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Name:

Email:

Date: 08/08/2023

Ref: 23-24 236

Dear

**RE: Freedom of Information request**

Thank you for your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which was received by the Trust on 12/07/2023. Please see responses to your requests below.

**1. Total number of hospital staff.**

Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust have a total head count of 8,693 staff.

**2. Percentage Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority (BAME) staff.**

27.9% of our staff are from a BAME background.

**3. Percentage of staff working in theatres.**

5.4% staff working in theatres.

**4. How many theatre staff members identify as Muslim this includes ODPs, theatre porters, medical and nursing staffing. Surgeons and Junior doctors.**

A total of five staff members identify as Muslim within the theatre team.

**a. Of these how many are female**

Four out of the five staff are female.

**5. A copy of your uniform policy**

Please see below the Trust's current uniform policy. We would like to highlight that we are in the final stages of updating this policy, but this is the current version in use.

**6. Any uniform policy related to the use of hijabs or religious head garments in the workplace or theatre.**

Please see refer to the uniform policy attached in question 5.

Please accept this letter as completion of your request. Please note that copies of this request will be held on file for three years before being confidentially destroyed.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of your request, please contact our Head of Information Governance on [Information.Governance@porthosp.nhs.uk](mailto:Information.Governance@porthosp.nhs.uk) or write to the above address and we will conduct an internal review. Upon review, if you are still dissatisfied, you may appeal our decision by contacting the Information Commissioner's Office; for more information, please visit the [ICO's website](#).

Please be aware, if we do not receive an appeal within 30 days of you receiving this letter, we will assume that you are satisfied with our response. If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Team



Working together  
for Patients



Working together  
with Compassion



Working together  
as One Team



Working together  
Always Improving

## UNIFORM & PROFESSIONAL IMAGE POLICY

Version	9
Sub-committee approval group	HR Policy Group
Document Manager (job title)	HR Manager
Date ratified	01 October 2020
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Electronic location	Management Policies
Related Procedural Documents	Infection Control Policy
Key Words (to aid with searching)	Dress code, uniform, professional image

### Summary

The standard of dress and general appearance of all staff plays an important part in promoting a professional and corporate image for the Trust to patients and members of the public. A consistent approach to the standard of dress and wearing of uniforms enables patients and members of the public to identify with ease Trust employees, and also addresses health and safety requirements.

### Version tracking

Version	Date Ratified	Brief Summary of Changes	Author
9	01/10/2020	Full review and Update	DCN
8	04/04/2019	General review and update	HR Manager
7	01/12/2016	Update to approval to change	OD Manager
6	24/08/2015	Updated and reviewed by the Professional Image 2 Listening into Action group – transferred from management policies	OD Manager

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## PROCESS

For quick reference the guide below is a summary of actions required. Additional details, by exception to cover any additional notes that supplement the quick reference guide can be found in Section 3 – Process.

This policy must be followed in full when developing or reviewing and amending Trust procedural documents.

For quick reference the guide below is a summary of actions required. This does not negate the need for the document author and others involved in the process to be aware of and follow the detail of this policy.

1. The public expect all healthcare workers to project a professional image.
2. Though not all staff may be required to wear a uniform, the requirement to present a smart, professional image applies to all staff
3. The wearing of an NHS uniform and/or workplace clothing must address key Health and Safety recommendations and adhere to infection prevention and control protocols.
4. Naked below the elbow guidance must be followed.
5. The Trust recognizes the diversity of cultures, religions and abilities of its employees and will take a sensitive approach when this affects professional image and uniform requirements.
6. Repeated failure to adhere to the set standards may constitute misconduct and employees may be subject to consideration of action under the Trust's Disciplinary Policy.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The standard of dress and general appearance of all staff plays an important part in promoting a professional and corporate image for the Trust to patients and members of the public. A consistent approach to the standard of dress and wearing of uniforms enables patients and members of the public to identify with ease Trust employees, and also addresses health and safety requirements.

## 2. SCOPE

All staff (permanent, locum, agency, bank and voluntary staff of the Trust, the Ministry of Defence Hospital Unit, Joint Hospitals Group South (Portsmouth) and Engie must follow the procedural documents agreed by the Trust. For staff other than those directly employed by the Trust the appropriate line management or chain of command will be taken into account. Breaches of adherence to Trust policy may have potential contractual consequences for the employee.

