



**Northwestern
Health Unit**

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For Immediate Release
October 23, 2014

Northwestern Health Unit reminds public to follow steps to safe sharps disposal

With fall clean up in full swing, workplaces and individuals will be taking steps to clean up their outdoor spaces. The Northwestern Health Unit (NWHU) would like to reinforce the messaging that there is a chance that a discarded needle or other sharp object may be part of the garbage found.

“Knowing how to safely dispose of a found needle or other sharp object is very important. Picking up sharps incorrectly can lead to exposure to infections such as Tetanus, Hepatitis C and HIV,” says Brittni Trudgen, Public Health Nurse at the Northwestern Health Unit. She continues, “We encourage parents, teachers and adults to remind children to never touch a needle and to tell an adult right away if one is found.”

Follow these steps to pick-up a found needle to ensure safety for yourself and others:

- If possible use gloves and tongs to pick-up the needle.
- Never put the cap back on a needle.
- Place the needle in a hard-sided plastic container, tightly seal and label “Needle”.
- Wash your hands with soap and water or use hand sanitizer after picking up a needle.
- Return the needle to your local Northwestern Health Unit.
- Never put needles down the toilet, in drains or in the garbage.

The Northwestern Health Unit Harm Reduction program provides free resources, training and equipment to community members, organizations and workplaces to support safe needle disposal and minimize the risk of exposure to infections. These services include the provision of:

- Mountable sharps containers,
- Workplace presentations, and
- Needle pick-up kits.

For more information or to request a presentation, please contact your local Northwestern Health Unit.

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For further information please contact:

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