

DRESS CODE/UNIFORM POLICY	Type:	Policy
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Consulted With:	Post/Committee/Group:	Date:
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1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 A uniform provides a means of easy identification and allows the wearer to project an image, which will inspire public confidence in the Trust.
- 1.2 This policy sets out the expectations of the Trust in relation to corporate dress code and applies to all employees, volunteers and those on work placements.
- 1.3 The purpose of this policy is to inform all staff of their obligations with regard to the dress code at the Trust. It forms part of the terms and conditions of employment not just for those for whom a uniform is supplied.
- 1.4 The policy is intended to maximize safety in the workplace and minimise the risk of cross infection.
- 1.5 This policy is designed to benefit staff, patients and visitors in respect of health and safety, security and comfort.

2.0 Equality and Diversity

- 2.1 Mid Essex Hospital Services NHS Trust recognises the diversity of culture, religions and disability of its employees and will take a sensitive approach when this affects dress and uniform requirements.
- 2.2 If any member of staff believes that for any reason they are unable to comply with the policy they must inform their line manager, who will give due consideration to the concerns raised. However, priority will be given to health and safety, security and infection control considerations.
- 2.3 Any ethnic, religious or special requirements will be available on an individual request basis, and if appropriate the uniform can be adapted as required. This may, for example, include the provision of trousers and/or tunics and long length sleeves if appropriate, (but sleeves must be rolled up when undertaking clinical procedures and for hand washing).
- 2.4 Refer to section 13 for details about Maternity uniform.

3.0 Uniform/Dress Code Statement for ALL staff

- 3.1 All employees of the Trust whether, uniformed or non-uniformed, have a responsibility to dress in a manner that encourages public trust and confidence. Staff must present a professional and corporate image, which is easily identifiable to colleagues and stakeholders.
- 3.2 Adherence to this policy is a mandatory requirement for all Trust employees. This includes those with honorary contracts, students and agency workers (uniforms supplied by agency) when working on the Trust premises.
- 3.3 All uniform styles will be agreed by the Trust Executive Board. The number of uniforms supplied will be a matter for directorates.
- 3.4 All line managers and professional leads are expected to monitor staff uniforms and/or clothing.
- 3.5 Failure to adhere to this policy may result in disciplinary action.

4.0 Personal Identification

- 4.1 All employees will be supplied with an official identification / security badge that must be worn and available for inspection at all times when on duty or acting in an official capacity representing the Trust.
- 4.2 Staff working in clinical areas must have their identification / security badge clipped to clothing. Lanyards are discouraged in clinical areas for infection prevention reasons. If lanyards are worn these should be plain and free from advertising.
- 4.3 It is acceptable for staff to wear a trade union badge appropriately and safely. Badges if worn inappropriately may cause injury to the wearer or others.
- 4.4 Lost ID badges pose a risk to patient security and must be reported to Security on extension 3059 in order that any risk is mitigated and arrangements can be made for a replacement. A datix must also be completed and forwarded to the appropriate parties.

5.0 Tax Benefits

- 5.1 A tax allowance can be claimed to reimburse staff for laundry expenses by contacting Inland Revenue directly on 0300 200 3300 and requesting claim form P87.

6.0 Generic Requirements for all Members of Staff

- 6.1 The Trust will provide an appropriate uniform to staff (excluding agencies or students) who require a uniform to perform their role. The uniform will remain the property of the Trust and must be returned on the last day of service.
- 6.2 Non uniformed staff must present a professional image at all time to instil confidence and reassurance to our patients. The following is not considered to fit this brief:
- Jeans
 - Skirts of inappropriate length
 - Scrub tops with long sleeve shirts beneath
 - Use of scrubs not within authorised area
- 6.3 All staff will present themselves for work in an appearance that is laundered, tidy and in keeping with a professional image.
- 6.4 All staff are expected to wear shoes or other footwear suitable for their role.
- 6.5 All staff must wear hair well groomed. Staff working in clinical areas must not have hair untied if it is below collar length, it should be tied up and not touching the collar of their uniform. Hair ornaments should be plain, discreet, not brightly coloured and practical for the purpose of keeping hair above the collar. Facial hair should be well groomed.
- 6.6 Visible body piercing (including tongues) must not be worn whilst on duty. This applies to all staff.
- 6.7 Perfume if worn should be kept to a minimum.

