

Board of Directors of Drugless Therapy Naturopathy

USE OF SAFETY-ENGINEERED NEEDLES REQUIRED AS OF JULY 1, 2010

April 29, 2010

In order to minimize the risk of needle stick injuries to health care providers, the Ontario government recently announced changes to the *Needle Safety Regulation 474/07*, under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. These changes, which come into effect on July 1, 2010, mandate the use of safety-engineered needles (SENs), with some exceptions, whenever hollow bore needles are used in healthcare delivery. This includes NDs and naturopathic clinics.

SENs have built in safety features that minimize the risk of skin puncture and consequent exposure to blood and body fluids. The greatest risk of transmission of blood-borne pathogens to healthcare providers (e.g. HBV, HCV and HIV) occurs through sharps injuries that involve contact with blood.

Needlestick injuries are a significant concern since they can transmit serious blood-borne diseases such as HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C

Regulation 474/07 will apply to NDs whenever they:

This is the third phase of the regulation: phase one applied to hospitals and phase two applied to long-term care homes, psychiatric facilities, laboratories and specimen collection centres

1. Are using a hollow bore needle on a person for a therapeutic, preventative, palliative, diagnostic or cosmetic purpose at their clinics or any clinic in which they work, or
2. Work in a public hospital, private hospital, Homewood Health Centre, lab or psychiatric facility.

This regulation does not apply to acupuncture needles.

The Board advises all Registrants to take the time to review and familiarize themselves with the complete Regulation before it comes into effect on July 1, 2010. The following links may be helpful in obtaining the necessary information:

Ontario Regulation 474/07 on Needle Safety:

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_070474_e.htm#Top

Ministry of Labour's press release on Regulation 474/07:

<http://www.news.ontario.ca/mol/en/2009/11/more-health-care-workers-protected-1.html>

Information on Safety Engineered Medical Sharps from The Ontario Safety Association for Community and Healthcare: http://www.hchsa.on.ca/misc_pdf/SafetySharpsPresentation.pdf