

# unisharp<sup>®</sup> FIXED

1ml fixed needle syringe



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Exchange Supplies is a social enterprise established in 2002 to supply products, information, and services to improve and prolong the lives of people who inject drugs.

**Being a social enterprise means that we are principally driven by our health and social objectives which are:**

- reducing the health impacts of injecting drug use;
- developing injecting equipment that causes less harm;
- providing employment and training to people with a history of drug dependence; and
- improving the understanding of injecting drug use.

**We are now happy to be able to introduce syringes with coloured plungers to Australia in partnership with Terumo, who will be distributing our 1ml Unisharp Fixed Needle Syringe to NSPs from the end of November 2017.**

By choosing our products, you are providing high quality injecting equipment, with a proven track record of distribution to injecting drug users, designed to maximise the benefits of service provision, and contributing to the research and development of new products.

I am looking forward to working with harm reduction services in Australia to improve injecting equipment supply, and reduce accidental sharing of syringes.

**Andrew Preston**

Exchange Supplies

November 2017

You can contact me by email: [andrew@exchangesupplies.org](mailto:andrew@exchangesupplies.org)

By phone: 0415 451 905

Or via Facebook: [facebook.com/exchangesupplies.org/](https://facebook.com/exchangesupplies.org/)

## Accidental sharing

In 2004 a video ethnography study of injecting drug use found that a significant cause of sharing was 'accidental sharing' of syringes, particularly where there was:

- shared storage of used injecting equipment;
- collective preparation of drugs for injection; and
- mix ups in injecting environments with multiple syringes/injectors.

This was not caused by lack of knowledge of BBV transmission, or decisions to take risks, but by the fact that all the syringes were identical. This was a risk inherent in the environment, that significantly increased the chances of BBV transmission regardless of the intentions of the injecting drug users. The study found high levels of awareness of the risk, and identified strategies implemented to reduce it but concluded that it would be most effectively reduced by the introduction of clearly visible difference to the syringes.

This problem wasn't confined to the study area (although it was particularly bad there with low coverage) and drug user groups in Australia and elsewhere have confirmed that this is an almost universal issue for injecting drug users who find themselves reusing injecting equipment, even if only occasionally.

Our 1ml Unisharp Fixed Needle Syringes have five different colour plungers to promote syringe recognition, and prevent accidental sharing. The range of colours allows couples to choose a colour that they stick to, and also allows people to collect equipment for use by others that is clearly differentiated.

When encouraged to do this by needle and syringe programme staff it provides a positive way for people to request more equipment for others which increases coverage, and reduces sharing.

Building change into the environment maximises the benefits, and is more likely to reduce sharing than relying on people to mark their injecting equipment to identify it. Having the difference built into the syringes, and not requiring any further action by the user of the syringe maximises the chances of the strategy working.



**Q. Do pharmacy packs have a mix of colours, or just one?**

- A. Just one. People generally go to the pharmacy to pick up equipment for themselves, the idea is that they can then remember the colour of the syringes in their pack.

The packs in the boxes will have a mixture of colours, so if someone picks up more than one pack they will probably get two colours.

If they are both the same, it is more likely to be remarked upon than before, so although not ideal, it's still an improvement.

**Q. Can people choose their colour in pharmacy packs?**

- A. No. The practical difficulties of allowing choice in the pharmacy setting are too great: the level of stock that would need to be carried would be too great, the time taken to do transactions could increase.

We have been distributing coloured syringes in the UK for 10 years, and all the packs are done in this way and it hasn't caused any problems.

**Q. Are you encouraging syringe re-use?**

- A. No. Single use is definitely the ideal, and all services should endeavour to issue more syringes than people need so that they never have to re-use.

However, syringe re-use is still a regular occurrence, and the coloured syringes endeavour to reduce the risks associated with syringe re-use.

**Q. Won't the colours be more attractive to children?**

- A. They may be, but our experience in the UK has been that because of this parents report being extra careful about keeping syringes out of reach of children, and that if discarded in public places, they are more easy to see than 'standard' syringes and therefore get disposed of properly more quickly.

