Appendix 5

Source patient information sheet following a sharps/splash/bite injury involving a member of staff or another service user/patient that requires blood test for HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C

Background
A member of staff/service user has been accidentally exposed to your blood or body fluids in a way, which could pose a risk to their health if you are infected with Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C or HIV. In order to allay the anxiety of the injured person and if necessary to ensure appropriate treatment, we need to test your blood to see if you are infected with these viruses.

It is consistent with the Trust Policy but you have the right to refuse the tests. The blood will be specifically analysed for evidence of infection with Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV.

Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV are not common illnesses but it is possible to be infected with them without knowing or being ill. If you are infected with these viruses it is important for you to know this, as there are treatments available for these conditions.

These viruses are transmitted by exposure to blood and some body fluids, most commonly by sexual contact with an infected person or by sharing of needles between injecting users.

People who are at higher risk of being infected are:
- Men who have sex with men
- Injecting drug users
- Sexual partners of the above
- Sexual partners of people who has lived in an area of high endemicity (Sub-Saharan Africa, South America, Far East)
- Sexual partners of HIV infected people
- Patients who have had blood transfusions before 1985 in the UK, or at any time in developing countries

HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C tests are performed on a blood test, which is taken like any other blood test, but which is analysed specifically for the viruses of concern. The result will show whether or not you are carrying the virus, even although you may be completely unaware of it.

HIV – stands for “Human Immuno-deficiency Virus”, the virus that causes AIDS. AIDS – stands for “Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.” This consists of a number of different types of illness e.g. a rare type of pneumonia, and a rare skin cancer, which occur in people who are infected with HIV.

A senior doctor or another member of clinical staff who is treating you will discuss the details of the testing arrangements and the implications of testing before your blood test is taken.
We can arrange a time to provide you with the result of the blood test, if that is your wish. If you do not wish to know the result, or do not wish the results to be recorded in your records, that wish will be respected.

If you are negative for these viruses, it will help to reduce anxiety in the injured doctor, nurse, other health care worker or service user. If you are shown to be positive, it will enable appropriate treatment to be given to the injured employee with the hope that this will minimise the chance of them developing serious illness resulting from their care of you. We will also be in a position to offer you appropriate treatment, should that be your wish.