

Novo Nordisk expands efforts to improve PFS sustainability

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Novo Nordisk has expanded its ReMed programme to include Italy in an effort to reduce the environmental impact of medical waste



Credit Novo Nordisk

Novo Nordisk has expanded its ReMed programme to include Italy, following successful launches in the UK, Brazil, France, Japan and Denmark. ReMed is a scheme which allows for the return of used pre-filled syringes (PFS) so that they can be recycled. Niels Otterstrøm Jensen, Head of ReMed Programme at Novo Nordisk, announced in a [LinkedIn post](#) on 20th June that the take back scheme is now available in three Italian cities, Bologna, Parma and Torino.

According to Otterstrøm Jensen: “Italy is Novo Nordisk's 6th country to launch a take-back solution, and we are looking forward to following the development. Preparations for take-back launches are always very complex, and we rely on the collaboration with partners along our value chain.”

PFS already offer improved sustainability over the traditional method of filling syringes from single-dose vials as they not only remove the need for the disposable vials, but also the need to discard unused portions of medication.

Novo Nordisk is seeking to further improve on the sustainability of PFS by recycling the pre-filled pens, which could drastically reduce the amount of medical waste globally if such programmes are widely implemented. Currently, traditional syringes are not recycled and are either incinerated or end up in landfills. With around [16 billion injections being administered annually](#) worldwide, syringes make up a significant portion of global plastic waste. This issue has only been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, with an estimated 144,000 tonnes of additional waste being generated from administered vaccines.

Novo Nordisk allows for patients to either return their PFS to the pharmacy or mail them back directly, after which they are crushed and separated into different material fractions that undergo a series of processes to prepare the materials for new uses. The initiative is part of a wider effort by Novo Nordisk to achieve a net zero environmental impact across its entire value chain by 2045.

Otterstrøm Jensen has discussed efforts to advance injectable drug device recycling at the [Pre-Filled Syringes and Injectable Drug Devices Europe](#) conference several times in recent years. The conference will return in January 2025 featuring a range of industry leaders.

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- [Pre-Filled Syringes and Injectable Drug Devices East Coast](#)