

**Mark Drakeford AC / AM**  
**Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol**  
**Minister for Health and Social Services**



**Llywodraeth Cymru**  
**Welsh Government**

Ein cyf/Our ref: WAQs 67910-67915

Angela Burns AM  
Assembly Member for Carmarthen West & South Pembrokeshire  
14 Market Square,  
Narberth,  
Pembrokeshire  
SA67 7AU

11 November 2014

Dear Angela

Thank you for your Written Assembly Questions in connection with single use instruments. I am sorry that we were unable to respond within the set deadline.

Single use devices are designed to be used during a single treatment and then disposed of. They do not have to withstand the rigours of all the processes involved in decontamination. They are not intended to be decontaminated and used again – even on the same patient at a later stage. The clear medical advice is that single use instruments are single use for sound clinical reasons. Ensuring patient safety is paramount so reuse or recycling is neither recommended nor endorsed by the Welsh Government. We have therefore never encouraged the practice of re-using single use instruments. Indeed, there are implications for a health professional re-using a single use device under the Medical Devices Regulations.

A total of £5.3 million was spent on single use surgical instrumentation during 2013-14.

*Best wishes*

*Mark Drakeford*

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Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

English Enquiry Line 0845 010 3300  
Llinell Ymholiadau Cymraeg 0845 010 4400  
Correspondence.Mark.Drakeford@wales.gsi.gov.uk