- 6.8 Visible tattoos where present should not be offensive to others. Where deemed offensive should be appropriately covered subject to bare below the elbows dress code.
- 6.9 Non-clinical staff may wear jewellery, including earrings, with approval of their manager or supervisor, avoiding extremes of fashion. Staff wearing inappropriate jewellery will be asked to remove it.
- 6.10 All staff will adopt the 'bare below the elbows' dress code whenever they are in a clinical environment. Bare below the elbows dress code is part of the Government's Clean Safe Care Strategy which aims to reduce infection risks by improving hand hygiene. Wrist watches must not be worn in the clinical areas (please refer to hand hygiene policy).
- 6.11 Clinical staff when in uniform may wear the following jewellery:
- One plain stud per earlobe for pierced ears.
 - One plain band ring
- 6.12 Nails should be clean and well-trimmed when undertaking clinical care. False nails, extensions, varnish or any form of nail art are not permitted in clinical areas.
- 6.13 False eyelashes are not encouraged, should not be excessive and should maintain a professional appearance
- 6.14 Non-uniformed staff are expected to adhere to the principles of smartness, professionalism and cleanliness, avoiding extremes of fashion e.g. skirts above the knee shorts, see through tops and low cut necklines.

7.0 Medical Staff

- 7.1 Medical staff must be dressed smartly so as to inspire public confidence:
- Sleeves must be above the elbow at the point of care
 - Ties are discouraged but if worn must be adequately secured whilst undertaking a procedure or examining a patient
 - Clothing should be appropriate and practical for clinical tasks including the transportation of essential items i.e. dresses and skirts should be no shorter than knee length

8.0 Uniformed Staff

- 8.1 Staff provided with a uniform must at all times comply with the Trust dress code in full.
- 8.2 Staff will be provided with the appropriate number and style of uniforms for their role. Staff are expected to wear the uniform, including trousers, provided by the Trust unless on occasion when staff members require an alternative uniform such as during pregnancy, this must be organised and requested by their line manager. A plain tee-shirt i.e. black blue or white may be worn under a tunic if desired.
- 8.3 Uniforms may not be altered in anyway except by the Trust sewing room. Uniforms will only be adjusted to meet the Trust's requirements, i.e. not too short and not too tight. Dress length must be at mid-knee. Damaged uniforms must be taken to the sewing room as soon as is practical.
- 8.4 Traditional belts and buckles may be worn if desired. Staff should however be aware of the increased risk to patients and themselves when moving and handling. Staff should

ensure that they are removed to allow comfortable movement (for example when moving and handling) but when worn must be done up and free from pins.

- 8.5 When wearing a dress, stockings or tights must be worn at all times, (except in extreme hot weather as section 9.2). These must be black or natural in colour and un-patterned. Navy or black socks must be worn with trousers or on the basis of departmental policy.
- 8.6 Shoes should be black, soft soled, closed over the foot and toes as well as smart and in good condition. Clogs are permitted in theatre areas. Trainers should not be worn unless required for the role and appropriate to the work area but should be plain black or white and of a water repellent material with non-marking sole. The material should be non-porous.
- 8.7 Staff should wear tabards when undertaking drug rounds.
(Refer to the 'Administration of Medicines to Inpatients Policy'; register number 08103)
- 8.8 There are certain jobs that require staff to wear protective footwear. These staff must wear the correct footwear for doing their work and if staff are uncertain they should check with their line manager.
- 8.9 Cardigans may be worn outside of the clinical area (these should be black or navy dependant on uniform). Cardigans must not be worn whilst providing clinical care or in the clinical area. No fleeces, hoodies or sweatshirts to be worn with a uniform unless provided by the Trust.
- 8.10 In certain areas scrubs (blues) may be appropriate to the clinical work undertaken. However it is essential that the Trust code is maintained and scrubs hats can only be worn in the theatre environment. Scrub suits (blues) may be worn within the main hospital building only (Zones A, B, C, D, & E). It is not acceptable to wear soiled blues or soiled footwear outside of the theatre environment. Staff should ensure that they wear a cover over the scrub suits (blues) when outside of the theatre environment including the atrium. Scrub suits (blues) and hats must not be worn outside of the hospital and staff should not travel to and from work in the scrubs if they own their own pair.
- 8.11 Staff working administrative days are expected to wear uniform in order to maintain a professional image and clear leadership within their clinical area.