**Q. At primary NSPs how many colours should we offer people?**

- A. People should have more than enough syringes for their own needs, and usually these would be all one colour.

If there is any possibility that others might want to use their syringes, then they should take as many colours as they need – one other colour if there is just two of them, more if they regularly inject with others.

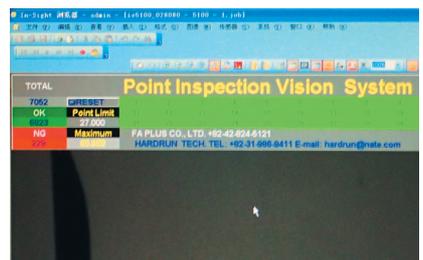
## Quality

We have over 10 years of experience supplying our own brand and proprietary needles and syringes to the harm reduction market. The launch of the 1ml Unisharp Fixed Needle Syringes exceeded our expectations with zero quality complaints.

We have had only one verified quality issue which was shortly after the launch of Total Dose needles when approx. 1,000 were put in a blister pack for a Unisharp needle of the same size. The response to this quality issue was fast, and extremely thorough, the countermeasures were robust, and there hasn't been a recurrence.

Introductions of new syringe can always trigger client concerns and complaints but these have been few with the 1ml Unisharp Fixed Needle Syringe, and since the launch sales have grown organically, and steadily and are now at just under 1 million units per month, giving them an approximately 30% market share of the UK.

Every component of the syringe is inspected by eye before, during, and after assembly by trained personnel.



There are also cameras on the production line that take a digital photograph of every single needle, compare it on the fly with a master image of a perfect needle, checking that the needle is in at a perfect angle, and the point is sharp. If a needle doesn't pass this test, it is ejected from the production line and the materials are recycled.

### Case Study

The UK's largest manufacturer of syringe exchange packs is Frontier Medical. They are to the UK needle and syringe programme what ASP is to Australian NSP.

In August of 2017 Frontier Medical experienced delays running to several months in the manufacture and delivery of a number of products, including their own-brand 27G fixed needle 1ml insulin type syringe.

As an emergency measure they bought over 200,000 27G 1ml Unisharp Fixed Needle Syringes during September and October and put them, without warning, as a substitute product in their packs.

This was a 'worst case scenario' for a syringe switch: the clients concerned had no warning that the substitution was happening, and there was no training or support offered to the clinicians distributing the equipment. However, despite this, we received no complaints from clients or workers about the changeover, or the quality or usability of the 1ml Unisharp Fixed Needle Syringe as a substitute product.

## Manufacturing Resilience

**Reliable lead times, and continuity of supply are key performance requirements for Exchange Supplies OEM Needle and Syringe Programme equipment suppliers, and sit alongside quality and price as essential elements of our supplier relationships.**

In order to ensure that we could be confident about quality and supply reliability we have built our relationship with our manufacturer in China in a planned, staged, and measured way, and have visited at least annually to meet with our account managers, and visit the manufacturing facilities and processes.

The first product we sourced was the 2ml Nevershare Luer Slip Syringe (which also has plungers in a range of five colours to prevent accidental sharing), we reasoned that a product with no needle was less susceptible to manufacturing error, would have lower client brand loyalty, and therefore reduced potential for problems and ease of swapping for a replacement product in the event of problems.

Prior to placing the first 2ml Nevershare order in 2011, Exchange Supplies MD Andrew Preston travelled to Shanghai and Wenzhou to conduct factory visits making detailed inspections of both the manufacturing and packaging printing factories, working conditions, accommodation, and manufacturing processes.

**Since launch in 2011 we have taken delivery of 47 million 2ml syringes. Every single delivery of product to the container port has been on time, delivered in full, and has arrived undamaged.**



## Manufacturing Resilience

After two years of successful manufacture of the Nevershare 2ml, and following a further visit to the new, purpose built, plant in Wenzhou to see all stages of needle manufacture in person we ran a successful user trial of generic hypodermic needles, manufactured for another European customer.

