



Community Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for General Practice

(also suitable for adoption by other healthcare providers,
e.g. Dental Practice, Podiatry)

Laundry including uniforms

LAUNDRY INCLUDING UNIFORMS

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Organisation:

Signed: 

Job Title:

Date Adopted:

Review Date:

If your organisation would like to exclude or include any additional points to this document, please include below. Please note, the Community IPC Team cannot endorse or be held responsible for any addendums.

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1. Introduction

The use of linen such as blankets, pillowcases, fabric hand towels in General Practice is not recommended as it is not practical to launder items between each patient. Best practice is to use disposable paper products, e.g. paper towels, couch roll.

2. Curtains

Fabric curtains and screens can be used, these should be laundered by a professional laundry service on a documented planned schedule, e.g. 6 monthly or laundered immediately if visibly soiled.

Disposable curtains if used should be changed every 6 months or immediately if visibly soiled. The date the curtain is put up should be documented.

3. Pillows and blankets

Pillows should be in a sealed wipeable cover with no tears and should be cleaned with a detergent wipe after use.

Fabric pillow cases and 'modesty' blankets are not recommended as it is not practical to launder them after each patient use. Disposable couch roll should be used to cover the pillow or maintain the patient's modesty for procedures where this is required and disposed of after use.

4. Staff uniforms and workwear

- Always use personal protective equipment, e.g. disposable apron, to prevent contamination of uniform and workwear.
- Uniforms and workwear worn by staff when carrying out their duties should be clean, fit for purpose and support good hand hygiene.
- Uniforms and workwear should be laundered separately from other clothing on a hot wash cycle at the highest temperature that the fabric will tolerate.
- Garments should be dried thoroughly. Tumble drying or ironing will further reduce the small number of micro-organisms present after washing.

- It is not good practice to wear neckties/lanyards (other than bow-ties) during direct patient care activity. Ties have been shown to be contaminated by pathogens, can accidentally come into contact with patients and are rarely laundered.

5. Infection Prevention and Control resources, education and training

The Community Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) Team have produced a wide range of innovative educational and IPC resources designed to assist your Practice in achieving compliance with the *Health and Social Care Act 2008* and CQC registration requirements.

These resources are either free to download from the website or available at a minimal cost covering administration and printing:

- Over 20 IPC Guidance documents (Policies) for General Practice
- 'Preventing Infection Workbook for General Practice'
- 'IPC CQC Inspection Preparation Pack for General Practice'
- IPC audit tools, posters, leaflets and factsheets
- 'IPC Advice Bulletin for GP Practice Staff'

In addition, we hold educational study events in North Yorkshire and can arrange bespoke training packages and 'Mock IPC CQC Inspections'. Prices vary depending on your requirements and location.

Further information on these high quality evidence-based resources is available at www.infectionpreventioncontrol.co.uk.

6. References

Department of Health (2015) *The Health and Social Act 2008: Code of Practice for the prevention and control of infections and related guidance*

Department of Health (2013) *Choice Framework for local Policy and Procedures (CFPP) 01-04 Decontamination of linen for health and social care: Management and provision*

Department of Health (March 2010) *Uniforms and workwear: Guidance on uniform and workwear policies for NHS employers*

NHS Professionals (March 2016) *Clinical Governance 1: Standard Infection Prevention and Control Guidelines Version 5*