9.0 Religious Dress/Adornments

- 9.1 The wearing of religious adornments is permitted for those that wish to wear them, provided that the health, infection control, safety and security of patients are not compromised.
- 9.2 Staff who wear facial coverings for religious reasons are required to remove them whilst on duty. This is to ensure that the member of staff is identifiable, and to enhance engagement and communication with patients, visitors and colleagues.
- 9.3 The Sikh Kara (bangle) may be worn high up on the forearm as possible or removed when carrying out direct patient care. Where this cannot be achieved it must be covered by wearing a disposable glove. Patient safety is paramount and the Trust's primary concern is to maintain bare below the elbows.
- 9.4 The wearing of Turbans, Kippahs and headscarves is supported on religious grounds. Headscarves must be plain and either navy or black in colour, shoulder length, adornment free and must not drape freely when providing direct clinical care.

- 9.5 Staff members who wish to wear a visible faith symbol for religious reasons may wear a small unobtrusive badge on the lapel or underclothing as long as do not present a risk either to health and safety or a risk to the individual wearing them.
- 9.6 Theatre staff: The wearing of religious headwear is permissible. Where changing facilities are provided, staff should change into said religious headwear at the start of their shift and out of it at the end of each shift, the specific garment should not be worn offsite. Religious headwear worn in the theatre setting should be cleaned after every shift or changed if visibly contaminated. Should it completely cover the hair, there is no requirement for it to be further covered with a theatre cap or hood. It is the professional responsibility of the individual to ensure that this is adhered to.

10.0 Non Uniformed Staff

- 10.1 Section 6 applies to non-uniformed staff.
- 10.2 In extreme hot weather conditions, ward/department managers may allow staff not to wear stockings or tights, or to wear shorts where these are agreed as appropriate.

11.0 Wearing Uniform Outside the Workplace

- 11.1 Uniforms are only to be used for official duties inside or outside the hospital. Staff may travel directly to or from work in uniform provided it is covered completely with a full length coat at all times.
- 11.2 It is unacceptable for staff to go shopping or enter commercial premises outside the hospital estate in uniform.
- 11.3 Staff must not smoke whilst wearing their uniform outside the hospital grounds. In addition, scrub suits (blues) and hats must not be worn outside of the hospital.

12.0 Infection Prevention and Control

- 12.1 Aprons must be removed when leaving the work area in order to reduce the risk of cross-infection, except staff escorting patients in containment isolation to other departments.
- 12.2 Staff must not wear aprons or heavily soiled/dirty uniforms in any public area in or outside of the hospital.
- 12.3 Special clothing e.g. theatre scrub suits, disposable headwear and specialised footwear, is issued for particular areas due to the nature of the work and should not be substituted with other items.
- 12.4 Scrub suits (blues) may be worn within the main hospital building only (Zones A, B, C, D and E). It is not acceptable to wear soiled blues or soiled footwear. Hats or masks must not be worn in public areas. Staff should ensure that they wear a cover over the scrub suits (blues) when outside of the clinical area.

13.0 Laundering

- 13.1 Theatre scrub suits will be laundered by the Trust. Other staff will be expected to launder their own uniforms.
- 13.2 Clinical uniformed staff should change into a clean laundered uniform at the start of each shift.

