

2008 International Sharps Injury Prevention Awards

International healthcare groups honor recipients of prestigious award

by Ron Stoker



During October the infection control community celebrated the International Infection Prevention Week (October 19-25, 2008.) This special prevention week was established when President Ronald Reagan proclaimed in 1986 that the third week in October be designated as National Infection Control Week. He called upon all federal, state and local government agencies, health organizations, communications, media and people to take part in educational activities and programs during this designated week.

During the month of December the global healthcare community will be commemorating the Seventh Annual International Sharps Injury Prevention Month. Activities have been encouraged to increase sharps injury awareness, providing information to healthcare workers to identify safer means of handling sharps, and to make them aware of sharps injury prevention products.

One of the primary goals of this prevention month has been to make workers aware that most needlestick and other sharps injuries are preventable. Needlestick injuries have been a danger to healthcare workers and others since the first syringe was used in 1845. An estimated 12 billion injections are administered each year worldwide. It is estimated that approximately 800,000 needlesticks occur in the United States each year in healthcare settings. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has estimated that one of every seven healthcare workers are accidentally stuck with a needle each year.

The word must be spread, as part of this prevention month, most needlestick and other sharps injuries can be prevented. It has been estimated that more than 80 percent of needlestick injuries can be prevented through the use of safer devices. Healthcare workers giving medical treatment to others should not have to become patients by receiving injuries from contaminated

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medical sharps. These sharps injuries can be avoided. These injuries are not limited to nurses and physicians. They also include cleaning staff, housekeeping, EMS/paramedic, law enforcement officials, correctional officers and firefighters.

In an interview a number of years ago, Bill Charney, then the health and safety officer at San Francisco General Hospital and a nationally recognized authority on hospital safety, said “If hospitals were sued for millions of dollars every time a nurse got a needlestick and the hospital didn’t supply safe needles, you can bet this problem would have gone away years ago.”

Hospitals have a variety of reasons now to use safety products since the passage of state laws regarding safety needle products as well as the federal Needlestick Safety and Prevention Act. The regulatory and punitive damages are a deterrent to using the same old standard sharps. However, there is an even more compelling reason for hospitals to use safety products—their workers!

Much of the world has an urgent nursing shortage that is bound to intensify. The fear of obtaining an occupational illness from an accidental needlestick is a big concern voiced by many nurses. In fact, registered nurses report that health and safety concerns play a major role in their decision to remain in the profession or not. More than 88 percent of nurses reported in a survey that health and safety concerns influence their decisions to continue working in the field of nursing, and the kind of nursing work they choose to perform. The message is clear. If a hospital wants to hold on to its healthcare work force it will make sure the staff believes the hospital has their best interest at heart. Hospitals will purchase, train and mandate the use of safety products, and will make sure nursing organizations are aware of this safety focus so that they can retain personnel. A nurse who believes the hospital is concerned about her health is more likely to continue working than one who believes the hospital is only concerned about its bottom line.

Award Winners

As part of the 2008 International Sharps Injury Prevention Month, ISIPS and *Managing Infection Control* magazine present the recipients of the 2008 International Sharps Injury Prevention Awards. The awards were sponsored this year by Terumo Medical, Retractable Technologies Inc., Smartstream Pty Ltd. and Qlicksmart.

This prestigious award is given to only a few individuals each year. Five deserving individuals have been notified and have accepted their 2008 International Sharps Injury Prevention Awards. In addition, several individuals have been recognized with honorable mentions. ISIPS and *Managing Infection Control* congratulate and thank these individuals for making a difference in spreading the message of sharps injury prevention to healthcare workers and employers around the globe. This award is one way of saying thank you for reducing the number of healthcare workers and others who are injured by needlestick and other sharps injuries each year.

Presenting this year’s distinguished winners:

- ▶ Karen Daley
- ▶ Elizabeth Donnenwirth
- ▶ Kaj Johansson
- ▶ Dr. Adelisa L. Panlilio
- ▶ Dr. Abimbola Sowande

Karen Daley



**Karen Daley,
MS, MPH, RN, FAAN**

Having spending the past 10 years advocating for health-care workers and raising awareness about the need for sharps injury prevention, Karen Daley, MS, MPH, RN, FAAN, is currently a PhD candidate at Boston College Connell School of Nursing, pursuing dissertation research related to the experience of sharps injuries.

