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Policy Title:		Staff Dress Code and Uniform Policy	
Executive Summary:		This policy sets the standard that Kettering General Hospital NHS Foundation Trust staff must adhere to in regards to their standards of dress, uniform and personal appearance. The policy sets out minimum standards of dress in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confirm a professional image of the NHS, the Trust and individual staff.• Inspire patient and public confidence.• Enable and support high standards of practice in Infection Prevention and Control.	
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1. Introduction

This policy sets out the expectations of the Trust in relation to the wearing of Trust uniforms and corporate dress code. The Trust considers the way employees dress and their appearance is of significant importance in portraying a professional image to all of its service users: patients, visitors, clients or colleagues. The policy sets out minimum standards of dress in order to:

- Confirm a professional image of the NHS, the Trust and to individual staff, patients and their relatives.
- Inspire patient and public confidence.
- Enable and support high standards of practice in Infection Prevention and Control.

2. Purpose

The adoption of corporate standards for wearing uniforms, clothing worn and personal accessories/items at work is an important issue for the Trust for the following reasons:

- It reflects a corporate identity which demonstrates a smart and professional image for patients, their relatives and staff.
- It provides a consistency of identification with Kettering General Hospital NHS Foundation Trust for service users and their families/visitors.
- It offers protection to staff by ensuring that the uniform codes and non-uniforms codes adhere to health and safety principles and guidelines and are appropriate to the area of work undertaken, minimising the risk of infection, whilst maintaining staff and patient safety.
- Current identity badges assist in ensuring the security of both staff and patients.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 Trust: the Trust has overall responsibility to have processes in place to ensure that all clinical and nonclinical frontline and corporate staff are aware of this policy and adhere to its requirements by:

- Providing strategic leadership in relation to the implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring the provision of appropriate resources, training and information to all staff involved in clinical duties.

3.2 Consultants, Clinical Directors/Managers, Heads of Nursing, Managers, Matrons, Lead Nurses, Ward Sisters: are responsible for

- Ensuring own familiarity with this policy and procedures.
- Ensuring that staff within their responsibility have read and understood this policy.
- Ensuring compliance with this policy within their clinical teams, including leading by example.

- Ensuring temporary staff (bank, agency, locum, independent contractors and visiting healthcare professionals) are made aware and uphold the standards set out in this policy.
- Monitoring the standards of uniforms/dress code for staff when on duty.
- Purchasing uniforms from the approved Trust supplier via e-Procurement.
- Applying this policy in a fair and consistent manner with regard to health and safety of all employees, service users and members of the public.
- Treating any concerns or issues raised under the scope of this policy seriously and sensitively.
- Seeking advice from HR or union representatives when necessary.
- Carrying out risk assessments ensuring arrangements are in place for effective planning, control, monitoring, organisation and review of protective measures.

3.3 Infection Prevention and Control Team are responsible for:

- Supporting the Trust, clinical and non- clinical managers to strengthen the compliance of this policy within their teams regarding best practice for infection prevention and control.
- Providing advice, guidelines and education to support clinical areas as required.

3.4 All Employees are responsible for:

- Maintaining awareness and compliance with this policy in order to protect the health and safety of patients and colleagues.
- Maintaining high standards of uniform and dress code when representing the Trust.
- Ensuring clothes and uniforms are clean and free from contamination, un-creased and in good repair.
- Wearing clothing which is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative.

3.5 Staff from other Trusts working on site within Kettering General Hospital Foundation Trust must comply with this Staff Dress Code and Uniform Policy.

4. Processes and Procedures

4.1 Non Clinical Staff / Clinical Staff In Non Uniform

There are certain staff that do not wear uniform, but spend their working time in the clinical area, and some delivering direct patient care, e.g. Medical Staff. The sections below includes Medical Staff, Ward Clerks and other clinical area workers that are not required to wear a uniform.

Clothing

Clothing must project a positive professional image and must not cause embarrassment or offence to colleagues, patients, other staff or visitors to the Trust.

Clothes must be clean and tidy and in good repair.

Clothing must be modest and appropriate, for example: no spaghetti straps, crop tops showing midriffs, no low cut tops or transparent garments, no miniskirts or very short skirts, no logo's/motif's on tops or trousers. Denim clothing such as jeans, leggings and jeggings including other types of leggings/jeggings are not permitted. Baseball caps and other inappropriate headwear are not permitted in the clinical areas.

Clothing must be sufficiently loose to allow a full range of movement and must not hinder moving and handling procedures. Clinical staff who do not wear a uniform should not wear any loose clothing such as unsecured ties, draped scarves or similar items as this type of clothing may make contact with the patient and may be a vehicle for transmitting infection

In clinical areas if ties are worn, they must be securely tucked into shirts. Staff must consider removing ties and scarves, especially if in an in-patient setting where there is a risk of violence and aggression and the clothing items present potential ligatures.