In the event of an infection outbreak, pandemic or major incident, the Trust recognises that it may not be possible to adhere to all aspects of this document. In such circumstances, staff should take advice from their manager and all possible action must be taken to maintain ongoing patient and staff safety.

The policy applies to all employees regardless of status, professional group or work location and includes anyone who works on Trust premises eg those on honorary contracts, agency workers, contractors, volunteers and students. This policy will allow Transgender employees to choose the dress code of their chosen gender.

*'In the event of an infection outbreak, flu pandemic or major incident, the Trust recognises that it may not be possible to adhere to all aspects of this document. In such circumstances, staff should take advice from their manager and all possible action must be taken to maintain ongoing patient and staff safety'*

All staff:

**Non-uniformed staff**

Staff who wear their own clothes to work.

**Uniformed Staff**

Staff who are provided with a uniform.

**2.1 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

All managers have a responsibility to ensure that:

- Staff are aware of the content of this policy
- All staff must comply with the policy.
- Local instructions specific to staff group(s) or specialty are developed
- Seek approval from the Director of Nursing or delegated individual for the introduction of a new clinical uniform or a change to the current clinical uniform. This applies to all staff groups.

**3. PROCESS**

The purpose of this policy is to clarify:

- the standards of dress and personal appearance expected of employees
- the specific requirements of clinical staff wearing uniforms

All staff will:

3.1 Wear their uniforms / work clothes in a manner that will project a professional image and will promote public confidence.

3.2 Wear identification (that includes their title, name and profession), clearly visible to members of the public, patients and other staff at all times. Lanyards should be of corporate design and colour and be made of cloth / plastic. Staff must remove their identification when not on Trust premises.

**3.3 Required standards for uniformed staff**

Are required to present in the appropriate uniform, so as to establish trust and confidence with their patients/customers and their relatives and carers.

REQUIRED STANDARD	RATIONALE
Wear only uniforms provided by the Trust, all should be in good repair and smart and maintain a professional image which cannot be deemed offensive to patients, colleagues and the public. They should be washed daily at 60 degrees centigrade and ironed prior to wearing.	Reduces the risk of cross-infection. Care of Linen Policy Professional appearance and patient confidence
No denim, jeggings, leggings, flip flops, beach shoes, shorts, strappy vest tops or off/open shoulder tops to be worn.	Professional appearance
Ties are not recommended and should not be worn in clinical areas.	Safety

Employees will be provided with enough uniforms for staff to change each day and must wear a clean uniform at the start of every shift.	Professional appearance Hygiene
All staff working in patient or public facing capacity, must change their uniform immediately should it become visibly soiled or contaminated	Infection control risk, safety and public image
Shoes must be fully enclosed, water repellent, flat heeled, in good condition, a good fit and fully black in colour (inc sole). They should be soft soled for reduced noise and appropriate for the area staff work in. Training shoes are acceptable if they meet this requirement fully.	Shoes in a poor state of repair and those with no tread are a safety risk. Noise at Night
Only staff wearing scrubs (exc. Smart Scrubs) may wear clogs These should be black or white in colour, unless alternative colour provided by the Trust. The following footwear is not suitable for use in the operating department: outdoor shoes, Crocs and any footwear with cloth/ material insets, containing wood or cork. In some areas protective footwear provided must be worn.	It cannot be decontaminated, and/or does not provide adequate protection from spillages and dropped equipment H&S statutory requirement
Staff who wear a uniform dress, must wear black or skin coloured hosiery. In extremely hot weather approval will be sought from the Chief Nurse for a period of relaxation to this requirement and communicated via email to all staff.	Professional appearance
Shorts are able to be worn by clinical staff and approval will be sought by the Divisional lead for Allied Health Professionals and communicated via email. The shorts should be of an appropriate colour, tailored and to the knee.	Professional appearance
Naked Below the Elbow 'Hand Hygiene Policy' control of infection guidance must be complied with.	Infection control
Uniforms which are damaged beyond repair or are stained irrevocably, will be replaced on a one for one basis.	Professional appearance
Hair must be clean, neat and tidy and of a colour that would not draw undue attention. Headscarves worn for religious purposes are permitted, but should be cleaned and laundered daily. Beards must be neatly trimmed unless it reflects an individual's religious belief where it must be	Professional appearance Potential for wound contamination from loose hair. When hair is touched micro-organisms on the hands may transfer to the hair and from hair to the hands, potentially increasing risk of infection.

