

Uniform & Dress Code Policy

Date	Version	
October 2017	Version 6	
Purpose		
The aim of the policy is to set out the expected standard of dress for all Trust staff whilst on duty and travelling to and from work.		
Who should read this document?		
All staff, including Medical and Dental. This policy must be read in conjunction with the Dress Code for Theatres Policy.		
Key messages		
This Policy set out the expected standards of dress which ensures that the three main criteria outlined by the Department of Health, are met:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Patient Safety 2. Public Confidence 3. Staff comfort 		
Accountabilities		
Production	Richard Maguire, HR Business Partner	
Review and approval	JSNC	
Ratification	Director of People	
Dissemination	Deputy Director of HR	
Compliance	Deputy Director of HR	
Links to other policies and procedures		
Visitors to Theatre Laser Policy Scrubbing Gowning and Gloving Dress Code for Theatres Policy Infection Control Policy Health and Safety Policy Universal Infection Control Procedures Smoking Policy		
Version History		
2.1	4 th November 2008	Amended in line with Policy for Development & Management of Trust-wide policy and procedural documents
3.1	19 th March 2009	Updated in line with 'bare below the elbows' requirements
4.1	March 2011	Trust commitment to valuing people amended in line with Equality Act 2010. Electronic policy paths updated
4.2	3 rd June 2011	Review date extended
4.3	1 st March 2012	Review date extended
5.1	26 th May 2012	Approved by JSNC
6	11 October 2017	
Last Approval		Due for Review
October 2017		October 2022

PHNT is committed to creating a fully inclusive and accessible service.

Making equality and diversity an integral part of the business will enable us to enhance the services we deliver and better meet the needs of patients and staff.

We will treat people with dignity and respect, actively promote equality and diversity, and eliminate all forms of discrimination regardless of (but not limited to) age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage/civil partnership and pregnancy/ maternity.

An electronic version of this document is available on the Trust Documents Network Share Folder (G:\TrustDocuments). Larger text, Braille and Audio versions can be made available upon request.

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1 Introduction

Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust expects all employees, contractors, NHSP workers, agency workers, visiting professionals, locums and volunteers, to adhere to this uniform and dress code policy. For the purposes of this policy the term 'workers' applies to all those listed above.

The Trust operates a 'bare below the elbows' policy for all clinical staff and for those who enter clinical areas, except where Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) rules apply. See section 7.

2 Purpose, including legal or regulatory background

The aim of the policy is to set out the expected standard of dress for all Trust staff whilst on duty or travelling to work which ensure that three main criteria, outlined by the Department of Health, are met:

1. **Patient Safety** - to protect the patient whilst they are receiving treatment and to protect the employee, their family and the community.
2. **Public Confidence** - a professional appearance encourages and fosters public confidence in the health service regardless of whether workers wear a uniform or their own clothes and identifies the workers readily to patients, relatives, visitors and other disciplines whether in the hospital or in the community.
3. **Staff comfort** – as far as possible, subject to the requirements above, staff should feel comfortable in their uniforms/clothing. This includes being able to dress in accordance with their cultural practices where possible.

3 Definitions

Workers - For the purposes of this policy only the term 'workers' applies to employees, contractors, NHSP workers, agency workers, visiting professional, locums and volunteers.

Visiting Professionals – individuals required to visit Trust sites and in some case to work within them (e.g. social workers, support agencies such as Pluss/Reemploy).

Clinical Workers – workers who are required to work in an area with patients or to come into direct contact with patients as part of their role.

Non-Clinical – workers who do not work in a patient area.

4 Duties

Workers

- Responsible for ensuring that they are appropriately dressed according to the nature of their work and in line with this policy.
- Ensure they are aware of and comply with the standard of dress for their area of work

Managers

- Responsible for ensuring that employees are aware of and adhere to this policy

- Ensure workers are aware of the uniform and/or dress code requirements for their area of work.
- Where appropriate provide workers with sufficient uniforms to enable clean uniforms to be worn at all times.
- Ensure they take appropriate action where employees do not comply. See section 15.
- Ensure sufficient uniforms are available across the Trust for appropriate workers.
- Ensure Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) is accessible when required.