Long trousers extending to the floor are not permitted due to Infection Prevention and Control standards. The wearing of shorts is not permitted in clinical areas such as ward areas etc.

Short sleeves or rolled up sleeves are necessary when working in a clinical area to enable high standards of hand hygiene. See the Department of Health's "bare below the elbow" guidance: NICE (CG139).

Where cardigans are worn they must be in a good state of repair and should be removed when carrying out any clinical procedure or patient assessments.

Sikh men are permitted to wear a turban and Muslim women are permitted to wear a Hijab, (unless there is a health and safety reason). Sleeve protectors must be worn if jewellery cannot be removed due to religious reasons.

Footwear

All employees' shoes must be clean and in good state of repair. Croc style footwear, open toed, sling backs, flip-flops and high heels are not permitted within the clinical areas due to the increased risk of injury. It is necessary to wear shoes appropriate to the environment and duties so that damage to feet would be minimal in the event of an accident.

All staff delivering direct patient care should wear leather shoes that can be polished or cleaned with a disposable wipe. Shoes that are fabric are not acceptable as these offer little protection from sharps injuries/hazards.

When working in areas that require safety shoes, these should be worn at all times. If specialist footwear is worn these will be classed as PPE and dealt with under the Policy for the

Provision and use of Workplace Equipment. PPE is provided by the Trust and staff should not provide their own. If staff are uncertain they must check with their line manager.

Hair and Make-up

Make-up should be kept to a minimum and kept to a professional standard for example: long false eyelashes etc. are not allowed.

Camouflage make-up may be permitted for medical reasons. Temporary marking/body art for religious or cultural reasons can be permitted.

Nail varnish is permitted if staff do not provide clinical care. Staff providing clinical care should have short clean nails with no nail varnish.

Hair should be clean, neat and tidy at all times.

Hair fastenings should be discreet and appropriate without adornment. In clinical areas, hair should be tied back so that it does not fall forward when undertaking clinical duties.

Beards and moustaches should be neat and tidy. Hair colour should remain professional with no additional bright colours.

Tattoos

Any potentially offensive and/or intimidating tattoos should be covered in a way that complies with the Trust's Hand Hygiene Procedure. Wearing long sleeves prevents thorough hand hygiene practices and are more likely to become contaminated during work activities. Any recent tattoos must be covered with a waterproof dressing in accordance with Infection Prevention and Control Policy (IPC02).

Facial and Body Piercings

Ear piercing should be one piercing per ear with small single studs in place.

Nose and tongue piercings are not permitted and should be removed if working within the clinical area or covered.

Body piercings are only an infection risk when new and should be covered appropriately.

Body piercings are allowed so long as they are covered for example belly button etc. and do not present a safety or a risk in the work area.

Jewellery

Rings, bracelets, necklaces and earrings should be kept to a minimum and remain professional. These items of jewellery must be removed if providing direct patient care for example: long dangling necklaces/large pendants and earrings, all bracelets and stoned rings. A plain metal wedding band or band for religious beliefs with no stones is permitted when working clinically.

Watches

Wrist watches must not be worn by any member of staff that have responsibility for patient contact due to the risk of causing injury to patients during patient manual handling procedures and impedes good hand washing technique.

Medic Alert or Sikh Kara bracelet must be pushed up the arm and secured in place during hand washing and direct contact patient care activity.

An appropriate fob watch may be worn and attached to the clothing of those staff working in a clinical area.

Badges

Badges with name, job role and a recognisable image of the staff member are not identity badges but are to be worn for security purposes and for access to areas within the hospital. However these are classed as identity badges for non clinical staff. Lanyards must be kept clean on in good order for non-clinical staff. Lanyards must not be worn by staff providing direct patient care.

A badge of a professional organisation or trade union may be worn. Approved national campaign badges may be worn at the time of the campaign.

4.2 All Staff Wearing Uniforms

Uniforms are provided by the Trust as protective clothing for use on duty and remains the property of Kettering General Hospital NHS Foundation Trust. The staff should expect to be challenged by managers/leaders and the general public if they do not adhere to this policy.

The Trust expects all staff wearing a Trust uniform to act in a professional manner at all times with regard to how they present themselves to the general public and patients, adhering to the Trusts Care Values. This includes

- Not smoking on Hospital premises or when in uniform. The Trust has a 'Smoke Free Ground' Policy which states that staff may not smoke in any of the Trust buildings, premises or grounds. Staff must not smoke whilst in uniform and must also ensure they do not smell of smoke when coming into work.
- Not chewing gum on duty (consideration may be given to staff chewing nicotine gum in an attempt to stop smoking).
- Not wearing uniform out of the workplace in public areas and whenever possible to change out of a uniform before leaving work. Staff travelling to and from work must have their uniform covered by outdoor wear when going into public places to maintain professional appearance and cleanliness. Staff are not permitted to wear their uniform socially outside the workplace or undertake social activities wearing a uniform, this includes shopping etc.

