The Nevada State Health Division is reminding health care providers that the reuse of single use only medical devices, namely endocavity needle guides, during the performance of prostate biopsies places the health, safety and welfare of the public at risk for blood-borne pathogen transmissions such as Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, and HIV.

Single use only medical devices are not designed to be used for more than one patient, even if the devices are cleaned between use due to potential blood and tissue contamination. This contamination may result in transmission of already existing blood-borne pathogens from a previous patient.

What are endocavity needle guides?
Endocavity needle guides are attached to the exterior of an imaging instrument for viewing internal organs and structures. A needle passes through the guide, obtains a tissue sample and passes back through the needle guide to exit the body. The needle guide includes a slot configured to receive a needle shaft, the slot having an interior surface configured to retain the needle's shaft.

Recommendations and Information for Healthcare Professionals Regarding Single Use Only Endocavity Needle Guides
- Endocavity needle guides labeled for single use only are meant for use by a single patient only, and are not to be shared between patients.
- The thorough cleaning of single use medical devices with the use of hot water, scrubbing off of blood and tissue matter or soaked in Cidex is not acceptable in any circumstance or situation.
- Though using disposable needles guides may minimize the risk of infection transmission in transrectal prostate needle biopsies, improper use of the device- including trying to clean and reuse the device should never occur.
- Safe injection practices must be implemented at all times as the same risks may exist with shared use of any reusable injection device.
- Hospitals and other healthcare facilities should review their policies and educate their staff regarding the use of single use only medical devices.

Resources
Nevada State Health Division: Health.nv.gov
Article on Needle Guides: http://www.nebi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18400273
The One and Only Campaign: www.oneandonlycampaign.org

The Nevada State Health Division would like to thank and acknowledge those many providers throughout the state who strive for optimal patient safety through proper use and disposal of single use only items in their practice.

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