Ms. Daley spent her entire nursing career as a frontline caregiver and staff nurse at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston where she began her career in 1973. She served as a senior staff nurse in Brigham and Women’s emergency department until January of 1999 when she left clinical practice due to a needlestick injury that resulted in her infection with both HIV and hepatitis C. Since that time, while continuing her role as president of the Massachusetts Nurses Association, she became actively engaged as an advocate for legislation to mandate use of safer needle devices in healthcare practice settings. Over the last several years, she has traveled to more than 23 U.S. states as well as Europe and Taiwan in her ongoing campaign to educate students and healthcare adminis-

trators on the importance of needlestick injury prevention. Ms. Daley was among those invited to the Oval Office to witness President Clinton sign the “Needlestick Safety Prevention Act” into law on November 6, 2000. She also spearheaded Massachusetts’ passage of the strongest needlestick prevention law in the country, which mandates reporting of all sharps injuries to MA DPH. The statute links compliance with injury reporting requirements and use of safer devices with institutional licensure.

“Witnessing and participating in passage of the federal legislation in 2000 has been my most rewarding experience in campaigning for sharps safety,” states Daley. “I am motivated to raise awareness to prevent injuries like mine. We know we can prevent a large proportion of these injuries through proper training, and proper workplace and engineering controls. It is a challenge to raise awareness among nurses of the need to act on their rights and opportunities under the 2000 federal law—including the requirement that employers provide them with safety devices where appropriate, and the opportunity they have to participate directly in the selection and evaluation of safety devices in their work settings. There is still a lot of work to do to eliminate preventable injuries.”

Ms. Daley has been recognized with numerous awards for her outstanding leadership and excellence in practice. In 2006, she was recognized as a living nursing legend by the Massachusetts Association of Registered Nurses. In November of 2006, she was inducted as a fellow into the American Academy of Nursing in recognition of the national and international impact of her needlestick injury prevention advocacy.

While working globally, she continues to work locally, serving as an active member of the Needlestick Advisory Committee for the Massachusetts Sharps Injury Surveillance Project at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, where her experience as a nurse as well as her perspective as a researcher and advocate has provided valuable guidance to the committee.

“I am honored to have received this award,” says Daley. “I never expect recognition for engaging in this work. For me, given the circumstances and outcome of my own injury, I have felt an obligation to do whatever I can to help reduce the incidence of similarly preventable injuries from occurring among nurses and other healthcare workers. I’ve felt very fortunate to have had the opportunity to participate in this important work which needs to continue on many fronts.”

Winners Circle

International Sharps Injury Prevention Awards

Acknowledged for their dedication to sharps injury prevention, the 2008 Sharps Injury Award winners are

welcomed into the Sharps Injury Prevention Winner’s Circle, which includes the following recipients from 2002 through 2007.

International Sharps Injury Prevention Winner’s Circle

2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Gail J. Callas	Letitia Goodman	Brian French	Lt. Cmdr. Paul Andre	Diane Crawford	Rep. Cass Ballenger
Carol DiGiacoma	Donna Jean Haiduven	Dr. Robyn Gershon	Diane Baranowsky	Kathi Miller	Gerald I. Brecher
Jan Elovitz Cothron	Eileen Johnson	Renee Gould	Dr. Burton Kunik	Brian K. Reaux	Beverly Campbell
Nancy L. Hughes	Bonnie Kashmiri	Susan Loomis	Sally Peerbolt	Susan Taylor	Barbara DeBaun
Angela K. Laramie	Dr. Janice Neubauer	Elizabeth Maccario		Bruce G. Weniger	Jennifer Hawbaker
Gina Pugliese	Janie Ott	Becky McKinney			Ron Luther
Thomas J. Shandera	Christine Pionk				Thomas J. Shaw
					Michael W. Smith
					Connie Steed
					Tim Truitt

Elizabeth Donnenthirth



**Elizabeth Donnenthirth,
RN, BFA**

Elizabeth Donnenthirth, RN, BFA, is a sharps safety specialist at Winchester Hospital in Winchester, Mass. With the materials management department as her home base and primary support, her position includes identifying and reviewing appropriate new sharps safety products, many of which must also pass infection prevention, IV therapy, AORN and patient safety guidelines. Utilizing product presentations and one-on-one conversations, she conveys the message of sharps safety and brings product options for consideration. Encouraging honest feedback, she looks for the clinical drawbacks to using specific sharps safety products not only to better refine her search for the best option, but also to communicate with the manufacturers to encourage better designs in the future.

