

Laundry Policy

Target Group: Senior housekeepers Housekeepers Clinical care givers Catering	Version: 9 First version April 2010	First Issue Date: March 2010
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1.Introduction

The Laundry provides a reliable, cost-effective service to the hospital maintaining a supply of clean bed linen, towels, robes, oven cloths, tablecloths (catering department) and a personal laundry service for all resident patients.

2.Purpose

This Policy describes the extent of the service to be provided by the Laundry, records the main operating risks and the measures to be taken to manage those risks for the benefit of patients, Caregivers, visitors, and contractors.

3.Objectives of this Policy or Procedure

Hygiene and Infection prevention Control: This is often the most critical objective, especially in healthcare. A well-defined laundry policy aims to ensure that linens and garments are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected to prevent the spread of bacteria, viruses, and other pathogens.

Cleanliness and Presentation: To provide standards on the cleanliness and presentation of linens (like tablecloths, personal garments, and towels) which directly impact customer satisfaction and the hospital's image.

Resource Management and Cost-Effectiveness: To optimise the use of water, energy, detergents, and labour involved in laundry operations. This can lead to significant financial savings and contribute to environmental sustainability.

Inventory Control and Longevity of Items: To be able to help track the movement and lifespan of linens and garments. Proper handling, washing, and storage procedures can extend the life of these items, reducing the need for frequent replacements and associated costs.

Standardisation and Efficiency: The laundry policy ensures consistent procedures are followed by all personnel involved. This standardisation streamlines the laundry process, improves efficiency, and reduces errors.

Compliance with Regulations: Healthcare is subject to specific regulations regarding laundry practices to maintain hygiene and safety standards. This helps ensure compliance with these legal and regulatory requirements.

Caregivers' Safety: This policy sets out guidelines for the safe handling of soiled laundry, including the use of personal protective equipment, to protect laundry Caregivers, from potential hazards. We identify and manage operational risks effectively to ensure the safety and well-being of all service users. Patient and customer satisfaction is a priority, and we aim to provide clean linen and personal laundry to a high standard. Additionally, we regularly review and audit our laundering practices under the Infection prevention control (IPC) guidelines to ensure continuous improvement and adherence to best practices and service delivery.

4. Policy Statement

Holy Cross Hospital employs a dedicated Laundry & Housekeeping team to maintain cleanliness and hygiene. The team works under the direction of the Director of Operations and in close collaboration with the Facilities and Housekeeping Lead, Senior Housekeepers, and the clinical team to ensure high standards of cleanliness and infection control.

5. Scope

This policy applies to all housekeeping Caregivers, clinical Caregivers and any contractors involved in laundry services at Holy Cross Hospital.

6. Responsibilities

Chief Executive (CEO):

Ultimately responsible for the laundry services and standards

Director of Operations (DO):

Ensures robust systems and processes are in place.

Approves orders for new housekeeping and laundry equipment.

Oversees the implementation of Health and Safety practices and compliance.

Ensures continuous improvement and adherence to best practices and service delivery.

Reports to both Leadership Team and Advisory Committee on Housekeeping and Laundry compliance.

Facilities and Housekeeping Lead (FHL):

Manages day to day housekeeping and laundry operations.

Ensures services are maintained to a high standard by providing effective staffing by organising the staff rota. Including holiday and sickness cover.

Identifies the need for new housekeeping and laundry equipment and obtains approval for purchases.

Compiles and maintains an inventory of Laundry and Housekeeping equipment, including maintenance records. Quarterly audits completed and report sent to DO.

Prepares monthly reports referencing audits results, actions taken and recommendations.

Ensures housekeeping team training is arranged, delivered, and recorded, with refresher training planned.

Collaborates with the Clinical Team to meet patients' needs regarding room moves or new patient arrivals laundry. To include deep cleans of their rooms including laundry areas.

Senior housekeepers:

Supervises housekeeping and laundry Caregivers and ensures standards are met.

Ensure that there is adequate cover assigned to the laundry and will assist the Caregivers as required.

Prepare monthly reports to FHL referencing audits results for their areas of responsibility.

Monitor chemical and equipment levels for ordering and stock purposes.

Are proactive in reporting incidents and accidents.

