

Better Safety Standards For Healthcare Workers

(NAPSA)—More than 5.6 million healthcare personnel in the U.S. are at risk of occupational exposure to blood-borne pathogens like HIV and hepatitis C. Needlestick injuries are sustained by 1,000 hospital employees alone each day. Countless more injuries occur in secondary-care facilities or go unreported. The financial costs to test and treat needlestick injuries exceed \$1 billion a year, while the trauma caused to the victims and their loved ones is incalculable.

The federal government has previously introduced needlestick safety legislation requiring all U.S. healthcare facilities to protect their personnel wherever there is a risk of harm. Despite some improvements, significant challenges remain. For syringes and needles, the reported number of annual needlestick injuries has remained largely stable, with safety products responsible for the majority of incidents. Many government agencies and healthcare advocates desire equipment with passive (automatic) and fully integrated safety features that can virtually eliminate the risk of harm. Such preferred devices are rarely available for use.

Safe in Common is leading a Needlestick Safety Advocacy Campaign to raise industry awareness about delivering optimal protection to all healthcare personnel at risk from such injuries.



Workers who selflessly take care of the sick and injured need protection from needlesticks.

This year, Safe in Common will visit more than 50 hospitals and a dozen healthcare conferences across 36 metropolitan centers in the U.S. For more information about the tour and to sign a support pledge, visit www.safeincommon.org/pledge.

Safe in Common Chairperson Mary Foley said, “Firemen get fire-retardant clothing. Police get bulletproof vests. But healthcare personnel lack sufficient protection from needlestick injuries as they go about the daily business of enhancing and saving the lives of their patients. We believe that a needlestick injury should be a never-ever event.”