5 Equality & Diversity

This policy applies equally to all workers. Whilst Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust recognises the diversity, cultural and religious beliefs of its employees the health, safety, security and infection control of patients and employees is paramount. This means that whilst the Trust will try to respect an individual's cultural/religious dress requirements it may not be possible to accommodate these requirements in order to ensure compliance with health and safety regulations, security issues and infection control considerations.

All individuals will be treated in a fair and equitable manner recognising any special needs of individuals where adjustment may need to be made. No member of staff will suffer any form of discrimination, inequality, victimisation, harassment or bullying as a result of implementing this policy.

For those undergoing gender reassignment or the menopause, the HR team will provide support and guidance in relation to matters concerning work wear and/or uniforms.

6 Health and Safety

All Trust workers have a responsibility for their own and other people's health and safety which should be reflected in their dress including footwear, jewellery, hair and make-up.

Clothing issued for health and safety reasons must be worn as directed i.e. personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, aprons. This requirement overrides any other requirement.

The Trust, as an equal opportunities employer, respects that workers dress may reflect their culture and religious belief, however compliance with health and safety and patient well being is paramount.

7 Personal Protective Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that has been issued by the Trust for health and safety reasons must be worn in the way it was intended to be used. Faults and defects must be reported immediately.

Potential hazards relating to clothing worn should be considered as part of the risk assessment process. Staff issued with PPE or clothing for their safety must ensure they are worn, stored, used, cleaned, maintained, serviced and disinfected as appropriate and in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations (the Personal Protective Equipment Regulations, 2002).

8 'Bare Below The Elbows' Requirements

The Trust's 'bare below the elbows' requirements apply to **all** workers working in or visiting a clinical environment and includes nurses, medical and dental staff, ward clerks, receptionists and volunteers. The only exception is where PPE rules apply.

The Trust requires employees to wear short sleeves/rolled up sleeves, and **no** wrist watches or jewellery (except for one wedding type band) below the elbows. Fob watches may be worn instead of wrist watches without affecting patient safety.

The rationale behind bare below the elbows is to facilitate effective hand washing to reduce the risk of cross infection through harbouring harmful organisms.

9 General

Identification (ID) Badge

Employees must wear their ID badge in a visible position whilst at work/on duty. Employees may be challenged if their ID badge is not visible and persistent offenders will be reported to their line manager/security if they do not have it on them. Where an employee refuses to give their details they will be immediately reported to security.

General requirements

Clothing should be clean and ironed and the individual's overall appearance should be of a smart, professional person. Those working in clinical areas should be mindful that patients may be offended by inappropriate clothing e.g. short skirts, low cut blouses, bare midriffs etc. Jeans or sportswear may only be worn with express management permission and only where there is no contact with patients or the public.

Clothes must be free of offensive words, pictures or logos and must be clean and in good repair. Anyone offended by words, pictures and/or logos may complain through the appropriate channels, in the first instance this will be the line manager.

Line managers should use their discretion about clothing requirements during periods of extreme weather. This does not override PPE requirements.

Personal Hygiene

All staff should maintain a high level of personal hygiene and appearance.

Tax Relief

Staff can claim tax relief in respect of laundry costs by writing to the local Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) Office, with National Insurance number and details of cost. More information is available from HMRC.

Changes to Uniform Policy in Extreme Weather Conditions

There may be circumstances where the wearing of all, or part of the uniform may cause difficulties to staff. One example of this is in extremely hot or cold weather. Changes to uniform may be allowed at local level and, following discussions with staff, managers have discretion to agree such changes. However this must be professional and respect the general principles specified throughout this policy.

Workers not required to wear uniform or protective clothing should dress in a way which is appropriate to the functions they perform. The appropriateness of dress should be outlined by the line manager. Workers who enter or are based in a clinical area must refer to Section 8 and 11.