Housekeeping and Laundry Team Guidance:

All clean linen must be stored off the floor in a clean, closed cupboard, and must be segregated from used / soiled linen. Linen cupboard doors must be kept closed to prevent airborne contamination. Linen must not be stored within the sluice or bathroom.

If taken into a patient room and not used, linen must then be laundered before use.

Clean linen must be in a good state of repair, as tearing or roughness can damage the patient's skin. The condition of linen in use should be monitored by the laundry Caregivers,

Ward-named laundry carts have separate clean and soiled garments carts, these are to be cleaned in line with IPC guidelines. The carts area segregated on entrance to the laundry to prevent clean and soiled clothing becoming cross contaminated. Clean linen is on one side and soiled to be washed lined is stored on the opposite side.

Recording of and maintaining cleaning standards throughout the laundry process and within the laundry area.

Clinical Caregivers:

It is the responsibility of the person disposing of the linen to ensure that it is segregated appropriately. Linen bags should not be overfilled or filled with wet heavy linen; this should be

separated into smaller amounts in each bag. All linen can be categorised into the following three groups:

- a) Clean or unused linen – White linen bags
- b) Soiled or infected linen – Red linen bags
- c) Dirty, non-infectious, or used linen – White linen bags

7. Definitions

Housekeeping: Activities related to cleaning and maintaining the hospital environment.

Laundry: Activities related to cleaning and laundering of patients' linen, towels, and personal garments

Infection Prevention Control: Policy and Procedures to prevent the spread of infections.

COSHH: Control of Substances Hazardous to Health regulations.

Risk Management: The process of identifying, assessing, and controlling risks to ensure the safety and well-being of patients, caregiver, and visitors.

Health and Safety Legislation: Laws and regulations designed to protect the health and safety of individuals in the workplace.

Audits: Systematic and independent examination of records, processes, operations, or compliance with regulations to provide an objective assessment and assurance. The goal is to verify the accuracy, fairness, and reliability of the information being examined and to identify any discrepancies, weaknesses, or areas for improvement.

8. Policy or Procedure Implementation

The laundry team follows detailed procedures for handling, washing, and storing linen. Regular training and audits are conducted to ensure compliance with standards.

8.1 Cleaning Schedule

The laundry team follows a detailed cleaning schedule that outlines the frequency and methods for cleaning several types of linen. This schedule includes daily, weekly, and monthly tasks to ensure all laundry is maintained to a high standard. Specific tasks include:

Daily Tasks: Washing and drying patient linen, personal clothing, and catering oven cloths and tablecloths.

Weekly Tasks: Deep cleaning of laundry equipment and storage areas.

Monthly Tasks: Comprehensive cleaning of curtains and other items requiring less frequent attention.

8.2 Cleaning Agents and Equipment

Laundry Caregivers are provided with appropriate cleaning agents and equipment to ensure effective cleaning and infection control. These should be fit for purpose in a healthcare setting from an approved supplier for all cleaning products.

Cleaning Agents: Detergents, disinfectants, and specialized cleaning solutions that meet health and safety standards.

Equipment: Washing machines, dryers, press, ironer, and other tools necessary for thorough cleaning.

8.3 Training and Development

Regular training sessions are conducted to ensure laundry Caregivers, are knowledgeable about the latest cleaning techniques and infection control procedures. Training includes:

Initial Training: Comprehensive induction training for new Caregivers, covering all aspects of laundry and safety protocols.

Ongoing Training: Regular updates and refresher courses on infection control, use of cleaning agents, and safe handling of equipment.

Specialized Training: Training on specific tasks such as handling hazardous substances (COSHH) and manual handling to prevent injuries.

8.4 Audits and Monitoring

To ensure compliance with the policy, regular audits and monitoring are conducted.

Routine Audits: Conducted by the Senior Housekeepers and FHL to assess the cleanliness and hygiene standards.

Feedback Mechanisms: Collecting feedback from Caregivers, and patients to identify areas for improvement, this is done using QR codes and Microsoft forms.

8.5 Reporting and Documentation

All laundry activities and audits are documented to maintain transparency and accountability. This includes:

Audit Reports: Detailed reports of audit findings, recommendations, and action plans for addressing any issues.

