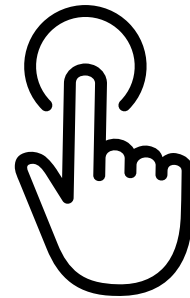


**PHARMACEUTICAL WASTE  
GUIDELINES AND POLICIES**

**AUSTRALIAN  
CAPITAL TERRITORY**



**'Go there' Buttons can be found throughout the document. Clicking on them will result in the relevant linked policy opening in your browser.**



#### **DISCLAIMER**

This document was created by DrugWaste International for the sole purpose of education and information provision. This document has not been created for commercial purposes and should not be viewed as such. It includes relevant links to governing policies and documents. All credit is given to the original authors. We encourage clinicians to read the linked policies/guidelines in their entirety to ensure complete understanding. This document is not a completely exhaustive or comprehensive list. Policies and frameworks are constantly being updated. DrugWaste International will attempt to ensure that all information presented is current, however, it is the full responsibility of the reader to ensure they engage with the links to ensure currency of resources.

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# MEDICATION HANDLING: CANBERRA HEALTH SERVICES CLINICAL POLICY

**Purpose:** This policy consolidates best practice principles on medication procurement, possession, storage, prescribing, dispensing, supplying, administering, and recording at Canberra Health Services (CHS). (Canberra Health Services, 2022, pg. 9).

## KEY COMPONENTS



- **Page 43:** Schedule 8 medications must be destroyed in a way that renders them unidentifiable, unrecoverable, and unusable.
- **Page 44:** The preferred mechanism for the destruction of Schedule 8 medications are DrugWaste Bins.
- **Page 44:** Once DrugWaste Bins are ready for disposal they should be sent to a waste stream bound for incineration.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?

Clinicians must ensure that they are rendering schedule 8 drugs **unusable** at point of disposal.

**DrugWaste Bins should be used for both the destruction of liquid and capsule form S8 Medication and should be made available to clinicians in every area.**

Instructions on how to use the bins can be accessed on our website [www.drugwaste.com.au](http://www.drugwaste.com.au)

Once finished with the bin, place it in a waste stream bound for incineration.

# CLINICAL WASTE MANUAL

**Purpose:** Clinical waste poses a risk to public health and the environment if disposed of by conventional garbage disposal methods ... This manual contains as a minimum requirement, procedures detailing the following:

- (a) The manner of storage, treatment, transport and disposal of clinical wastes;
- (b) Containers to be used in storage and transport of clinical wastes;
- (c) Colour coding, labelling and marking of these containers;
- (d) a list of appropriate disposal sites; and
- (e) the layout of the application for a license under the Act.

(Australian Capital Territory Government, 1991, pg. 4).

## KEY COMPONENTS



- **Page 14:** All clinical waste must be incinerated
- **Page 17:** Pharmaceutical waste is considered ‘Environmentally Hazardous Waste’ and must be incinerated.
- **Page 27:** Pharmaceutical waste is prohibited to be disposed of via general waste (landfill) and sewers.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?

**Pharmaceutical waste is a classified waste** and must be treated with care in relation to its disposal.

**Incineration** is the only acceptable way to dispose of pharmaceutical waste and disposal via landfill and sewers is illegal.

Clinicians must ensure that pharmaceutical waste enters a waste stream bound for incineration to **mitigate community harm and environmental damage**.

# SUMMARY

The ACT has very clear and specific legislation when it comes to the disposal of pharmaceutical waste.

- Schedule 8 medications must be **rendered unusable and unrecoverable at point of disposal.**
- **DrugWaste Bins are the most acceptable method of destruction** for Schedule 8 medications and render drugs unusable and unrecoverable at point of disposal.
- **All pharmaceutical waste must be incinerated** – any other method of disposal is illegal.

**Clinicians must take all the relevant steps to ensure compliance** when disposing of unwanted, unused or expired medication.

# WANT TO KNOW MORE?

[www.drugwaste.com.au](http://www.drugwaste.com.au)



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# References

Clinical Waste Manual 1991. DI1991-12. Australian Capital Territory Government. April 1991.

<https://www.legislation.act.gov.au/di/1991-12/default.asp>

Medication Handling Clinical Policy. Canberra Health Services. June 2022.

[https://www.canberrahealthservices.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/word\\_doc/0004/1981462/Medication-Handling-Policy.docx](https://www.canberrahealthservices.act.gov.au/_data/assets/word_doc/0004/1981462/Medication-Handling-Policy.docx)