

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE HOSPITAL
(NHS) TRUST

**STANDARDS OF DRESS AT
WORK POLICY**

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| Lead Director: Director of Human Resources | Trust Contact: Human Resources Manager |

1 INTRODUCTION

The Trust is a large organisation which employs a diverse range of staff. These staff undertake differing clinical and non-clinical activities and it is important that each employee has workwear which is appropriate to their role. It is acknowledged that this workwear will naturally vary between the different groups of staff, however, a set of guiding principles are needed to ensure important standards are met. It is important that staff will look professional, identifiable, and will wear clothes that are comfortable and safe for the work area.

2 POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to define clearly for all Trust staff, the principles that need to be followed when implementing the dress code. All Trust Staff will dress and present themselves in a manner which will encourage public trust and confidence and will promote a positive professional image.

3 CENTRAL PRINCIPLES

The following principles are important in ensuring a suitable dress code is in place:

- 3.1 All health and safety requirements of the work environment, identified through the risk assessment process are met.
- 3.2 Prevention of infection.
- 3.3 Safety and comfort.
- 3.4 Maintenance of a therapeutic relationship and interdisciplinary teamwork in the absence of a traditional uniform.
- 3.5 Presenting a professional image.
- 3.6 Must adhere to standards of decency.
- 3.7 Must be easily identifiable by members of staff and the public.

4 SCOPE

4.1 Standards of Dress

Applies to all staff, irrespective of position and whether a standard uniform is worn or not.

4.2 Uniforms

Uniforms are worn by all staff working in clinical and ancillary areas including bank, agency and locum staff. It is essential that the uniforms fit correctly and are an appropriate size to allow free and proper movement. Any adjustments to uniforms should be made by the Sewing Room (this is limited to adjustment to hems).

5 RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Managers

5.1.1 To advise all staff of the dress code applicable to the area of work.

5.1.2 To ensure that all staff comply with this policy.

5.2 Individuals

5.2.1 To dress in a way that supports the principles outlined in this policy.

5.2.2 To advise colleagues, or if appropriate, the first line manager, when it is felt that an unprofessional image is being presented.

6 STANDARDS OF DRESS AT WORK

6.1 All dress codes will be approved by the relevant Division/Directorate management team.

6.2 All dress codes will meet the central principles outlined in section 3 of this policy.

6.3 All staff should wear suitable footwear which is appropriate to the working environment i.e. a closed toe and non-slip soles/heal grips in a clinical environment. The emphasis should be on comfort, safety and stability. Some work areas will have specific health and safety requirements e.g. theatres, ICU.

6.4 Jewellery (including body piercing/tattoos) should not pose a safety/infection risk to either the employee or the client group. Minimal jewellery should be worn whilst on duty in order to ensure and maintain a professional image. Tattoos should be covered whilst on duty.

6.5 Hair and make-up should be such as to comply with the central principles of this policy in terms of professional image and health and safety.

6.6 Name Badges/Trust Identity Cards

Whilst at work, name badges should be worn and visible at all times and Trust identity cards should be carried. There may however be exceptions to this, e.g. in the interests of the employee's safety. Repeated failure to produce an Identity Badge on request is a disciplinary offence.

When away from the work place (i.e., in the community) staff are requested to carry their Identity Badges at all times during working hours.

6.7 Individual Needs

Some members of staff will require a more individual approach to their workwear. These staff may be, for example, pregnant women, the physically disabled or staff whose cultural and religious practices need to be respected. In these cases, the member of staff through a process of discussion with their first line manager, will be supported in a dress code that meets their requirements.

7 UNIFORM

See attached list (appendix 1)

Staff who work in the community will be exempt from the above if it is felt appropriate for safety reasons.

- 7.1 On appointment, and in line with the Directorate/Divisional staff group dress code, the employee will be advised by their first line manager as to the system for obtaining the appropriate type and number of workwear and frequency of replacement.
- 7.2 Staff should report for duty wearing a uniform which is smart in appearance and stain-free.
- 7.3 Soiled clothing should not be worn in the restaurant area. Theatre staff should ensure that clean white coats are worn in the restaurant area covering theatre clothing.
- 7.4 In the interests of professional image, whilst travelling to and from the place of work, uniform should not be visible and identity badges should be removed.
- 7.5 Uniform or mufti will be worn and cared for in a way that promotes personal and patient/client safety and will be clean, in good repair, well fitted and complete. Mufti clothes should be appropriate to the patient/client area with discreet necklines and appropriate hem lengths.
- 7.6 Agreed workwear will be supplied at no direct cost to the individual. This may be facilitated through either the provision of workwear from the Trust's Sewing Room or by financial reimbursement in those areas where

workwear is initially purchased by the employee and the employer is required by management to purchase his/her uniform.

- 7.7 For those staff who launder their workwear, written laundering advice is attached at appendix 2.
- 7.8 When returning workwear, either because of a change in role or termination of employment, the employee will follow the Directorate/staff group system for the return of workwear. It is a managerial responsibility to ensure all uniforms, suitable for re-use are returned upon termination of employment.

