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More Health Care Workers Protected

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McGuinty Government Expands Needle Safety To Additional Workplaces

Ontario is increasing protection for health care workers by making the use of safety-engineered needles mandatory in additional workplaces, including doctors' and dentists' offices, community health centres, family health teams and independent health facilities.

Safety-engineered needles have been designed to eliminate or minimize the risk of needle punctures to the user.

The use of safety-engineered needles will also be mandatory in other workplaces where health-related services are provided, including home care services, ambulance services, public health programs, health support services to students in schools, and health care/first aid services to workers or individuals in industrial and other workplaces.

The regulation will come into effect on July 1, 2010. This is the third phase of the government's efforts to better protect workers from needlestick injuries as part of the Healthy Work Environments Initiative.

QUICK FACTS

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

- 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.

LEARN MORE

- Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety on needlestick injuries.
- Ontario Safety Association for Community and Healthcare information on Safety Engineered Medical Sharps (SEMS).
- Ministry of Labour Health Care Sector Plan.
- Ontario Regulation 474/07 Needle Safety.

CONTACTS

- Bruce Skeaff
Communications Branch
416-326-7405
- Emily Bullock
Minister's Office
416-326-7713

Ministry of Labour
ontario.ca/labour

"These healthcare workers are on the front lines protecting us each and every day. It is only right that we take action to protect them."

– Peter Fonseca
Minister of Labour

"Healthy and safe workplaces are critical to making Ontario the employer of choice for nurses and other health care workers and to support a culture of safety in health care."

– Deb Matthews
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care

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