The trial surpassed our expectations, with universal approval. We created the 'Unisharp' brand for these detachable needles, and placed our first order for 300,000 25G 25mm needles – the UK's most popular detachable needle size.

**The product launch went well, and we had zero quality complaints, and sales picked up quickly, so over the next four years we developed the range to seven different Unisharp detachable needles, and later added our dead space reducing 'Total Dose' Low Dead Space Needle products in five gauges and five lengths. These have a modified hub, but use the same needle as the Unisharp. We have sold over 25 million units of these two brands of detachable needles.**

Once the Unisharp needle brand was established, we looked again at the insulin type syringe possibilities because we now had the opportunity to offer different needle gauges on a fixed 1ml (BBraun can only make the 1ml Nevershare fixed with 30G needles), and a fixed needle colour differentiated syringe without any price premium.

We launched the 29G 1ml Unisharp Fixed Needle Syringe in August 2015, later adding 30G and 27G to the range. **We have sold over 14 million 1ml Unisharp Fixed Syringes. We have received 22 consignments which have all been delivered on time, and in full.**



Over 25 million needles sold

## Manufacturing Resilience

Sales have continued to grow organically, and steadily and are now at just under 1 million units per month, giving them an approximately 30% market share of the UK fixed needle syringe for the harm reduction market.

The 1ml Unisharp Fixed Needle Syringes are made at the plant in Shanghai where all the UK 1ml Unisharp Fixed Needle Syringes have been made. This means that the staff making our products are completely familiar with the procedures to produce syringes with colour plungers, and ensuring that everything is packed correctly.

The machine there can make 200,000 syringes per day, 3,000,000 per month.

**In addition, there are three identical machines in Wenzhou making total production capacity 12,000,000 per month.**

Two city manufacturing capacity provides additional supply chain protection from major weather, geological, or social events.

Under the terms of the distribution agreement Exchange Supplies have signed with Terumo, Terumo Australia are building 12 weeks stock of 1ml Unisharp Fixed Needle Syringes to hold in country, and additionally, Exchange Supplies will build a stock of a further 1.5 million syringes at the manufacturing site so that we are able to ensure continuity of supply during the launch period of increasing demand, and/or any unexpected events.



Over 14 million 1ml Unisharp Fixed Needle Syringes distributed to injecting drug users in the UK

## Testimonials

We wrote to a few long-standing UK customers buying the 1ml Unisharp Fixed Needle Syringes, as well as Unisharp hypodermic needles, and Total Dose low dead space needles (which are all made in the same manufacturing facility) asking them to summarise their experience. All the customers who have provided testimonials have confirmed that they are happy to be contacted directly by prospective customers in Australia.

**Lorraine Maden: North West and Yorkshire**

lmaden.lifeline@gmail.com

**From:** Lorraine Maden <lmaden.lifeline@gmail.com>**Date:** 1 September 2017 at 06:51:42 BST**To:** Louise Evans <louise@exchangesupplies.org>**Subject: Exchange Supplies Testimonial**

Hi Louise

My name is Lorraine Maden and I worked as a Substance Misuse Pharmacist for North West and Yorkshire for Lifeline. We began distributing the 1ml Unisharp Fixed Needle Syringes, Total Dose needles and 2ml Nevershare syringes to our clients 2015 as part of a NICE recommended pick and mix service.

The response of our clients to the new syringes was very positive across all our services and they continue to be the product of choice.

Quality of the product supplied has been excellent along with the outstanding customer service provided by their team.

I would highly recommend them.

Kind regards

**Lorraine Maden**

Community Substance Misuse Pharmacist North West and Yorkshire

change, grow, live

Please note my usual working days are Wednesday and Thursday.

M: 07809105973

W: [changeGrowLive.org](http://changeGrowLive.org)

## Testimonials

Lucy Wenlock: Solihull

lwenlock@welcome-charity.org.uk



[www.sias-solihull.org.uk](http://www.sias-solihull.org.uk)

My name is Lucy Wenlock and I work for SIAS as the Needle Exchange Co-ordinator. We have been distributing Exchange Supplies products which including more recently the 1ml Unisharp Fixed Needle Syringes, 2ml Nevershare syringes and Total Dose needles to our clients since 2011.