- 13.3 If uniform or clothing becomes visibly soiled or contaminated, staff must change their uniform or clothes immediately.
- 13.4 Uniforms laundered by staff should be washed using detergent. A 10 minute wash at 60 degrees celsius removes most organisms (DH, 2007).

14.0 Maternity Uniforms

- 14.1 Standard dress/uniform will be supplied to all pregnant staff upon request. This applies only to staff who normally wear a uniform.
- 14.2 The uniforms are to be returned to the sewing room laundered before going on maternity leave.

15.0 On Leaving the Trust

- 15.1 Staff will return a complete set of uniforms to the sewing room when they leave the Trust. Failure to do so may result in the recovery of the outstanding balance from their salary.

16.0 Health and Safety

- 16.1 All staff whether in uniform or not are required to wear clothes and footwear appropriate to the role for which they are employed to meet the requirements of health and safety legislation.
- 16.2 Where safety clothing /equipment is provide by the trust it must be worn and used as directed. Staff must report any defect in clothing or equipment to their manager.

17.0 Monitoring

- 17.1 The Electronic Staff Record (ESR) system will record all disciplinaries with reasons, names of those involved, dates and outcome, any appeal and employment tribunal actioned. A report taken from ESR and highlighting cases at least quarterly to the Workforce Group
- 17.2 Feedback received from all users (managers and members of staff) will be collated by Human Resources and discussed at the Policy Sub-Group to review the Policy together with any Employment Law updates regularly.

18.0 References

Department of Health (2007) Uniforms and work-wear: An evidence base for developing local policy

Royal College of Nursing (2005) Guidance on uniforms and clothing worn in the delivery of patient care. London RCN

UNIFORM REQUEST FORM

Please complete Section 1-5 (marked *).

Please note that uniforms will not be issued without a fitting or authorisation in accordance with the Mid Essex Hospital Services NHS Trust Uniform Policy.

1. DATE & DEPARTMENTAL DETAILS *

Please complete the detail below.

Date:	
Name:	
Job Title:	
Ward/Department:	
Ext. No:	

2. STAFF TYPE DETAILS *

Please indicate staff type by ticking the appropriate box below.

Sister	<input type="checkbox"/>	Laboratory Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff Nurse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Estates Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>
HCSW / Nursing Auxiliary	<input type="checkbox"/>	Porters	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pharmacist	<input type="checkbox"/>	Domestic Assistant	<input type="checkbox"/>
Radiographer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Full-Time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Part-Time	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. QUANTITY *

Please indicate the quantity and sizes of the items required.

Item	Size	Quantity	Item	Size	Quantity	Item	Size	Quantity
Tunic			Trousers			Dress		
Blouse			Shirt			Jumper		
Boiler Suit			Jacket			Logo		

4. REASONS *

Please indicate reasons for additional uniform items if not a new member of staff

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5. AUTHORISATION DETAILS *

Please note uniforms will not be issued without an authorised signature or proof of employment (letter of appointment or contract).

PRINT NAME:	
SIGNATURE:	
Job Title:	
Ext. No.:	
AUTHORISATION SIGNATORIES BELOW:	
Site Co-ordinator, Matron, Sister, Ward Manager, Estates & Facilities Liaison, Nurse in Charge & Departmental Manager	

PLEASE RETURN ALL FORMS TO: Sewing Room, Broomfield Hospital.

5. UNIFORM COLLECTIONS:	
PRINT NAME:	
SIGNATURE:	
DATE OF COLLECTION:	

6. RETURNED UNIFORMS:	
PRINT NAME:	
SIGNATURE:	
DATE OF RETURN:	

Estates and Facilities Office Use Only		
Financial Charges		
Quantity:	Uniform Item:	Cost: £
Total Cost:		£
Funds Transfer to Budget Code:	Funds Transfer from Budget Code:	
Authorised Signature:		
Print Name:		
Additional Notes:		