Workers who wear their own clothes should ensure that they are suitable for work purpose, clean, in a good state of repair and should be of a smart/professional appearance. Casual clothing may not be appropriate for the workplace and for workers who access patient/public areas such as the main concourse and restaurant. The following are not permitted unless agreed by management:-

- Revealing clothing Mini skirts/dresses (just above the knee is acceptable),
- Leggings,
- Backless or strapless items,
- Showing the midriff or underwear,
- Sports clothing (unless appropriate for the role),
- Shorts,
- Denim including jeans
- Maxi skirts/dresses which may impact on health and safety issues.

Workers who are required to work in a clinical area such as Ward Clerks, or access patient areas should also comply with Section 4 Bare Below the Elbow Requirements.

Make-up and Nails

Make-up should be discreet. Nails should be clean and nail varnish, where it is worn, should be in good condition. If entering or working in a clinical or reception area refer to Section 8 and 11.

Jewellery

Must not pose a risk to themselves or others or be offensive to others. Facial jewellery should be discreet, plain and flat to avoid potential harm.

Footwear

Footwear should be appropriate for the type of work individuals carry out and should not expose the individual or others to unnecessary risk. Flip flops, thong sandals or gladiator style sandals are not permitted for reasons related to health and safety. Shoes should be in good condition. It is expected that all line managers ensure compliance with health and safety regulations.

Hair

All staff should ensure they maintain professional standards in relation to choice of hair style which must be neat whilst at work. Headscarves worn for religious purposes are permitted. Beards must be neatly trimmed, unless it reflects an individual's religious belief where it must be tidy.

Personal Protective Equipment

Workers within a non clinical support areas such as Laboratories, Pharmacy and Sterilisation Disinfection Unit may be required to wear PPE – See Section 3.1.

Workers who wear their own clothes e.g. consultants, administrators, junior doctors must comply with the principles of this policy when working in or entering a clinical environment.

Uniforms

Staff working in an area where scrubs have to be worn are not permitted to wear them outside of Trust premises. Staff visiting other areas of the Trust must not do so if their uniform/scrubs are soiled in anyway. Footwear if worn out of a clinical environment must be clean and clear of spillages.

There are specific areas where scrubs/uniforms must be laundered by specialist companies and employees will be informed if this applies to them.

Uniforms issued by the Trust remain the property of the Trust and must be returned upon termination of employment

Shoes

For reasons of health and safety and infection control, workers working in clinical areas will wear shoes that are leather **or** water repellent with closed toes and heels and with soft soles to minimise noise disturbance for patients. Rubber/synthetic clogs may be worn but must not have holes or decoration/logos and must be white, blue or black and have a heel strap. Footwear should be appropriate for the type of work individuals carry out and should not expose the individual or others to unnecessary risk. Flip flops, thong sandals or gladiator style sandals are not permitted for reasons related to health and safety and preferably to be antistatic and anti-slip. Shoes should be in good condition. It is expected that all line managers ensure compliance with health and safety regulations.

Jewellery

Must not pose a risk to themselves or others or be offensive to others. Facial jewellery should be discreet, plain and flat to avoid potential harm. Necklaces should not be worn by clinical staff.

Employees with direct patient contact should wear no more than one plain wedding type band and one pair of stud earrings. Employees with direct patient contact must remove nasal and facial jewellery whilst on duty.

Nails

Staff who visit or work in a clinical area must not wear nail extensions, acrylic nails, false nails or nail products e.g. nail varnish.

Finger nails should be kept short and clean. Uniformed staff must not wear nail varnish or nail art whilst on duty. The wearing of false / acrylic nails is strictly forbidden as they pose an infection control risk. Please refer to the Trust's Hand Washing Policy.

