

3.1.16

EMS Aspects: Patient Care – Clinical

Aspect Ranking: 7

Patient care activities are conducted within University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston at the UT Professional Building, the Dental Branch, and School of Public Health which specialize in services for the students, faculty, employees as well as the general public.

Medical Waste Management

Task/Activity Description:

Medical wastes are a specific type of hazardous waste that is subject to 25 TAC 1.132 which states the definition, treatment and disposition of special waste from health care-related facilities.

Solid medical wastes from patient care clinics are collected in cardboard biological waste boxes, closed, transported by clinic staff to a secure storage area, and shipped offsite through an approved contractor for treatment and disposal. Individual boxes may be designated for incineration by affixing a yellow waste label, supplied from the medical waste disposal contractor, to the box.

Solid medical wastes at the Dental Branch are transported to DBB 3.099 for storage by clinical staff. An approved medical waste contractor is scheduled to pickup medical waste on a weekly basis.

Solid medical waste is collected from the individual clinics at the UT Professional Building and School of Public Health clinics in the Rio Grande Valley by an approved medical waste disposal contractor. Medical waste pickups are scheduled with the contractor by the Environmental Protection Program.

Sharps from patient care clinics are collect approved sharps containers. Full sharps containers must be securely closed, then placed into a biological waste box for offsite disposal.

Key Control Points:

- Medical wastes are stored in a secured area

- Medical waste pick ups are scheduled by the Environmental Protection Program
- Medical waste disposal records and invoices are maintained by the Environmental Protection Program

Related Forms, Records, SOPs:

- Institutional Biosafety Manual
- Texas Administrative Code (25 TAC 1.132)

Personnel Responsible:

Clinic Personnel

- Ensure biological waste boxes are closed and stored in a secure area

Safety Specialists, EPP

- Provide containers and bags when needed
- Maintain medical waste disposal supplies in DBB 3.099
- File manifest and disposal records at OCB 1.330

Safety Manager, EPP

- Review waste volumes collected
- Report waste management activities to Biological Safety Committee and Executive Safety Council
- Submit monthly invoice for payment
- Schedule pick ups with medical waste contractor

EH&S Director

- Provide management review and liaison with UT Physicians contract administrator

Training – Environmental Management Systems and Environmental Awareness

Task/Activity Description:

For the communication of environmental programs and environmental management systems, Environmental Health & Safety provides initial training to Medical and Lab staff. This training introduces and reinforces environmental management system principles, blood borne pathogens, waste management practices specific to laboratory and clinical operations, and environmental concerns and compliance requirements for biological waste management. The training is lead by an instructor and is incorporated

into new employee orientation training and is also offered on a monthly basis to current employees. Additionally, the training materials are available on the EH&S web page.

Key Control Points:

- Communicate environmental compliance requirements, environmental management concepts, and emergency procedures to personnel who generate biological waste and infectious agents.

Related Forms, Records, SOPs:

- Basic Clinical and Laboratory Safety Training

Personnel Responsible:

UT Physicians

- Ensure clinic staff attends training

Manager/Safety Specialists, EPP

- Develop training materials and submit updates to for web page
- Schedule training time, place, and date (annually)
- Present training materials to lab staff
- Document training by obtaining a sign in sheet with all participants listed, deliver sign in sheet to EH&S administrative assistant who will enter names of personnel trained into a training data base

EH&S Director

- Provide management review, liaison with Principle Investigators (PI) if necessary

Routine Management of Infectious Agents and Biological Waste to meet regulations:

TCEQ /Medical Waste Management (30 TAC 330.2001)

The Environmental Protection Program utilizes the UTHSC-H Institutional Biological Safety Committee for review and approval of experimental protocols utilizing infectious materials. The review process includes waste disposal and management procedures.

Emergency Response for Medical Wastes

Incidents reported to SHERM are entered into an Incident database. The database is built into the EMS to enter in incidents as they occur, allowing for tracking, documentation, follow-up, and corrective action. Employees handling bloodborne pathogens are trained annually at an appropriate level on emergency response procedures. The universally accepted biological hazard warning symbol is utilized throughout the institution to notify workers about the presence of infectious agents.