The wearing of uniform outside the Trust is only permitted when on specific Trust duties e.g. transferring patients to other hospitals or attending meetings in a clinical or official capacity.

The Trust will aim to meet requirements of cultural or religious wear or recommendations from Occupational Health where possible.

Supply of Uniforms

Working frequency	
Full time	5 items- 3 tunics and 2 trousers or 5 dresses
Part time	2 tunics and 1 trouser or 2 dresses
Once a week/ occasional	1 tunic and 1 trouser or 1 dress

* Departments with highly immune-compromised patients will have local requirements and must be agreed by the Matron.

Clothing

All staff are required to wear a clean (washed at a temperature of at least 60 degrees), un-creased and fit for purpose uniform for every shift/working day. Long sleeves prevent thorough hand hygiene procedures and are more likely to become contaminated during work activities. Staff must remove long sleeved clothing or roll up long sleeves before undertaking any direct 'hands on' patient care.

Arms should be "bare below the elbow" to allow for cleanliness and enable easy hand cleaning as per the Department of Health's "bare below the elbow" guidance. Please refer to the Trust's Hand Hygiene Procedure, Infection Prevention and Control Policy: Standard Precautions IPC1.

No cardigan or jumper can be worn when undertaking clinical duties. Vest, T-shirts or undergarments should not be visible

Buckles or belts may be worn with dresses as per staff member's role but must be removed when giving direct patient contact and when undertaking clinical duties.

Tights must be black/grey or neutral with uniform dresses and socks must be black/navy when wearing trousers and tunics. Between the months of May and September bare legs may be permitted in hot environments following authorisation by the direct clinical line manager. The wearing of shorts is not permitted in clinical areas such as ward areas etc. However, in extreme temperatures this may be negotiated with line managers in departments such as supplies/portering etc.

For Theatre Scrub policy please see link below:

<http://kghintranet/Docs/Policies/publishedpp/SUR03%20Theatre%20Attire%20Policy.pdf>

Footwear

Footwear must be safe, sensible and appropriate for the duties undertaken and have regard to Health and Safety considerations. Therefore, Croc style footwear, open toed shoes, sling backs, flip-flops and high heels are not permitted within the clinical areas.

Shoes should be:

- Clean and in good state of repair
- Flat, plain, non-slip soft soles/soft heels and closed over the foot and toes for protection from spills and dropped objects etc.
- Black with matching laces.
- Shoes with trainer sole may be worn where appropriate to the work area but must be plain black leather, or leather look material, waterproof and have no white sole, or coloured logo on display.
- All shoes should support the foot and slip-on, lace-up or Velcro fastening style of footwear are acceptable.
- Suede or fabric shoes are not acceptable as these cannot be polished or cleaned with a disposable wipe.
- When working in areas that require safety shoes, these should be worn at all times.
- Staff with specific foot conditions are able to wear recommended footwear by Occupational Health Department or their own GP/hospital department with written confirmation and recommendations to ensure their own safety at work.

Badges

Badges with name, job role and a recognisable image of the staff member are not identify badges but are be worn for security purposes and for access to areas within the hospital. Lanyards must not be worn by staff providing direct patient care. A badge of a professional organisation or trade union may be worn. Approved national campaign badges may be worn at the time of the campaign.

Hair and Make-up

When in uniform hair should be clean, neat, tidy and well groomed. Hair should be tied back so that it does not rest on collar of the uniform or fall forward when undertaking clinical duties. Hair fastenings should be discreet and appropriate without adornment. Hair colour should remain professional with no additional bright colours.

Camouflage make-up may be permitted for medical reasons. Temporary marking/body art for religious or cultural reasons can be permitted.

Male staff must be clean shaven or ensure that their beards and moustache's are trimmed, clean, neat and tidy. Consideration will be given to staff with religious beliefs and they should discuss this with their line manager. If for religious reasons, the beard must not be cut (eg Sikhism) it should be tied and rolled to a short length using a cord in the manner traditional to that religion.

The wearing of temporary false eyelashes is not permitted.

Nail varnish, nail extensions and false nails must not be worn in the clinical area. Fingernails must be clean and short to prevent scratching injuries to patients.

Headwear must be of plain colour appropriate to uniform e.g. blue, black, and white, when worn as religious or cultural headwear.

Jewellery

Wristwatches/ bracelets and other hand/wrist jewellery **must not be worn** in the clinical areas or providing direct patient contact as these compromise hand hygiene. These may become contaminated during work activities and also prevent thorough hand hygiene procedures. Fob watches may be worn within clinical areas and when giving direct patient care and must be cleaned with a disposable wipe for infection prevention and control purposes.