8 **MONITORING & REVIEW**

This policy will be monitored on an on-going basis. Any future changes to uniforms outside of this policy should be agreed through the Joint Management/Staff Side Working Group. A register of all uniforms currently in use will be maintained by the Linen Services Department.

APPENDICES

FOI REF 187-1819

UNIFORM

- i) All staff who are required to wear a uniform are offered the choice of:
- ☉ tunic/trousers
 - ☉ dress (no belt)
 - ☉ polo shirt/trousers (for clinical areas – paediatrics only)

It is strongly recommended on health and safety grounds that staff choose the tunic/trousers option, but individual preferences should be considered.

- ii) The uniform for all staff who work in clinical areas should be as follows:

Nursing Staff

| | | |
|---------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| Clinical Nurse Specialist | - | white-if uniform is usually worn |
| Sister/Charge Nurse | - | navy with white trim |
| Senior Staff Nurse | - | teal with white trim |
| Staff Nurse | - | white with hospital blue trim |
| Enrolled Nurse | - | white with green trim |
| Midwives | - | stewart blue with white trim |
| Clinical Support Worker | - | white with lilac trim |
| Dental Nurses | - | white with yellow trim |
| Nursery Nurse | - | white with pink trim |

*NB Agenda for change is likely to result in changes to the current grading system. If the timescale for the introduction of new uniforms is to be longer term, it may be more appropriate to introduce revised uniforms for the nurse in charge (navy with white trim), the qualified nursing team (white with hospital blue trim) and Clinical Support workers (white with lilac trim).

PAMs

| | | |
|-------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Physiotherapists | - | white with block trim of navy |
| Radiographers | - | white with block trim of royal blue |
| Occupational Therapists | - | white with block trim of bottle green |
| Dieticians | - | white with block trim of burgundy |
| Pharmacists | - | white with block trim of mid green |

Assistants –

| | | |
|---------------|---|---------------------------------|
| physiotherapy | - | white with block honeybird trim |
| O/T | - | white with block aqua trim |
| dietetics | - | white with block fawn trim |
| radiography | - | white with block blue trim |

Where required trims will be fitted to collars and sleeves.

Technicians/Scientific Staff

Plain white

Medical Staff

Junior Doctors to wear white coats/theatre clothing as appropriate.

- iii) Where staff in clinical areas wear polo shirts/trousers e.g., within paediatrics, the colour of the polo shirt should represent the grade of the staff member i.e., navy blue polo shirt – Sister/Charge Nurse.
- iv) Staff who work in warm areas i.e., ICU, MIU, A & E, Labour Ward, Renal Unit where necessary may wear tunic/trousers of a lightweight material (colour coded according to grade) i.e:

| | | |
|---------------|---|-------------------------|
| Navy | - | Sister/Charge Nurse |
| Teal | - | Senior Staff Nurse |
| Hospital Blue | - | Staff Nurse |
| Green | - | Enrolled Nurse |
| Stewart Blue | - | Midwife |
| Lilac | - | Clinical Support Worker |

If appropriate, the Department name could be woven on to the right hand side of the tunic top.

- v) Non-clinical staff who are required to wear a uniform should wear the following:

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| Catering Staff | - | white with colour variations to suit nature of work |
| Hotel Support Workers | - | dark/light green |
| Portering Staff | - | Charcoal/light grey |
| Health Records/Reception | - | pale blue |
| Estates | - | navy blue with estates logo |
| Laundry | - | light blue with logo |
| Sterile Services | - | light blue |

- vi) Where logos are applied to polo shirts and sweatshirts, they must have the new NHS logo in compliance with NHS advice, on the left hand side. It is appropriate to name the department on the right hand side of the shirt but other logos should not be used.

It is proposed that any future changes to uniforms, outside of this policy, are agreed through the joint Management/Staff Side working group. A register of all uniforms currently in use will be maintained by the Linen Services Department.

LAUNDERING ADVICE -UNIFORMS

1. Introduction

The laundering of uniforms under "uncontrolled" circumstances i.e., at home, is not uncommon. The following advice is provided to assist in the home-laundering of uniforms and is intended to inform staff of special requirements and considerations which may need to be allowed.

2. Creation of a "barrier"

Where there is a risk of body fluids, treatment materials or chemicals coming into contact with the uniform materials, creation of a liquid proof barrier is recommended. A disposable plastic apron is an example and will assist in reducing staining.

3. Laundering

Normally, articles are laundered in accordance with the manufacturer's advice, which is on the label affixed, it is necessary to comply with NHS guidance contained within HSG (95) 18. This guidance advises that articles should be laundered at a temperature of 71°C for 3 minutes plus mixing time ("mixing time" is the time taken for the whole of the wash load to achieve the present temperature). To make allowance for the variable standards of domestic washing machine temperature controls, and wash times, the following is recommended.

- i. The machine must not be overloaded.
- ii. Staff uniforms should be washed separately from other clothing.
- iii. Temperature (or programme) setting should be set to 80°C (the time required to comply with the guidance, decreases with higher temperatures).

Note - workwear materials e.g., nurses uniforms, are manufactured from materials capable of withstanding high temperature, although, over a period of time, some loss of colour will be experienced.

When necessary, further and specialist advice can be obtained from Linen Service Management.