

Automatic and safe needle disposal

FRONTIER MEDICAL GROUP talks to *The Probe* about its automatic needle remover for dentists...

FRONTIER Medical Group has re-introduced Safe-Point, the automatic needle remover for dentists. Safe-Point has been designed by a dentist, for use by other dentists, to combat cross-infection through needle-stick injury.

This re-introduction coincides with next year's introduction of the EU Directive 2000/54/EC on the prevention of sharps injuries. It is estimated in the EU, that dentists and staff incur more than 60,000 needle-stick injuries each year. The anxiety and costs associated with a member of staff experiencing a needle-stick injury can have significant effects on their morale and that of the practice, staff and patients.

The current revision of the NICE guideline, stipulates that the national and international guidelines are consistent in their recommendations for the safe use and disposal of sharp instruments and needles. The NICE guideline suggests that sharps should be disposed of at the point of use, in order to reduce the risk of needle-stick injury and associated infection from blood-borne viruses, including over 30 potentially dangerous pathogens, such as hepatitis

B and C and HIV. 100,000 needle-stick injuries occur each year in the UK.¹

Safely removing needles

Using Safe-Point promises to eliminate the need for re-sheathing and direct personal contact. It is described as a low voltage electrical device, which automatically unscrews and disposes of used needles in seconds, providing safe removal and disposal of used needles. They are detached and dropped into an integral lockable sharps container with a capacity of 250 needles, which can be removed and locked ready for collection.

The complete unit measures only 15cm in height, is compact, stylish and designed to sit neatly by the chairside. The custom-designed sharps container attaches directly onto the Safe-Point removal unit.

According to the company, using the automatic needle remover, ensures the practitioner improves health and safety procedures in the following ways:

- A safety device is used to dramatically reduce the risk of injury.
- Dramatic reduction in associated infection from blood-borne viruses, such as HIV and hepatitis, which may arise as a result of needle-stick injuries.
- The needle is removed at the point of use, therefore eliminating re-sheathing and any direct personal contact with a used needle.
- Needles are automatically unscrewed from the syringe and deposited into a lockable sharps container, which has a replaceable capacity of 250 needles per sharps container.
- Needles are removed in just two seconds.
- Facilitates segregation of sharps and

pharmaceutical waste.

- Non-touch technique – No secondary handling of used needles.
- Needles are never re-sheathed.
- The dentist removes the needle, not the dental nurse.
- Reduces risk of litigation by a member of staff suffering a needle-stick injury.

How it works

Unlike traditional methods of needle disposal, Safe-Point is said to enable practitioners to automatically remove and dispose of needles immediately after use in a single-handed action:

- Step one: Simply place a used needle with syringe attached into the entry port located on top of the device.
- Step two: Pushing down the syringe initiates the removal cycle. The Safe-Point mechanism then automatically removes and disposes of the needle into the sharps container below.
- Step three: When the indicator light flashes, lift the syringe from the Safe-Point.

In terms of clinical waste segregation, it is now a legal obligation for businesses to describe exactly the content of their waste in order to ensure its safe disposal according to the Waste Acceptance Criteria.²

Safe-Point is said to provide reassurance and confidence to the practitioner in the knowledge that they are responsibly and effectively disposing of their used needles, by segregating pharmaceutical waste. This, therefore, provides the dental and health sector with a solution to meeting the

Step 1

Place syringe into Safe-Point.



Step 2

Depress activator plate for 2-secs.



Step 3

Lift syringe. Needle removed.



criteria.

According to the company, the running costs of Safe-Point are significantly less than the on-going purchase and disposal costs of single-use syringes. This is because it will efficiently store 250 used needles in a 0.5L sharps container. By comparison, single-use syringes would require a storage volume of 10L.