Hair

All staff should ensure they maintain professional standards in relation to choice of hair colour and style. Hair colour should be clean, tidy and off the collar, to reduce the incidence of bacterial growth around the collar. Uniformed staff should have their hair tied back (male and female staff) if longer than shoulder length. This applies to all hairstyles and types, including extensions, wigs, etc. Where hair clips or bands are worn, they must be appropriate and not have the potential to injure staff or patients and must comply with health and safety and infection control standards.

Headscarves worn for religious purposes are permitted. Beards must be neatly trimmed, unless it reflects an individual's religious belief where it must be tidy.

12 Maternity Uniforms

Staff who are required to wear a uniform will be provided with maternity uniform when required.

13 Travelling in Uniform

Uniforms must not be worn outside of the Trust unless on Trust business or for travelling directly to and from work. Staff must not visit restaurants, entertainment establishments and other similar inappropriate areas whilst travelling to and from the Trust. Uniform must be covered at all times, particular when using public transport.

This recommendation is made for the safety and security of all staff, to minimise the risk of cross infection and prevent the potential for adverse public comment.

Requests to wear uniform outside of Trust premises for formal occasions or where promoting the Trust must be authorised by the Line Manager

It is **not acceptable** for Trust staff to wear uniform when visiting food establishments external to the Trust premises.

Staff who are seen in uniform in public areas as defined above may be subject to formal action in line with the Trust Performance and Conduct Policy.

14 Replacement of Uniforms

Department managers are responsible for authorising replacement uniforms and for ensuring that systems are in place within their departments to monitor and control items issued by the Trust.

In cases where negligence is proven, the individual member of staff should replace the uniform or protective clothing at their own expense, whilst taking advantage of the Trust discounts from suppliers.

Uniform/Protective clothing items are not automatically considered for re-issue after being handed in by staff, however there are occasions when uniforms are almost brand new and may therefore be considered for re-issue.

It is essential that all uniforms and protective clothing are collected after termination of employment or when being replaced under the normal 'wear and tear' criteria and returned to the department manager.

Old uniforms should be handed in for disposal on receipt of new ones.

15 Failure to Comply

In most situations issues of non compliance with this policy can be resolved by the manager speaking informally to the employee and reminding them about the requirements of this uniform and dress code policy. However continued failure to comply with this policy may result in formal action in line with the Performance and Conduct Policy depending on the severity of the breach and could result in dismissal.

16 Overall Responsibility for the Document

The Senior Management Team and the Director of People in conjunction with the JSNC Policy Group is responsible for ratifying this document. The Director of People

has overall responsibility for the dissemination, implementation and review of this policy.

17 Consultation and Ratification

The Director of People is responsible for ratifying this document and has overall responsibility for the dissemination, implementation and review of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the Policy Sub Group of the Joint Staff Negotiating Committee and will be signed by the staff side chair and the Director of People.

This policy will be reviewed on the date specified at the beginning of the document and the policy will be revised as and when necessary.

18 Dissemination and Implementation

Following approval and ratification by the appropriate group, this policy is being rolled out across the Trust.

Publication of this policy will be publicised in Vital Signs, the Trust's weekly staff news briefing and it will be available electronically on the Trust Document Network Share Folder.

19 Monitoring Compliance and Effectiveness

HR will be responsible for monitoring compliance with this policy through comprehensive advice and supporting guidance documents.

20 References and associated documentation

None

Core Information				
Document Title	Uniform and Dress Code Policy			
Date Finalised	April 2012			
Dissemination Lead	Jenny Birchall, Human Resources Business Partner			
Previous Documents				
Previous document in use?	Yes			
Action to retrieve old copies.	Will be removed and replaced with this version			
Dissemination Plan				
Recipient(s)	When	How	Responsibility	Progress update
All Trust Staff	May 2012	Vital Signs	Workforce Department	