The response from our clients to the new syringe has been positive and the quality of the products we order has always been second to none. We have been very happy with the working relationship we have developed with Exchange Supplies and wouldn't hesitate in recommending their service and products to anyone.

## Testimonials

Sarah Khalifeh: Tower Hamlets, London  
Sarah.Khalifeh@towerhamlets.gov.uk



2009-2019  
Positive engagement of older people

2009-2019  
Preventing and tackling child poverty

2003-2009  
Winner of 7 previous  
Beacon Awards



POSITIVE ABOUT  
DISABLED PEOPLE



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Communities, Localities & Culture

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62 Roman Road  
London E2 0PG

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Tel 020 7364 4594  
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To whom it may concern,

**Re: Exchange Supplies**

I am a Commissioning and Contracts Officer at the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Drug & Alcohol Action Team.

In my role I am responsible for overseeing the Needle Exchange contract and determining the range of products distributed.

We have been distributing Unisharp fixed needle syringes, 2ml Nevershare syringes and Total dose needles to our clients since 2009.

The range of equipment we use was reviewed in 2015-16 and it was agreed that we would continue using this equipment. We also conducted a short survey in 2015 targeted at pharmacy needle exchange clients for feedback, and received a positive response about the equipment provided.

Sincerely,

Sarah Khalifeh  
Commissioning and Contracts Officer  
Tower Hamlets Drug and Alcohol Action Team

## Testimonials

**Kevin Cundy: Daniels Healthcare**  
Kevin.Cundy@daniels.co.uk

**From:** Kevin Cundy <kevin.cundy@daniels.co.uk>  
**Date:** Monday, 11 September 2017 at 15:29  
**To:** Andrew Preston <andrew@exchangesupplies.org>  
**Subject: RE: 1ml Unisharp Fixed Needle Syringe**

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Dear Andrew

Further to your request for information about how we have found your 1ml Unisharp Fixed Needle Syringes since launch to the harm reduction market, I am writing to confirm that Daniels Healthcare are one of the UK's largest sharps container manufacturing companies, and that we have a division specialising in contract pharmacy NSP pack packing, and that we are also a supplier of equipment to specialist drug services in the harm reduction UK market.

We have stocked the Exchange Supplies 1ml fixed insulin type syringe since its launch, and have supplied it to customers on request since.

All orders for this product range have been delivered on time, and in full. Harm reduction practitioners and service commissioners have been appreciative of the ability the product gives them to address the issue of accidental sharing, and the reports from our customers are of high levels of end user product acceptability, and loyalty once the switch has been made.

If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Regards

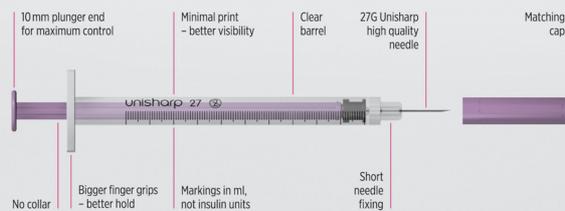
Kevin

**Kevin Cundy**  
Harm Reduction Business Manager  
Daniels Healthcare  
14 Station Approach  
Kidlington  
OX5 1JD

# Resources available to support the switch to Unisharp Fixed

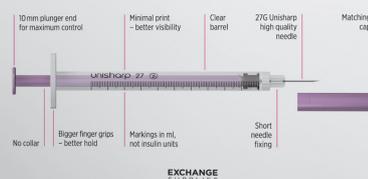
We listened and now supply  
**27G fixed needle syringes**  
designed for injecting drug users

Different colours so you can tell which is yours



We listened and now supply  
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Different colours so you can tell which is yours





**EXCHANGE**  
SUPPLIES

1 Great Western Industrial Centre,  
Dorchester, Dorset DT11RD, UK