



STANDARDS OF DRESS POLICY

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Document History			
Version Changes	Date	Author	Version
Policy updated to reflect current guidance. Item 3.7 Neck ties added. Added items to be tucked away as this better reflects the position of infection control. Item 4.1 and 4.2 the word 'must' added Item 4.2 refers to National Infection Prevention and control manual Item 4.2 sentence added re neck ties Item 4.3 removal of statement relating to pin watches and badges following clarification from Health and Safety Added in section on laundering to reflect national guidance		C.Stokoe/ H Bryers	3
	Sept 2014	H Bryers	2

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to set out NHS Highland's policy with regard to an organisational standard of dress which is necessary in order to:
- Convey a professional image of NHS Highland and individual staff
 - Give patients confidence in NHS Highland staff and Standard of Care
 - Support Infection Control Policy and Prevention measures
 - Have regard to Health and Safety considerations for all staff.
- 1.2 NHS Highland considers the way employees dress and their appearance is of significant importance in portraying a professional image to all users of its services, whether patients, visitors, clients or colleagues.
- 1.3 Whilst NHS Highland recognises the diversity across the workforce, consideration should be given to the impact standards of dress might have on others. This policy is not exhaustive but seeks to provide guidance of acceptable and unacceptable standards of clothing and appearance at work and all staff should use common sense in adhering to the principles underpinning the policy.

2. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Staff

This policy applies to all Health or Social care staff. It also applies to volunteers and students, locums and independent contractors working or studying in a health or social care setting associated with NHS Highland. If a member of staff has a particular concern or requirement that needs to be taken into consideration that must be raised in the first instance with their manager. Exceptions to some elements of this policy may apply where there is a dress requirement arising from an employee's faith.

2.2 Managers

All managers have a responsibility to ensure staff comply with the requirements of this policy. All managers will ensure they raise awareness of this policy amongst their teams. Managers should seek advice from Human Resources if they have queries arising from an employee's dress requirement / preferences.

2.3 NHS Highland

NHS Highland will ensure this policy is included in organisational induction processes and will ensure it is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect other policy as it arises.

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3. GENERAL STANDARDS OF DRESS (Applying to **ALL** Staff Groups)

- 3.1 Staff required to wear the National Uniform will do so without modification or embellishment to the standard tunic / trouser or polo shirt as issued, unless they have discussed and agreed requirements of their faith with their manager. Staff issued with a uniform should comply with the NHS Scotland Uniform Policy.
- 3.2 Where there are the options of not wearing a uniform or where none is provided, staff should wear clothing and footwear suitable to the task, which complies with Health and Safety requirements in their area of work, is of a good standard of cleanliness and repair, permits freedom of movement and does not inhibit the use of equipment.
- 3.3 Staff are required to dress appropriately. All clothes should be clean and presentable and consistent with presenting a professional image. Torn clothing is unacceptable. Where a uniform is provided this must be worn and a freshly laundered uniform is required for each shift.
- 3.4 Staff must dress in a manner that is sensitive to the diversity of patients, visitors, and other employees. Staff with specific dress requirements relating to faith should discuss the matter with their manager if they feel unable to comply with the Standards of Dress Policy.
- 3.5 All staff are expected to maintain a high standard of personal hygiene and appearance, which demonstrates to other staff, patients and members of the public, the professional image of the service. Make up and jewellery should be discreet and comply with Health and Safety and Infection Control requirements appropriate to the area of work.
- 3.6 Staff who smoke should comply with NHS Highland's Tobacco Policy, and should note that clothing or uniforms which smell of tobacco are unacceptable.
- 3.7 Neck ties/ Lanyards that are used for example for name badges should be tucked away or when providing hands on care to a patient or in a clinical area in order to minimise the risk of infection.

4. SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS for Staff Working in **DIRECT CLINICAL** Patient Care Settings

- 4.1 Staff who are provided with a uniform must dress in a manner that inspires public confidence which includes:
Wearing a Uniform of a smart appearance. Scrubs may not be used as a replacement uniform and may only be worn in designated areas

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- Hair tied back off the collar if hair is exposed.
- Wearing a name or other identification badge. Name and identification badges should be attached to uniform / clothing with badge clasps where possible.
- Changing into and out of uniforms at work (where changing facilities are available).
- Staff must refrain from undertaking personal activities in public such as shopping, whilst wearing a uniform (unless this is with/ for a patient / client as part of their working duties e.g. care at home, therapy and rehabilitation).

4.2 Staff must ensure all appropriate steps are taken to minimise the risk of the infections and cross contamination for patients and the public and follow NHS National Infection Prevention and Control Manual.