Training Records: Documentation of all training sessions attended by laundry and housekeeping Caregivers, certificates held by learning and development.

Incident Reports: Reporting any incidents using the hospital incident/accident form, completing, and handing to your line manager/HoD for investigation related to laundry activities, such as spills or breaches of infection control protocols.

Laundry Caregivers must adhere to health and safety regulations to prevent accidents and ensure a safe working environment.

Infection Prevention: Following procedures to prevent the spread of infections, including the use of protective equipment.

Electrical Safety: Ensuring all electrical equipment is regularly tested and used safely.

Manual Handling: Training on safe lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying, or moving techniques to prevent injuries.

COSHH Compliance: Proper handling, uses and storage of hazardous substances.

8.6 Equipment Purchase, Use, Maintenance, and Disposal

Identification and Approval: The FHL identifies the need for new equipment and obtains approval for purchases through the DO. This is recorded on the equipment database.

Risk Assessment and Training: FHL will risk assess equipment before first use, followed by arranged training for all Caregivers.

Maintenance Planning and Inventory: Equipment maintenance is planned at purchase and recorded, with an inventory compiled and reviewed annually.

Disposal: Laundry equipment is disposed of according to the Waste Disposal Policy at the end of its useful life and recorded on the equipment database

Ongoing Compliance: Regular risk assessments, maintenance, and proper disposal of laundry equipment are ensured in line with the Waste Disposal Policy.

8.7 Purchasing, Delivery, and Storage

The FHL ensures all arrangements for purchase, delivery, and storage comply with Hospital Policies.

8.8 Financial Management and Reporting

A monthly operating statement is prepared by the FHL and reported to the DO.

8.9 Sustainability and general waste stream reduction:

General Waste Audits:

Weekly and monthly Audits: Conduct regular waste audits to identify and address the main sources of general waste.

Feedback Systems: Implement feedback systems using QR codes throughout the hospital to understand why certain items are wasted and adjust cleaning schedules and training accordingly.

Procurement: Single supplier to reduce transportation frequency and associated emissions is used.

Bulk Purchasing: Supplies are purchased in bulk to reduce packaging waste and manage inventory more efficiently.

Recycling and Composting:

Recycling Programmes: Comprehensive recycling programmes for general, mixed plastics/recycling, cardboard/ paper, glass, and food in place.

Composting: Implement composting for organic waste to reduce landfill use.

Caregivers Training and Engagement:

Training Programmes: To educate housekeeping/laundry Caregivers, on waste reduction techniques and the importance of sustainability.

9.Regulatory Requirements/ References/Policies/Procedures

- National Standards of Healthcare Cleanliness (2021)
- HTM 01-04: Decontamination of linen for health and social care
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

- COSHH Regulations 2002
- DSEAR Regulations 2002
- Infection Control Manual
- Sharps and foreign object procedure – as per Sharps injury O:\Infection Prevention\Resources

10. Evaluation Measures

Routine audits by the Facilities and Housekeeping Lead and Senior Housekeepers.

Feedback from Caregivers and patients.

11. Related Documents

Infection prevention Control Manual: Details the guidelines, procedures, and best practices to prevent the spread of infections in various settings, most commonly healthcare environments.

COSHH Manual: Details all chemical cleaning products in use to describe the risks associated with use, disposable, spillage and fire within a risk assessment and safety data sheets which have been attached via hyperlink and Hard copies can be obtained from the FHL &DO.

Health and Safety Policy: Details the measures in place to protect the health and safety of employees, patients, and visitors within the hospital environment.

Waste Disposal Policy: Describes the processes for the safe and compliant disposal of General waste, mixed recycling, cardboard and paper, glass, food waste clinic non-hazardous and hazardous and WEEE (Waste electrical and electronic equipment)

HTM 01-04: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/decontamination-of-linen-for-health-and-social-care-htm-01-04/>

Risk Management Policy: Details the approach to identifying, assessing, eliminating, substituting, and controlling risks within the housekeeping & laundry operations to ensure safety and compliance.

Patient Survey: Provides methods for collecting and responding to feedback from patients and other service users to improve the quality of our housekeeping and laundry services.

