations.

- WAAC
664 Murray Street, West Perth WA 6005
Tel: (08) 9482 0000
Web: www.waac.com.au
Email: hello@waac.com.au

Provides education, counselling, advocacy, support, and care services to enhance the quality of life of people living with and/or affected by HIV/AIDS. Provides services to minimise the transmission of BBVs and STIs. These include a needle and syringe exchange program that provides equipment and information on safer sexual and injecting practices at fixed and mobile sites, peer education and outreach programs.

Drug and alcohol treatment services

- Speak to your local public health unit or closest Community Alcohol and Drug service for advice on referrals to alcohol and other drug services.
- You can also check [The Green Book | A Directory of alcohol and other drug \(AOD\) services in Western Australia \(wanada.org.au\)](#) for alcohol and other drug services.