



**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
OF DIABETES EDUCATORS**

The “Medicare Safe Needle Act of 2005” - H.R. 2841

The American Association of Diabetes Educators supports the “Medicare Safe Needle Act of 2005” - H.R. 2841. This legislation will provide Medicare beneficiaries coverage for home needle destruction devices and the disposal of needles and lancets through a sharps-by-mail or similar program under Part D of the Medicare Program.

It is estimated that at least 3 billion injections occur yearly outside of health care settings. About 2 billion of these injections are administered by people with diabetes and patients receiving home health care. The most common method of disposal has been to discard used needles in household trash and community solid waste, putting workers and the public at risk of needle stick injuries and potentially fatal infections.

In 2004 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) introduced new recommendations on disposal of used syringes generated by self-injectors in non-traditional health care facilities in the U.S., i.e., at home. The EPA now suggests participating in one of two programs: a community program (such, as community drop-off centers, household hazardous waste facilities, residential “special waste” pick-up services or syringe exchange programs) or a national disposal program (such as, sharps mail-back programs, or at-home needle destruction devices).

Congress should act to provide Medicare beneficiaries coverage for home needle destruction devices and the disposal of needles and lancets through a sharps-by-mail or similar program under Part D of the Medicare Program.

The American Association of Diabetes Educators calls on Congress to:

- Enact H.R. 2841, the “Medicare Safe Needle Act of 2005”
- Support legislation that will provide Medicare beneficiaries coverage for home needle destruction devices and the disposal of needles and lancets through a sharps-by-mail or similar program under Part D of the Medicare Program.

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