References

1. www.needlestickforum.net
2. www.hazardouswaste.org.uk

Reader enquiry: 125



Safe-Point®

www.safe-point.co.uk

NEW PRICE
INCLUDING 3 REPLACEMENT CONTAINERS

Transmission rates after a needle-stick injury¹

- 1 in 3 Hepatitis B
- 1 in 30 Hepatitis C
- 1 in 300 HIV

(1) Safer Needles Network, 2006

The importance behind a company name

dgb (formally THE DENTAL BUYING GROUP) discusses the topic of corporate rebranding and explains the reasons behind its recent name change...

CORPORATE rebranding should always be primarily a public statement of a company's success, whether it is actual or anticipated. The business may have progressed, outgrown its old logo through acquisitions, or diversification, or simply raised its game in its existing field. Changing the brand name and/or the associated company image has become necessary to more accurately reflect the company's performance and range of activities.

In the case of The Dental Buying Group, all three reasons apply. The dental industry, like many others, where retailing is the final outcome, features innumerable shop windows, usually only visited by those industry professionals whose function is part of the supply chain to the final customer, or, in this case, the dental patient.

The Dental Buying Group (now rebranded as the dgb), in keeping with the contemporary predilection for brevity and precision, has taken this step as a result of a need to actively promote and broaden the huge range of services under the dgb umbrella.

It is vital for progressive companies and their brand owners to keep pace, not only with changes to their industry, but also the

organic growth of their own organisations, and to ensure that their public countenance mirrors these changes.

Economic turmoil

The UK dental industry, even allowing for the exponential and continuing increase in the popularity of elective treatments within a competitive private sector, has been hit hard by the global economic turmoil – which began with the collapse of Lehman Brothers Bank in 2008 and, four years later, shows no signs of abating. In these circumstances, it's no surprise that many small- or medium-sized specialist dental companies have struggled to raise finance.

Consolidation has been the natural response. As this consolidation has spread, many brand names and established corporate

images have lost their relevance to the true nature of the firm they purport to represent, and so rebranding has become inevitable.

It is clearly vital from every point of view to publicise this transfer of services, or potential and even existing customers may shift their allegiance to an alternative supplier. Rebranding is a potent marketing tool and an opportunity to attract attention, and, at the same time, underline the quality of service on offer.

Commercial buyers are notoriously fickle, and their confidence, as well as their custom, must be retained. This is particularly important when the company has widened its field of expertise without neglecting its original core functions.

Offering additional services

A complete overhaul of marketing strategy and advertising is therefore entirely appropriate as companies expand their range of products and services, either organically or through the purchase of another business.

Originally formed around 20 years ago, on

the basis of providing dental practices with discounts on bulk-bought dental supplies and equipment, The Dental Buying Group, now dgb, grew to the point where it supplied 7,000 dental practices.

However, continuing expansion over the years has led the organisation to offer an increasingly varied assortment of additional services to practices in areas such as engineering, staff training, regulatory compliance, legal and financial services, and many others.

With its purchasing activities now only one element of a multi-faceted operation, it became axiomatic that a rebranding was necessary to draw customers' attention to the range and variety of high quality services that dgb is said to provide to the dental industry.

Several, recent, high profile rebranding exercises have backfired in spectacular fashion. It's worth noting that such failures usually occur when there is no substantive change in the company undergoing the rebranding. The change of image can be compared with cosmetic surgery – the underlying features are not altered.

With dgb, this is not the case, and the company is keenly looking forward to providing both its loyal, existing, and many new, customers with its wide range of additional services.

Reader enquiry: 126

Protection in practice

Frontier Medical Group have re-introduced Safe-Point, the automatic needle remover for Dentists, at a new significantly reduced cost. Safe-Point has been designed by a Dentist for use by other Dentists to combat cross infection through needle-stick injury.

“Prevention is better than cure”

British Dental Journal Volume 190 no. 12 June 23 2001



So why choose Safe-Point?

- Non-touch technique – No secondary handling of used needles
- Point of use needle removal
- Single handed action
- Removes ALL popular makes of dental needles
- Needle removed and disposed of in just 2 seconds
- Reduce needle-stick injuries and cross infection

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