- Staff delivering direct patient care should adopt “Bare Below the Elbows” recommendations. Unless otherwise specified in this policy, long sleeved white coats will not be worn. The exposure of the arms is an essential part of hand and wrist hygiene however it is acceptable for staff to cover their arms when not delivering direct patient care e.g. when travelling between hospital departments or client location within the community.
- Neck ties should be tucked in, or removed when delivering direct patient care.
- Staff will keep their nails short and clean, not wear fake nails, nail extensions, nail polish or watches / hand / wrist jewellery (other than a plain wedding band or one other plain band) when providing direct patient care.
- Certain staff e.g. staff working in laboratories or plaster room staff, may wear long sleeved white tunics or gloves as a PPE, but will adopt “Bare Below the Elbow” principles when delivering direct patient care.
- Where for reasons of faith members of staff wish to cover their forearms or wear a bracelet when not engaged in direct patient care, they should ensure that bracelets or sleeves can be pushed up and secured in place for hand washing and direct patient care activity. In certain circumstances the use of disposable over sleeves may be appropriate but must be disposed of between each patient and strict application of hand hygiene must be observed before and after use.

4.3 Staff should ensure that all appropriate Health and Safety requirements appropriate to the area are met. For those staff providing direct patient care this should include:

- Staff should not wear jewellery such as necklaces or wristwatches. A plain wedding or other similar band is permissible.
- Single plain (no stones) stud earrings are permissible; staff should avoid visible body piercing and multiple / large earrings.

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- Footwear must be appropriate to ensure a safe environment for staff and patients. Staff should wear plain, soft soled shoes which cover and protect the foot and toes.
- Heel strap must be worn on all clog type shoes which must also conform to the specification above. N.B. Note exceptions in surgical areas (see below).
- Trainers which have holes or clog type shoes with holes which are not enclosed are not appropriate for clinical areas.
- Scissors and pens must not be carried in an outer breast pocket as they may fall out when leaning over a patient.

Laundering of Uniforms

Uniforms contaminated with blood or bodily fluids should be washed by a hospital laundry services where these are available. Where this is not possible uniforms should be laundered separately, at 65°C, then tumble dried or ironed following line drying.

Non-Contaminated uniforms can be laundered at home. Uniforms should be placed in a clear polythene bag and the bag closed. Laundering, can occur with other items, there is no necessity to wash the items separately however one of the following processes must be used as a minimum: -

- wash and thermal disinfection at 71°C for 3 mins.
- wash and thermal disinfection at 60°C for 10 mins in full wash

4.4 Care Home Staff

- Care Home staff are not currently required to wear a uniform: this is under review.
- Care Home staff who work in the kitchen are expected to wear an appropriate NHS uniform. Drivers supporting care homes wear hi vis jackets provided. Appropriate personal protective clothing should also be provided for, and worn by staff undertaking gardening work.
- Staff are requested to dress in a manner suitable for this environment. The manager may need to give guidance to staff on a one to one basis when required.
- Staff are expected to wear protective clothing such as aprons and gloves when carrying out personal care tasks particularly if the resident has an infection.

4.5 Care at Home Staff

Care at home staff are required to wear a uniform and are expected to adhere to the General Standards of Dress applying to all staff and the specific requirements appropriate to staff working in direct clinical patient care settings

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5. SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS for Working in MENTAL HEALTH Settings

- 5.1 Staff are expected to apply the general dress code principles in their choice of dress in Mental Health / Community Care settings. The duties and working environment in some Mental Health / Community Care working environments may require a more casual approach to dress when delivering certain rehabilitation activities. Staff may wear long sleeved shirts where this does not breach existing Infection Control policies. A Risk Assessment should be completed where staff groups are planning any variance from this policy. In some settings e.g. Care of the Elderly Inpatient settings or where the risk of infection transmission is higher, the application of the direct clinical patient care settings guidance will apply. Any variation to the Dress Code should be agreed with the manager of the service or team.

6. SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS for Staff Working in THEATRES, LABOUR SUITES and OTHER EQUIVALENT Settings

- 6.1 Scrubs and specific clogs are worn in these settings to support Infection Control policies. These items are not uniform and should only be worn while working in these specific clinical areas.
- 6.2 Scrubs should not be worn in general clinical environments or as an alternative to the national uniform. Staff should change into uniform or their own clothes when undertaking other duties including meetings, and also for meal breaks.
- 6.3 Uniforms for designated areas eg operating theatres, must not be worn out with these areas unless due to clinical necessity in which case the uniform will be changed upon return to that area.

7. REFERENCES

Department of Health (2010) Uniforms and Work Wear: Guidance on uniform and work wear policies for NHS Employers.

Scottish Government (2008) CEL 53 NHS Scotland Dress Code

CEL (42) 2010 issued 21st Dec 2010

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