“To impact future safety designs while looking for the best products on the current medical marketplace is very exciting,” Donnenthirth says. “It’s more than just adding a cover to the current tool; products are being redesigned entirely, and it’s safer for the clinician and the patient when the entire package and procedure is refined or redeveloped.”

Using her specialized knowledge in sharps safety, Ms. Donnenthirth has worked diligently with the hospital staff to find the right safety products, and has shown patience and persistence in the process of dealing with surgeons and their use of safety scalpels. She has researched the use of cord blood kits which have posed a challenge and has advocated for safer blood collection procedures.

“Her job is somewhat of a thankless and frustrating task—trying to get surgeons to change their ways and use different blades, needles, etc. than the ones they have been using for years,” states Dennis Begos, MD, chairman for the department of surgery at Winchester Hospital. “Nevertheless, she is patient, pleasant and unbelievably upbeat when it comes to working with us—even when she hears us complain about things she has no control over. She backs that up with very hard work, a thorough knowledge of the products available, and the laws/regulations that apply to us. In addition to working with the surgeons, she has worked with nursing to

improve sharps safety on the floors and throughout the hospital, and with anesthesia and other providers who regularly use sharps for various procedures. The amazing thing is, she does all of this without managing to incite the usual anger that comes with change. She understands our needs, and the patients’ needs, and knows that they come first.”

As Ms. Donnenthirth explains, “Change is always difficult, period. Sharps safety had an uphill motion initially. In its early stages and even in recent conversations I find that what I do most is teach, to communicate the law and what changes need to occur, while instilling hope that there are good options and the user has input in the process. The responses still vary, but more recently it is one of a welcoming nature. The replies ‘it’s about time’ and ‘I am glad to see safer devices and designs out there, and in *our* hands’ are rewarding. The best comment is, ‘I want something safer, I saw this device where I used to work, can we talk about a trial?’ These are wonderful words indeed.”

Kaj Johansson



Kaj Johansson

Beginning his nursing career in 1990, Kaj Johansson knows firsthand the trauma experienced due to infection following a sharps injury. Diagnosed with hepatitis C in 1999 resulting from an occupational injury, he endured 48 weeks of medical treatment and as of 2006 is free of infection. Mr. Johansson has become a champion of sharps safety in Sweden, becoming a public healthcare nurse advisor working with the non-profit hepatitis C organization for the past six years.

Developing the first network of healthcare personnel in Sweden who have been transmitted with HCV in work, Mr. Johansson used his experience and initiative in developing two non-profit Web sites: www.vardnet.se for Swedish healthcare personnel, and a safety products site in English www.careandsafe.eu.

“It’s a tremendous trauma to a healthcare professional to be infected with hepatitis C and its serious medical consequences,” Johansson states. “My most important focus is

that no healthcare personnel have to experience what happened to me or those other healthcare personnel who have been infected in a similar way all over the world. Not to forget all those unverified numbers who have been infected with hepatitis C in their work without even knowing it! A safe and secure working place with access to safety material and knowledge about the risks regarding blood infection in their working environment is the only way to change.”

Mr. Johansson has found his most rewarding experience thus far in his efforts as a champion for sharps safety is his participation in the seminar on prick and cut injuries in healthcare, held this December in Stockholm. Special guests invited to the seminar include the Swedish Institute for Infectious Disease Control, The National Board of Health and Welfare, Swedish Work Environment Authority, the president from the Swedish Nursing Association and the Swedish Medical Association, as well as hospitals, doctors and many more who have influence on the important topic of sharps safety and who want to learn more and put focus on the situation.

In regard to his ISIPS Award achievement, Mr. Johansson shares his reaction: “Joy, I share the prize with all healthcare personnel around the world!”

Adelisa Panlilio



Dr. Adelisa Panlilio

Dr. Adelisa Panlilio has focused her work of the past 20 years on assessing the risks and preventing transmission of infections to and from healthcare personnel. Recently retired from the U.S. Public Health Service after 20 years of service at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta, Ga., she was the first EIS Officer in what was then the HIV Activity in the Hospital Infections Program (HIP).

During her tenure at CDC she worked as a medical epidemiologist in the Division of Healthcare Quality Promotion as part of a team that helped to characterize and assess the risk of transmission of bloodborne pathogens in healthcare settings. This team also developed and assessed guidelines and measures for the prevention of such transmission.