Review		
Title	Is the title clear and unambiguous?	Yes
	Is it clear whether the document is a policy, procedure, protocol, framework, APN or SOP?	Yes
	Does the style & format comply?	Yes
Rationale	Are reasons for development of the document stated?	Yes
Development Process	Is the method described in brief?	Yes
	Are people involved in the development identified?	Yes
	Has a reasonable attempt has been made to ensure relevant expertise has been used?	Yes
	Is there evidence of consultation with stakeholders and users?	Yes
Content	Is the objective of the document clear?	Yes
	Is the target population clear and unambiguous?	Yes
	Are the intended outcomes described?	Yes
	Are the statements clear and unambiguous?	Yes
Evidence Base	Is the type of evidence to support the document identified explicitly?	Yes
	Are key references cited and in full?	Yes
	Are supporting documents referenced?	Yes
Approval	Does the document identify which committee/group will review it?	Yes
	If appropriate have the joint Human Resources/staff side committee (or equivalent) approved the document?	Yes
	Does the document identify which Executive Director will ratify it?	Yes
Dissemination & Implementation	Is there an outline/plan to identify how this will be done?	Yes
	Does the plan include the necessary training/support to ensure compliance?	Yes
Document Control	Does the document identify where it will be held?	Yes
	Have archiving arrangements for superseded documents been addressed?	Yes
Monitoring Compliance & Effectiveness	Are there measurable standards or KPIs to support the monitoring of compliance with and effectiveness of the document?	Yes
	Is there a plan to review or audit compliance with the document?	Yes
Review Date	Is the review date identified?	Yes
	Is the frequency of review identified? If so is it acceptable?	Yes
Overall Responsibility	Is it clear who will be responsible for co-ordinating the dissemination, implementation and review of the document?	Yes

Core Information	
Manager	Richard Maguire, Human Resources Business Partner
Directorate	HR
Date	October 2017 (review)
Title	Uniform and Dress Code Policy
What are the aims, objectives & projected outcomes?	The aim of the policy is to set out the expected standard of dress for all Trust staff whilst on duty and travelling to and from work.
Scope of the assessment	
Collecting data	
Race	This area will be monitored through workforce data. As stated in this policy health and safety compliance will override any cultural/religious requirements and we appreciate this may have an impact and appropriate consideration will be given to individual requirements.
Religion	This area will be monitored through workforce data. As stated in this policy health and safety compliance will override any cultural/religious requirements and we appreciate this may have an impact and appropriate consideration will be given to individual requirements.
Disability	There is no evidence to show an impact in this area, however data will be monitored through workforce data reporting and analysis
Sex	There is no evidence to show an impact in this area, however data will be monitored through workforce data reporting and analysis
Gender Identity	There is currently no data collected to show the impact in this area, however, this will be monitored via feedback as appropriate.
Sexual Orientation	There is no evidence to show an impact in this area, however data will be monitored through workforce data reporting and analysis
Age	There is no evidence to show an impact in this area, however data will be monitored through workforce data reporting and analysis
Socio-Economic	There is currently no data collected to show the impact in this area, however, this will be monitored via feedback as appropriate
Human Rights	There could potentially be an impact on Human Rights due to race and religious belief requirements which are covered in those specific areas within the EIA.
What are the overall trends/patterns in the above data?	No trends or patterns identified at this stage. However, workforce data will be monitored and any trends or patterns will be identified and appropriate actions will be put in place.

Specific issues and data gaps that may need to be addressed through consultation or further research	There is currently no data collected to monitor the impact on gender identity, socio-economic and human rights. It is recognised there will be an impact on race and religion due to the requirement to comply with health and safety regulations.			
Involving and consulting stakeholders				
Internal involvement and consultation	JSNC, Senior Nursing, Operations			
External involvement and consultation	None			
Impact Assessment				
Overall assessment and analysis of the evidence	At present whilst it is acknowledged that this policy will have an impact on race and religion, there is no anticipated negative impact as this is due to health and safety compliance. However, the workforce data that can be collected will be monitored to assess the impact.			
Action Plan				
Action	Owner	Risks	Completion Date	Progress update
Monitoring of workforce data on a regular basis	Martin Bamber		On-going	Action will be taken as and when required.