

AS 3825:2020



Procedures and devices for the removal, containment and disposal of scalpel blades from scalpel handles



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The following are represented on Committee HE-011:

- Australasian College for Infection Prevention and Control
- Australian College of Perioperative Nurses
- Australian Dental Association
- Australian Funeral Directors Association
- Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association
- Australian Medical Association
- Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation
- Australian Private Hospitals Association
- Australian Society for Microbiology
- Medical Technology Association of Australia
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Preface

This Standard was prepared by the Australian members of the Joint Standards Australia/Standards New Zealand Committee HE-011, Safe Management of Sharps and Healthcare Related Wastes, to supersede AS/NZS 3825—1998, *Procedures and devices for the removal and disposal of scalpel blades from scalpel handles*.

The objectives of this Standard are as follows, in order to reduce the incidence of injury or transmission of infection to the user and other personnel:

- (a) Define the performance characteristics of devices which are used to remove and contain scalpel blades from scalpel handles.
- (b) Recommend appropriate procedures for removal and containment of scalpel blades from scalpel handles.
- (c) Recommend appropriate procedures for the disposal of scalpel blade removal devices and contained scalpel blades.
- (d) Specify test methods for assessment of removal and containment.

The major changes in this edition are as follows:

- (i) Expansion to include both multiple-use and single-use scalpel blade removal devices.
- (ii) Removal of unsafe practices such as using artery forceps to remove used scalpel blades.
- (iii) Specification of the immediate containment of removed scalpel blades to provide protection against injury to downstream staff.

This Standard is applicable to all clinical and non-clinical settings. Examples include, but are not limited to, hospitals, surgical settings, residential aged care facilities, doctors' surgeries, dental offices and podiatry clinics, and areas other than health facilities, e.g. schools, universities, laboratories, veterinary surgeries, aesthetic clinics, architects' offices, graphic design studios and any establishment where scalpels are used.

The terms "normative" and "informative" are used in Standards to define the application of the appendices to which they apply. A "normative" appendix is an integral part of a Standard, whereas an "informative" appendix is only for information and guidance.

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NOTES

Australian Standard®

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1 Scope

This Standard sets out performance characteristics of devices used in, and procedures for, the removal, containment and disposal of scalpel blades from scalpel handles.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document:

NOTE Documents for informative purposes are listed in the Bibliography.

AS 4031, *Non-reusable containers for the collection of sharp medical items used in health care areas*

AS/NZS 4261, *Reusable containers for the collection of sharp items used in human and animal medical applications*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1

chamber

that part of the scalpel blade removal device which fully encloses the scalpel blade after its removal

3.2

container

receptacle intended for the collection and containment of scalpel blade removal devices

3.3

containment

complete enclosure of the scalpel blade within a chamber of the scalpel blade removal device following removal

3.4

loaded

physical state wherein a scalpel blade is attached to a scalpel handle, ready for use

3.5

may

indicates the existence of an option

3.6

removal

separation of the scalpel blade from the scalpel handle prior to containment

3.7

resheathing-type removal action

physical action whereby the user or other person holds a loaded scalpel handle with one hand and attempts to remove the scalpel blade with a device held in the other hand