Meet Harold

74 year old ♂
Type 2 diabetes for 32 years injecting insulin for over 20 years
His wife Edith supports him in his diabetes care

Current Challenges

- Recently hospitalized with a stroke.
- Transferred to a rehabilitation facility following a three week stay in acute care.
- Working very hard to achieve the independence he had prior to his stroke.

Current Challenges

- History of Hepatitis B and diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease at age 68.
- Post stroke has residual right side weakness, may need assistance with his insulin injections when he returns home.

What does the research say?

Canadian Centre for Occupation Health and Safety
Recapping of needles can account for 25 to 30% of all needlestick injuries to healthcare workers.

Canadian Centre for Occupation Health and Safety
33% of needlestick injuries occur after the use of the device and prior to disposal.

Lamontagne
Needlestick injuries have been reduced by up to 75% with the use of SEDs.

Recommendations for Harold and Edith:

- Edith was advised on the appropriate handling and disposal of the sharps used for blood glucose testing.
- Edith was instructed in the proper use and disposal of a 5mm safety engineered pen needle for the insulin injections.

FIT4Safety Recommendations:
Recapping of needles and lancets should be eliminated.
All healthcare facilities should use SEDs.
Did you know?

**Injection technique matters**
- The injection using a safety engineered device (SED) requires a different technique. Therefore, caregivers need to be taught how to use the SED and how to check to ensure that the insulin has been properly injected.

**SEDs are available at selected pharmacies and healthcare institutions.** The recommended SED for pen use has protected ends preventing needlestick injury to the user and is shorter in length (5mm).

**When using a pen device, the pen needle should be inserted at a 90° angle. Then, depress the plunger and hold the needle in the skin for a count of 10 seconds before removing. This will ensure that you have properly delivered the full dose.**

Did you know?

**SEDs are the safest option**
- A barrier to the use of SEDs in the home is their cost and availability. Other options to avoid handling of the sharps are:
- **1.** Needle clipping devices are used to clip the end off of a pen needle or syringe. After clipping, the needle is automatically and safely retained within the device.*
- **2.** Pen needle removers which remove the entire pen needle for transfer to a sharps container.*

Unfortunately, there is still a higher risk of a needlestick injury when using these devices compared with SEDs. Both are available through the pharmacy and web order sites.

Did you know?

**Sharps disposal matters**
- Since many needlestick injuries occur when disposing of sharps, caregivers needs to be instructed to put the used sharp in a puncture proof container with a tight fitting lid, preferably a "sharps container".
- **A sharps container should be located at eye level and in close proximity to where the sharps are being used.**
- **These containers are available at pharmacies.**
- **Check with your local government for regulations regarding the disposal of these sharps containers.**

---

1. Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety www.ccohs.ca

*Refer to manufacturer's instructions manual for proper use of these devices.*

www.fit4diabetes.com
Did you know?

Despite the introduction of Safety Engineered Devices (SEDs), needlestick injuries are still occurring.

Do you promote a “safety culture” in the use of diabetes sharps?

**Safety**
- I promote a “safety culture” by modeling best practice recommendations
- I have read the policies/procedures in place for the use of sharps
- I use SEDs wherever possible
- I never recap needles
- I can easily find the procedures in the event of a needlestick injury

**Education**
- I promote best practice in the handling of all diabetes sharps
- I avoid ‘skin lifts’ wherever possible by using shorter needle lengths
- I always ensure the device’s safety feature has been activated after use
- I read and refer others to educational websites*
- I promote the use of safety tools if SEDs are not available for use in the home i.e. needle clip, pen needle removers

**Disposal**
- I always have the sharp disposal unit accessible before I use the sharp
- I dispose of sharps in a puncture resistant container with a tight fitting lid
- I ensure that the sharps container is not filled past the indicated fill line or more than ¾ full
- I do not shake or force more sharps into the container
- I am aware and share the information regarding local regulations and disposal sites for sharps

Safe practice prevents needlestick injuries.

*www.ccohs.ca; www.cdc.gov/niosh; safety@uottawa.ca; www.ona.org; www.bd.com/resource.aspx?IDX=25063

*Educational tools based on FIT4Safety Canada Recommendations for Best Practice in the Safe Use of Diabetes Sharps.