

Freedom of Information Request	FOI 23-148	10 th May 2023
--------------------------------	------------	---------------------------

I have recently become a user of an Abbott Freestyle Libre 2 system (which monitors blood glucose levels) provided by the NHS.

I wish to make a Freedom of Information request regarding the policy and procedures regarding the safe and effective disposal/recycling of the component parts of the Freestyle Libre 2 system, after being given conflicting advice from my diabetes nurse specialist, and the contents of the generic user guide provided by the manufacturer/distributor.

In the Abbott user guide page 83, section headed Disposal I have some questions regarding the disposal of the Sensor and Sensor Container/Applicator.

The guide states "the sensor must not be disposed of via municipal waste collection...Contact the manufacturer for details." In addition, the sensors must not be incinerated. (Therefore, am I correct in assuming that they must not put in a sharps collection box? What alternative disposal process does ABUHB provide?

Can you please advise how I am able to dispose of the sensor in a controlled, approved manner within my local area? (Newport, South Wales, UK)

Are the empty sensor applicator/containers suitable for controlled recycling since they contain a large amount of plastic and metal?

I have searched the ABUHB website and cannot find any information regarding processes followed by the Clinical Waste Management services, especially with regard what actions a customer of the service must follow.

As we become more environmentally aware, may I suggest that Clinical Waste Management policies/procedures be reviewed in light of new technology advances and new expensive materials?

Any information regarding this matter gratefully received.

Patients receive training on using the Freestyle Libre from Abbott education providers, the Health Boards Diabetes Specialist Nurses (DSN) and are also sent a letter which provides information on accessing online training. Patients are also provided with information for safe disposal along with a sharps container in order to dispose of used sensors and applicators either via the DSN (if available) or via prescription from their GP. If you have not received this training please let us know.

The Health Board contacted the manufacturer Abbott regarding recycling, and they have advised:

The sensor and applicator has to be disposed of as clinical waste in a sharps container, but the remaining component parts can be recycled via household collections where applicable.

Sharps containers and the collection of, are undertaken by Health Courier Services, unfortunately they are not able to take recyclable materials so that would be the responsibility of the relevant local authority.

With regard to the recycling of the 'remaining component parts' mentioned above, you would need to contact your local council with regards to the types services they provide for the disposal of these parts.

The Health Board would further advise you to contact the company directly with regards to new technology advances and new expensive materials as it has no say over the materials etc. used in manufacture of these devices.