Medic Alert or Sikh Kara bracelet must be pushed up the arm and secured in place during hand washing and direct contact patient care activity.

Rings should be one plain metal band only with no stones in place when dealing directly with patient care due to infection prevention and control and prevention of scratching/abrasion injuries to the patients.

Necklaces must not be worn when giving direct patient care.

Earrings may be worn but they must be small, plain studded earrings. Hooped earrings and earrings that hang below the ear are not permitted in the clinical areas and whilst giving direct patient care.

No other visible jewellery may be worn when giving direct patient care e.g.: ankle bracelets etc.

Tattoos

Any potentially offensive and or intimidating tattoos should be covered in a way that complies with the Trusts Hand Hygiene Procedure. Wearing long sleeves prevents thorough hand washing procedures. Any new tattoos must be appropriately covered with a waterproof dressing in accordance with the Infection Control and Prevention Policy as they are more likely to become contaminated during work activities.

Facial and Body Piercing

Ear piercing should be one piercing per ear with small single studs in place.

Nose and tongue piercings are not permitted for those staff in clinical areas and should be removed when on duty or covered.

Body piercings are only an infection risk when new and should be covered appropriately. Body piercings are allowed so long as they are covered for example belly button etc. and do not present a safety or a risk in the work area.

5. Respect for Diversity

5.1 Individual staff that are required to wear something that potentially contravenes this policy, for example for religious reasons culture or perhaps due to a disability, should discuss this in confidence with their line manager. Please note the Department of Health provides specific advice on Spiritual Care Provision in the NHS: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/culture-spirituality-and-religion>

Agreement for the way forward must be confirmed in writing and must comply with all policies relating to infection prevention and control.

5.2 The Trust believes it is important to recognise and support equality in employment and due consideration will be given. However, health and safety, and infection prevention and control issues are paramount.

6. Monitoring Compliance with this policy.

6.1 All individuals identified in section 3 of this policy are expected to adhere to the dress code/uniform standards within the policy.

6.2 Consultants, Clinical Directors/Managers, Heads of Nursing, Managers, Matrons, Lead Nurses, and Ward Sisters must agree for their areas local protocol for standards of dress within the parameters of this policy. This must be disseminated effectively to their teams/staff and ensure, through team meetings of existing staff and local induction for new staff, that staff and teams understand and adhere to this policy.

6.3 If individual members of staff do not comply with this policy, line managers will discuss the issue informally and agree a way forward.

6.4 Staff may be asked to return home to change, in such circumstances staff will be expected to make up any time lost. Alternatively, staff may be asked to remove any items that are not acceptable and should not be worn again.

6.5 If despite these measure listed above, an individual member of staff continue not to comply with this policy, the issue will be addressed through the Trust's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

6.6 The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through the following

- Outcome of patient and staff survey
- Overview of any disciplinary or grievance issues
- Complaints
- Areas/wards/teams local uniform audits.
- Ward Accreditation

6.7 This policy will be reviewed in three years following ratification. An earlier review can take place should exceptional circumstances arise or new guidance is issued resulting in part or all of this policy being not fit for purpose.

7. References

National Patient Safety Agency. (2004). *Patient Safety Alert 4 Clean Hands Help to Save Lives*. Available at: www.npsa.nhs.uk/

IPC02 Infection Prevention and Control Policy. (2017). Kettering General Hospital Foundation Trust.

IPC1 Standard Precautions. (2017). Kettering General Hospital Foundation Trust.

Department of Health England. (2010). "Uniforms and Workwear: an evidence- based document on the wearing and laundering of uniforms" Available at <http://www.dh.gov.uk/publications>

NHS Wales. (2010). All Wales NHS Dress Code, Free to lead, free to care.

Department of Health. (2007). 'Uniforms and Workwear: An evidence base for developing local policy'.

British Medical Association. (2018). Dress codes at work.
<https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/employment/contracts/consultant-contracts/dress-codes>

APPENDIX 1**Staff Dress Code and Uniform Policy
Addendum during Coronavirus Pandemic**

The Trust continues to receive concerns and complaints regarding staff non-adherence with the current policy. This is within the context of the Coronavirus pandemic, current concern over rising local incidence and the potential for local lockdown escalation.

Public & staff concerns / complaints relate to infection prevention & control of the virus both within and outside the hospital environment but also impact on the Trust's reputation. The concerns specifically relate to staff members wearing uniform outside the hospital environment whilst travelling to or from work.

As a result the following addendum to the current policy has been agreed.

The wearing of a uniform or scrubs whilst travelling to or from the Trust is NOT permitted. If you are a mobile worker travelling from location to location in the community you may wear your uniform throughout your work day. Non-work activity should not be undertaken whilst in uniform eg shopping.

If an individual member of staff continues not to comply with this policy, the issue will be addressed through the Trust's Disciplinary Policy