Sharps and foreign object procedure: To prevent injury to Caregivers and damage to equipment from sharps or foreign objects inadvertently present in laundry.

Identify and Isolate: If the object is clearly visible and can be safely removed with tongs, place it in a sharp's container. If not, **do not attempt to remove it.**

- **Secure the Bag:** Close the bag carefully and securely.
- **Label (if possible):** If your facility has a system, label the bag (e.g., "SHARPS INSIDE").
- **Alert Supervisor:** Immediately inform your supervisor or the designated Caregiver.
- **Follow Disposal Procedures:** Your supervisor will guide you on the appropriate disposal for the entire bag, which may involve placing it in a sharps or biohazard container or specialized handling.
- **Document:** Complete any required incident reports.
- **Hand Hygiene:** Wash your hands thoroughly after handling the bag.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1: Cleaning tasks

Appendix 2: Cleaning records

Appendix 3: Sharps and foreign objects

Appendix 4: Audit Checklists

Appendix 5: Risk management

Appendix 6: Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Appendix 7: Clarify colour coding.

Appendix 1: Cleaning tasks

O:\Support Services\HOUSEKEEPING\MASTERS\HK TASKS

Appendix 2: Cleaning records (Microsoft forms)

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/DesignPageV2.aspx?origin=Marketing&groupid=285cbb32-1f23-4a16-b3a5-8a8bd697c001>

Appendix 3: Sharps and foreign objects

If the object is clearly visible and can be safely removed with tongs, place it in a sharp's container. If not, do not attempt to remove it.

Close the bag carefully and securely.

Alert Supervisor: Immediately inform your supervisor or the designated Caregivers.

Your supervisor will guide you on the appropriate disposal for the entire bag, which may involve placing it in a sharps or biohazard container or specialized handling.

Complete any required incident reports.

Wash your hands thoroughly after handling the bag.



Appendix 4- Audit checklists

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/DesignPageV2.aspx?origin=Marketing&groupid=d1494751-dac3-4a82-ad3d-ffe0d1b4845d>

Appendix 5– Risk management

Hazard	Measures to manage risk	Person responsible	Residual risk assessment
No staff available to operate machinery	All members of Housekeeping Dept have been trained in use of equipment	Facilities and housekeeping lead	Low
Machinery breakdown	There are 2 washing machines and 2 driers. All equipment regularly serviced under contract with PDS	Facilities and housekeeping lead	Low
Infection in Hospital being transmitted via laundry	Washing machines operate on a medical sluice this ensures that the required temperature is reached on all washes, including soiled or infectious. Colour coding system is used to ensure contaminated linen is kept separate from other laundry. There are separate ward bags and carts for clean and soiled linen.	Facilities and housekeeping lead	Low
Not enough clean linen is available to meet demands	There are adequate stocks of linen held in stock to ensure there is always enough clean linen. The laundry operates at weekend to ensure that back logs do not occur. An emergency supply of clean linen is held should a situation arise when higher than usual demands are made on the department (for example – epidemic of D&V)	Facilities and housekeeping lead	Low

Appendix 6 – Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Tool

To be considered and where judged appropriate, completed and attached to any policy.

document when submitted to the appropriate committee for consideration and approval.

Policy Title	Laundry Policy	
	Yes/No	Comments

	Does the policy/guidance affect one group less or more favorably than another based on:		
	Race	No	
	Gender reassignment	No	
	Marriage & civil partnership	No	
	Pregnancy & maternity	No	
	Ethnic origins (including Romani people and travelers)	No	
	Nationality	No	
	Sex	No	
	Culture	No	
	Religion or belief	No	
	Sexual orientation	No	
	Age	No	
	Disability- both mental and physical impairments	No	
2.	Is there any evidence that some groups are affected differently?	No	
3.	Is the impact of the policy/guidance likely to be negative?	No	
4.	If so, can the impact be avoided?	N/A	
5.	What alternatives are there to achieving the policy/guidance without the impact?	N/A	
6.	Can we reduce the impact by taking different action?	N/A	
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7.	If you have identified potential discrimination, are any exceptions valid, legal, and/or justifiable?	N/A	

Appendix 7: - Clarify Colour Coding Practice:



Your local contact for hospital cleaning is: