POLICY DOCUMENT

Dress and Personal Appearance Policy

Owner: Director of Workforce & Education
Date Created: 01/06/2003

The following fields are updated automatically:
Version No: 3.0
Status: Approved
Next Review Date: 
Approved By: Workforce Strategy Group
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1. **Document Definition**

1.1 **References & Further Reading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref. No.</th>
<th>Document Title</th>
<th>Document Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Royal College of Nursing (2005) Guidance on Uniforms and Clothing Worn in the Delivery of Patient Care</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Royal College of Nursing (2005) ‘Wipe it out’ RCN campaign on MRSA <a href="http://www.rcn.org.uk/mrsa/lifesavinginformation">www.rcn.org.uk/mrsa/lifesavinginformation</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Steppie, S (2004) ‘Choosing safety over style’ Nursing Times 100 (48) pg 75</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1.2 **Glossary/Definitions**

The following acronyms are used within the document.

- The Trust = Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- PPE = Personal Protective Equipment
- ICU = Intensive Care Unit
- SCBU = Special Care Baby Unit

1.3 **Purpose**

1.4 **Scope**

The guidelines set out in this document apply to all employees of Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, and other workers including agency staff, contractors, work experience students and volunteers. Particular reference is made to individuals issued with uniforms and/or protective clothing. Some areas in the Trust, for example Theatres, Intensive Care, High Dependency Unit and Special Care Baby Unit wear specific clothing and as such Nurse Managers will be required to formulate a local uniform policy that supports this code. Any other exemptions must be discussed first with the Director of Nursing & Midwifery or her Deputy in her absence.
1.5 Regulatory Position

1.6 Special Cases

1.7 Equality Impact Statement

Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust aims to design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of its service, population and workforce, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others.

This document has been assessed against the Trust’s Equality Impact Assessment Tool. This document has been assessed as relevant to the duty.

1.8 Comments

Any comments on this document should, in the first instance, be addressed to the author.
2. Policy Details

2.1 Introduction

This document defines a dress code and minimum standards of appearance which are required by the Trust to portray a professional and corporate image to all, whether they are patients, visitors, clients or colleagues. The Trust also recognises that managers may need to adopt standards of dress code, which are specific to the department or area of work.

All employees and volunteers of Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust are, at all times whilst performing their duties, in the public eye and therefore representatives of the Trust.

3. Diversity

Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust recognises diversity within the workplace, however individuals should present a professional image whilst at work.

No individual will be discriminated against in furtherance of this code, on the grounds of sex, gender, ethnicity, religious beliefs, age or disability in line with the ‘Respecting Individual Differences’, The Management of Equality and Diversity Policy.

4. Objective

The overall objective is to ensure that through dress and personal appearance, employees/workers are able to maintain a professional image and inspire confidence as well as providing a safe, healthy and hygienic environment. This code sets a unified standard across the organisation, and will assist the patient, family, carer or the public to recognise the role an individual plays in the Trust.

5. Responsibility

Managers are responsible for ensuring the code is adhered to in respect of themselves and the employees they manage.

It is recognised that issues relating to clothing, personal hygiene and personal presentation may be sensitive. It is the responsibility of managers to counsel individuals in the first instance where the code is not upheld. All employees/workers have a duty to ensure that the provisions of this code are met.

It is the responsibility of the employee/worker/volunteer to adhere to this policy. In cases where the policy is abused, or where counselling has been unsuccessful, an investigation will be instigated and disciplinary action may be considered in accordance with the Trust Disciplinary Policy.

6. Clothing and Uniform

6.1 Staff who wear a uniform

Colour and style of uniform will be specified in accordance with corporate and professional identity. Uniforms are not considered personal protective equipment (PPE). PPE is worn in addition to uniforms if contamination is anticipated.
**ITEM**

**STANDARD**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shoes</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| • Low heeled, enclosed, covering the toes and offering support to the feet.  
| • Black/navy blue  
| • Soles should be of a material that reduces noise e.g. rubber and non slip  
| • Shoes must be decontaminated if splashed with blood or body fluids in line with the Trust decontamination policy  
| • Crock shoes or Trainers must not be worn in general wards, units and departments unless there is a medical reason that is supported by a letter from the Occupational Health Department (refer to section below for permitted areas) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialist footwear</th>
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</table>
| • Specialist footwear is permitted in certain areas i.e. Theatres, ICU, SCBU, Delivery Suite, Stores, Mortuary and A&E. If crocs are worn in these specialist areas, the top of the foot must be fully enclosed and back straps must be worn around the heel.  
| • Specialist footwear must not be worn outside the hospital |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nails</th>
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</table>
| • Fingernails must be kept clean and short, without nail polish or decoration.  
| • False nails and nail extensions must not be worn. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
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</table>
| • Hand washing techniques must comply with infection control guidelines.  
| • Hands must not be written on (e.g. bleep numbers) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hair</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| • Hair must be neat, tidy, clean and well groomed.  
| • Hair longer than shoulder length must be secured away from the face and collar  
| • Hair must be covered as appropriate in specific areas e.g. Theatres |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tattoos</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• As far as possible tattoos should be covered</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Make-Up</th>
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<tr>
<td>• False eye lashes must not be worn</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jewellery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • One ring - yellow/white metal band (no stones)  
| • No wristwatches permitted  
| • No bracelets/bangles/decorative wristbands  
| • One pair of stud earrings/nose stud  
| • All other facial piercing must be covered  
| • No neck chains |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tights/stockings/socks</th>
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</table>
| • Plain, dark socks with trousers  
| • Tights must be worn at all times with uniform dress and must be of black or neutral colour. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cardigans/ Jackets</th>
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</table>
| • Black or dark blue, but these must not be worn when delivering direct patient care  
| • Other colours may be worn if provided as part of the uniform |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trust Identification</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Kerri Card must be worn at all times for security reasons, and in accordance with the Patients Charter.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.2 Staff NOT wearing uniform who work in a clinical area and/or role

This applies to all staff that will be required to see patients and/or visit the clinical areas as part of their daily duties.

Employees who are not required to wear a uniform must ensure that clothing and appearance is in keeping with the corporate image, to protect both themselves from a Health and Safety perspective as well as the reputation of the Trust.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>STANDARD</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Shoes | • Enclosed, covering the toes and offering support to the feet.  
| • Soles should be of a material that reduces noise e.g. rubber and non slip  
| • Shoes must be decontaminated if splashed with blood or body fluids in line with the Trust decontamination policy |
### Nails
- Fingernails must be kept clean and short, without nail polish or decoration.
- False nails and nail extensions must not be worn.

### Hands
- Hand washing techniques must comply with infection control guidelines.
- Hands must not be written on (e.g. bleep numbers)

### Hair
- Hair must be neat, tidy, clean and well groomed.
- Hair longer than shoulder length must be secured away from the face and collar.
- Hair must be covered as appropriate in specific areas e.g. Theatres.

### Tattoos
- Tattoos should be covered as far as possible.

### Make-Up
- False eye lashes must not be worn.

### Jewellery
- One ring - yellow/white metal band (no stones)
- No bracelets/bangles
- One pair of stud earrings/nose stud
- All other facial piercing must be covered
- No visible neck chains
- No wristwatch

### Clothing
- Casual wear including jeans, mini-skirts, cropped trousers, shorts, trainers,
  revealing clothing or clothing bearing inappropriate slogans are not acceptable
  and must not be worn

### Trust Identification
- Kerri Card must be worn at all times for security reasons, and in accordance
  with the Patients charter.

## 6.3 Staff working in a non-clinical environment and do NOT wear a uniform

This applies to non-clinical staff with no direct patient contact as part of their normal working day e.g. Trust management, medical records.

It is an expectation that staff not required to wear uniform ensure that their clothing and appearance is in keeping with the corporate image.

Employees who do not have direct patient contact should exercise care and discretion when wearing jewellery and accessories, with regard to Health and Safety at Work, and public image.

### Shoes
- Should be appropriate to the environment and role

### Clothing
- mini-skirts, shorts, jeans, revealing clothing or clothing bearing inappropriate slogans are not acceptable and must not be worn

### Tattoos
- Tattoos should be covered as far as possible

### Trust Identification
- Kerri Card must be worn at all times for security reasons, and in accordance with the Patients charter

### Hands
- Hand washing techniques must comply with infection control guidelines.
- Hands must not be written on (e.g. bleep numbers)

## 6.4 Study Days

It is acknowledged that many members of staff attend these in their own time; however, as representatives of the Trust there is an expectation that staff attending in-house and external study days will maintain a professional image.

## 6.5 General Information regarding clothing and uniform

To minimise the risk of cross infection, clothing worn during direct patient contact should only be worn outside the workplace where employees are required to work off site, or when travelling directly to and from home. It is the employee/workers responsibility to ensure that patients and the general public
are not put at risk of infection, through the wearing of uniforms in public places. Entering commercial premises in uniform/protective clothing is unacceptable.

Uniforms issued to employees remain the property of Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and should be returned upon leaving the Trust. Individuals should take reasonable steps to ensure that uniforms are presentable and in a good condition. Where uniform and/or protective clothing is issued, it should be worn as directed in all clinical areas.

Uniforms provided by the Trust should not be worn when not working for the Trust i.e. as an agency locum member of staff.

Decorative buckles/belts must not be worn when involved in direct patient contact.

7. Personal hygiene

Uniforms must be regularly laundered and clean and all staff must be clean, presentable and well groomed when at work.

8. Protective clothing/shoes

In accordance with Health and Safety legislation, protective clothing should be worn where applicable, at all times. Reference should be made to the Latex Policy for guidance on the use of protective gloves.

Employees (including Bank and Agency staff) have a responsibility to follow Health and Safety Guidelines, if they do not they could be subject to disciplinary action in line with the Trust's Disciplinary Policy.

9. Laundering of Uniforms

Laundering uniforms at home is acceptable providing they are laundered separately from other clothing and at the highest temperature the fabric will withstand. Arrangements should be made for grossly contaminated uniforms to be laundered in the Central Laundry.

It is the responsibility of all staff living in Downsview House to deposit all used uniforms, including scrubs, into the appropriate linen skips in the main hospital. It is not acceptable for these to be left behind in the rooms as they present a Health and Safety as well as an infection control risk.

10. Integration

This procedure complies with the following statutory requirements;

Sex Discrimination Act (1975),
Race Relations Act (1975),
Disability Discrimination Act (1995),
Employment Relations Act (1996),
Human Rights Act (1998)
Part Time Workers legislation (2000),

11. Compliance with Code
Staff must comply with the code and exceptions must be agreed with line managers, both operational and professional. If a member of staff does not comply, then the disciplinary policy will be introduced at this stage.

12. **Audit**

This code will be the subject on an audit and the results will be reported within the appropriate Directorate and to the Clinical Managers Meeting.