Observational studies of occupational exposure, prospective surveillance of exposed healthcare personnel, and seroprevalence surveys conducted by investigators at CDC (including Dr. Panlilio) and elsewhere demonstrated that the greatest risk of bloodborne virus infection was associated with percutaneous exposures to infected blood. Clearly the best method of preventing such transmission would be through preventing percutaneous injuries.

Mid-career, Dr. Panlilio led a group that estimated the number of percutaneous injuries sustained annually among hospital-based healthcare personnel, using data from the CDC’s National Surveillance for Healthcare Workers (NaSH) and EPINet. This figure, for 1997-98, was that approximately 1,000 percutaneous injuries occurred daily in U.S. hospitals.

Most recently, she revised the Public Health Service recommendations on the management of occupational exposures to HIV. Her primary work in sharps safety as she retired was to help bring to life the Healthcare Personnel Safety Component of the National Healthcare Network that will enable tracking of occupational sharps injuries, continuing this function from NaSH, which she oversaw for the last seven years.

“Prevention of sharps injuries requires a multi-faceted approach that includes changing the culture of safety, use of engineering controls and modification of work practices,” Dr. Panlilio states. “CDC can generate guidelines and lead discussions about sharps safety but the optimal method of ensuring adherence to its recommended practices to ensure sharps safety is what I see as the greatest challenge in sharps injury prevention.”

Dr. Panlilio graduated from Radcliffe College, and then received her medical degree from the State University of New York, Downstate. She trained in pediatrics and blood banking in New York City. After working for 10 years as the medical director of the American Red Cross Blood Services in Nashville, Tenn., she turned to public health, first obtaining a Masters in Public Health from the Harvard School of Public Health, and then entering the Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta, Ga.

Surprised by her award nomination, Dr. Panlilio shares her honor with colleagues, “I feel that I have contributed to sharps safety as part of a larger team and feel that I am accepting this on behalf of all of my colleagues with whom I have worked, both within and outside CDC. The collaborative effort of the many stakeholders interested in sharps safety has been a rewarding experience. This includes those who have participated in sharps injury surveillance in NaSH facilities, colleagues in OSHA, academia, and elsewhere in CDC, including NIOSH.”

Abimbola Sowande

A public health physician who has been practicing for 30 years, with the last 10 years actively in public health, Dr. Abimbola Sowande is the country director of the Making Medical Injection Safer (MMIS) project in Nigeria. The project has brought greater awareness of needlestick injuries to the government of Nigeria and the medical community as a whole.

Dr. Sowande pioneered safe injection pilot programs in Nigeria, including unsafe syringe needle recapping practices which were reduced from 76 percent during the baseline study to 18 percent and reduction of the risk of needle injuries by the use of safety boxes increased by 75 percent. Needlestick injuries were reduced from 46 percent to 6 percent. She has helped to spread the lessons to more sites in Nigeria, hence promoting IS education of healthcare workers in African's most populous country with a very weak health system.

Funded by the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the project was originally planned to work in six states in Nigeria. Due to the advocacy conducted to the government, the Federal Ministry of Health, the HIV Division has committed funds to train in geographical zones and sites not covered by the project. The plan is to train all tertiary health institutions in the country. There is a national injection safety and healthcare waste management policy in place. Legislation to support the policy is in progress.

The National Administration for Food, Drug and Control (NAFDAC) has thrown its weight behind use of auto-disposable syringes and use of safety boxes in Nigeria. NAFDAC in conjunction with the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) and the Medical and Dental Council has given a grace period to manufacturers and importers of syringes to phase-out reusable syringes in favor of auto-disposable syringes. Local companies have already commenced manufacture of auto-disposable syringes and safety boxes. There is a review of curriculum of nurses, environmental health officers and community health officers to include appropriate injection safety messages, including post-exposure management. Advocacy to provide free hepatitis B vaccines to clinical officers, nurses and medical waste handlers is also going on. The project has also trained journalists to educate the general public on the danger of demanding for unnecessary injections from their health givers, scavenging in medical waste and promotion of oral medications.

Although a five-year project which will end in September 2009, the message

and work the project has done is here to stay. There is government ownership of the project and the activities will continue in the Federal Ministry of Health after MMIS has concluded its program.

