

LAUNDRY SERVICES POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to describe the standard of linen and laundry to be provided to school clinic and how linen and laundry should be stored, handled and transported around the school to prevent cross contamination.

AIMS

The aims of this policy are specifically:

- To ensure the use of correct laundry and linen specifications to comply with the requirements of infection control
- To demonstrate continuous improvement in the management of laundry and linen to minimise the risks of cross infection infections.

SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

To promote guidance for health care workers on the correct hygiene measures for the laundering of linen. Highlight the risks of infection associated with handling dirty laundry, as well as keeping clean laundry free from the risk of contamination.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Cleaning Staff

Cleaning staff are responsible for collecting laundry bags from school clinic. They must ensure when dealing with clean and dirty linen that they are kept completely separate to avoid any risk of cross-contamination. Likewise when transporting laundry only dedicated clean trollies may be used. Staff must be inducted to know that clean and dirty linen must never be stored or transported in the same trolley.

STORAGE OF CLEAN LINEN/LAUNDRY

- Clean laundry must be handled in such a way that contamination is avoided including during transport and storage.
- Clean linen should always be stored in a clean, dry designated area, preferably in a purpose built cupboard.
- Clean laundry should be stored above floor level and kept tidy to prevent contamination with dust and/or aerosols. If a linen trolley is used for the storage of linen it should be enclosed.
- Linen and/or the linen trolley must not be stored in bathrooms, laundry rooms or staff changing room.
- Ideally, linen should not be decanted onto different trollies, or stored in corridors when delivered, as this may result in contamination.

USED LINEN WITHIN THE HEALTHCARE ENVIRONMENT

There are categories of used linen:

1. Soiled and Foul linen- This is all used linen, irrespective of condition, which may be contaminated by body fluids, except linen from a known or infectious person.
2. Infected linen- This is linen from patients with a confirmed diagnosis of or suspected to be suffering from enteric fever, and other Salmonella infections, Dysentery, pulmonary T.B. Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING LINEN

- All cleaning staff that deal with laundry (clean or used) must adhere to the policy on linen and laundry.
- Exposure to infected agents will be averted with responsible handling of linen, separation of clean and dirty linen and performing effective hand hygiene. Staff should be vigilant for any discarded items that may pose a risk or injury. Such items should be disposed of correctly.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment PPE should be worn when handling when handling/disposing of linen.
- Laundry bags should always be used when clearing away used linen from bed areas and the used linen carefully removed, avoiding any unnecessary agitation, and directly placed into the appropriate bag. Staff must not hand carry loose used linen, or leave items of linen on the floor, in order to minimise environmental and personal contamination.
- The laundry bag should not be overfilled and should be securely closed when $\frac{3}{4}$ full
- Staff should wear aprons and gloves when handling linen especially whenever handling linen contaminated with bodily fluids.
- The linen bags should be used for linen only and never for clinical waste.
- Staff must wash or alcohol gel their hands after handling used linen, and after removing gloves and aprons.

Implementation Date: September 2020

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Reviewed by: _____
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