Honorable Mentions

Nominations for this year's awards have been truly outstanding. We would like to recognize the following individuals for the contributions they have made. It is through their efforts that the healthcare work environment continues to improve in the many areas impacting safe sharps practices.

Please join us in congratulating the 2008 Sharps Injury Prevention honorees.

Salisu Abubakar

Salisu Abubakar, RN, ICN, is an infection control nurse and member of the hospital infection control committee at Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital in Kano, Nigeria.

He initiated the hospital's first sharps disposal system and proposed and wrote the guideline/protocols for prevention and management of occupational exposures to bloodborne pathogens. This has in turn promoted sharps injury awareness and subsequently reduced injuries. Mr. Abubakar has presented sharps awareness campaign lectures to many groups of healthcare workers. He has also presented papers on sharps injury at two IFIC conferences and won the 2006/ 2007 OXOID infection control award for his hospital.

Carol Cagle

Passionate about sharing up-to-date information on current trends in prevention and safety techniques and procedures, Carol Cagle, BS, MT(ASCP)SM, makes herself available on call as a resource for anyone who needs her expertise. As the infection prevention and control manager at Holy Cross Hospital in Chicago, "Ms. Cagle has done an exceptional job of providing leadership, commitment, and dedication to ensure that our hospital has up-to-date standards of performance for all clinical staff who are monitored with other nursing and ancillary directors/managers/supervisors daily," says Dr. Dulcelina A. Stahl, Holy Cross Hospital. "Statistically, our sharp injuries are well below reported number of injuries by other healthcare facilities."



The multidisciplinary safe sharps/phlebotomy subcommittee at Holy Cross has been effective in reducing sharps injuries by 70 percent from its inception. “As infection prevention and control manager I have had the pleasure of serving as chairperson of this very dedicated and results oriented group of leaders and employees who continue to monitor and evaluate any opportunities for improvement,” Ms. Cage states.

Alexandra Derevnuk

Alexandra (Sandy) Derevnuk, RN, is the blood and body fluid exposure (BBFE) coordinator at Mount Sinai Medical Center, a 1,100-bed teaching medical center in the heart of New York City. She is responsible for the rapid and thorough analysis of circumstances surrounding each exposure incident, and gathers BBFE information in order to prevent reoccurrence. Ms. Derevnuk evaluates safety devices and personal protective equipment, and addresses challenges of risk assessment data collection and blood screening of source patients for HIV and hepatitis B and C. She assures adherence to legal guidelines and confidentiality issues within the State of New York, in order to best provide appropriate post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) medication if needed.

“Alexandra is an unbelievably dedicated professional who is tireless in her efforts to educate staff, orient healthcare workers to new equipment, and prevent sharps injuries,” states Elizabeth Coughlin, RN, MPA, assistant director of infection control at Mount Sinai.

In collaboration with the division of infectious diseases, employee health, clinical nursing and education, waste management and the product value analysis committee, Ms. Derevnuk initiates changes in policies and procedures, leads educational review sessions about BBFE and HIV testing, and recommends safer devices—all for the goal of a safe environment for the facility’s patients and healthcare workers.

Dennis J. Ernst

Dennis J. Ernst, MT(ASCP), is the director of the Center for Phlebotomy Education Inc. in Corydon, Ind. and has been actively advocating needlestick prevention through education since 1997. He has written dozens articles on needlestick safety



for healthcare publications, and authored two textbooks and a reference book, each infused with detailed information on exposure prevention. Additionally, Mr. Ernst has given hundreds of workshops and conference presentations around the world, many on needlestick prevention, and serves as the editor of the Phlebotomy Today family of newsletters, read monthly by more than 10,000 subscribers worldwide.

“Through the Center for Phlebotomy Education, Dennis Ernst has dedicated his energies, time and talent to ensure those who perform blood specimen collection procedures keep themselves and their patients safe,” explains nominator Lisa Balance. “He is an inspiration and positive role model to the global healthcare community.”

Dr. Zeinab M. Hassan

As a young researcher from Jordan, Zeinab M. Hassan, RN, PhD, has accomplished pioneer work in Jordan in the area of sharps injuries among healthcare workers. She is an assistant professor on the faculty of nursing at Hashemite University in Zarqa, Jordan. Her work serves as a base for effective interventions to promote the health of Jordanian healthcare workers.

Dr. Hassan’s paper titled “Reporting Rate and Occupational Exposure to Sharp Injuries among Jordanian Healthcare Workers” was accepted as an oral presentation at the International Conference on Urban Health 2007 in Baltimore. Her manuscript “Occupational Exposure to Sharp Injuries among Jordanian Healthcare Workers” has been accepted to be published in *Infectious Diseases in Clinical Practice*, and a second manuscript, “Underreporting of Occupational Exposures to Sharp Injuries among Jordanian Healthcare Workers” is under review by the *International Journal for Quality in Health Care*.

Susie Rich

Due to her passion about sharps safety, and through her persistence and dedication, Susie Rich, RN, has been responsible for significant changes within the emergency department (ED) at Christchurch Hospital in New Zealand. She has worked in the ED at Christchurch for the last eight years, most recently as an associate clinical nurse manager.

“My sharps safety project arose from my interest in infection control and occupational safety issues within the

emergency environment,” explains Ms. Rich. As a result of her concerns regarding unsafe practices and lack of availability of effective safety devices, a practice review was undertaken. From the review, she has now introduced a number of initiatives to improve sharps safety and reduce needlestick injuries in ED. This has involved the removal of all needles, with the exception of those essential for direct injection or ABG sampling, and the introduction of the Introcan safety cannulae. “She has created a momentum with this quantum change which is spreading throughout the hospital where she is based,” says her nominator, Terry Sullivan, B. Braun.

Glen Riverstone

Glen Riverstone has been an emergency nurse in Brisbane, Australia since graduating with a Bachelor in Health Science Nursing degree three years ago. After cutting himself several times on glass ampoules he asked others if they had had the same problem, and discovered that most people who use ampoules cut themselves at some stage, if not regularly. Deciding there had to be a user-friendly solution to this potentially serious occupational hazard and safety issue; he set about designing the Snapit ampoule opener. After only a short nine months, Mr. Riverstone has taken his concept to reality with the patent-protected Snapit ampoule opener.

As an RN working part time in various emergency departments, Mr. Riverstone has founded his own business, River Logic Pty Ltd., with the company’s first major accomplishment the product refinement, marketing and sales management of its first product, the Snapit ampoule opener. The Snapit and its safety benefits are starting to be experienced internationally across sectors such as healthcare, cosmetics and veterinarian markets.

Joel Schoenfeld

Joel Schoenfeld, retired chairman of UNIVÉC, is dedicated to helping others around the globe in reducing the exposure to bloodborne pathogens resulting from the reuse of needles and needlestick injuries. The United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations (UNCTC) was established in 1974 and its primary purpose was to establish a linkage of investment, technology transfer and advising governments of

developing countries and former Soviet-style governments with transnational corporations. As a consultant, he was involved with numerous negotiations concerning scientific and technical agreements with such governments of those countries.

Mr. Schoenfeld soon noticed that from his work with the World Health Organization (WHO) that most countries were reusing syringes when administering vaccines or giving injections. WHO informed him that up to one-third of immunization injections were unsafe. He soon began to collaborate with scientists regarding the possibility of producing a one-time use only, auto-destruct syringe to save the millions of lives being lost to the reuse of syringes. In 1991 this vision established a company called UNIVÉC with Mr. Schoenfeld as chairman. The mission of the company was simple, to develop a one-time and one-time only use syringe. The syringe was designed, prototypes made, patents filed and research done. Both the Surgeon General of the United States and WHO declared this to be the safest syringe produced.

Mr. Schoenfeld has testified before Congress, met with numerous Health Ministries, doctors and renowned epidemiologists throughout the world. He has traveled to every continent (excluding Antarctica) in seeking to promote the use of safer syringes.

Marcia Williams

Marcia Williams, RN, BSN, is an employee health nurse at Arrowhead Regional Medical Center (ARMC) in Colton, Calif. where she oversees employee health services for more than 3,500 employees. She is active in providing training for all new hires and annual skills updates. All bloodborne pathogen exposures are followed through by Ms. Williams. A member of the sharps safety committee, along with several other committees geared toward staff safety and training, she is involved in the annual updating of policies related to sharps safety and prevention.

“Ms. Williams plays a vital role in her department and is well received and respected by her peers as she offers a wealth of knowledge in her role and profession as a RN,” states Teresa Gwinn, nominator »and coworker at ARMC. “She has made some great changes in her department since she has been in charge and has reduced needlestick incidence greatly by instituting new safety devices to help protect staff during use.” †