tidy. Hair must be securely tied so that it does not touch the uniform or the patient. Hair accessories and fastenings should be discreet.	
Only one plain metal band ring to be worn, no wristwatches or necklaces to be worn in any clinical environment. One pair of plain ear studs and one kara can be worn.	Jewellery may be hazardous for the following reasons: Jewellery, even plain gold bands (wedding rings) have been shown to colonise with micro-organisms (Hoffman et al 1985) Rings with stones are hazardous and may cause trauma to patients, stones in jewellery may become dislodged. Jewellery that is hanging e.g. necklaces, could be dangerous to staff and patients in potentially violent situations Appropriate hand washing techniques are prevented by the wearing of wristwatches
Piercings: Earrings: one pair of small plain metal studs only should be worn. All new visible body piercings must be covered with a blue plaster until the wound has healed. Once the wound has healed, all associated piercing jewellery must be removed. No other visible piercings are allowed.	New wounds shed high levels of bacteria. Professional appearance is important for patient confidence. Food hygiene regulations
Tattoos that could be deemed inappropriate or offensive to any patient or member of staff must be covered	Professional appearance
Staff must not wear, acrylic or gel nails and/or nail varnish and keep their finger nails clean and short.	Reduce chance of transferring bacteria under the fingernails, reduces risk of trauma when involved in direct patient contact. Professional appearance
Make up should be discrete and fragranced products kept to a minimum.	Professional appearance
Belts/Epauettes: Belts should not be worn when involved in direct patient contact/care. When they are worn, belts should be clean and laundered at least monthly. Epauettes should be clean and laundered at least weekly.	Risk of trauma to patients. Ease of movement for staff. Reduces risk of cross-infection
Staff must ensure they are clean and tidy and they take steps to keep unpleasant body odour to a minimum.	For patient and colleagues comfort
Staff are prohibited from smoking or vaping whilst in their uniform, irrespective of	Professional appearance



whether the employee is off duty or off the Trust premises.	
Additional garments e.g. fleece/cardigan: must not be worn when delivering direct patient care. Fleece/cardigans that are worn must be of a plain dark colour, must not have any non-Trust logo's and be of smart appearance. When the environmental temperature is low (e.g. on night shifts) a fleece or cardigan may be worn but removed if involved in any clinical care (including preparation of drugs). Theatre jackets may be worn when the environmental temperature is low (e.g. cardiac) but must be removed if direct patient care is involved.	Reduces risk of cross infection

3.3.1 Uniform provided will be worn appropriately in line with local procedures<sup>1</sup>. Staff will wear the equivalent standard of dress to:

- Fulfill cultural, religious and ethnic needs.
- Meet specific needs of staff with disabilities.

3.3.2 The needs of pregnant and disabled staff must be assessed, and advice obtained through the Health Safety and Wellbeing Department.

3.3.3 Changing facilities and hospital laundering services will be used where provided<sup>2</sup>. In the absence of on-site facilities, guidance for travelling to and from work, and laundering of uniforms (App I) must be followed.

Uniformed staff must present a professional image in terms of their appearance.

3.4 The Trust is aware that different cultures may have specific requirements that may affect work and will make efforts to identify these and work with employees to meet them wherever possible and that different cultures have specific requirements affecting work in a medical environment. Certain customs of traditional dress need to be considered in this context.

3.5 Staff and students are expected to care for patients of both sexes and from a variety of backgrounds and lifestyles. Both verbal and non-verbal communication is essential. For this reason the face should not be covered and dark glasses which prevent eye contact should not be worn. In operating theatres, staff and students should ask for a surgical cap called a helmet (due to its shape) which should be worn over scarves and/or a surgical gown requested from theatre staff.

#### **Wearing of uniform outside Trust premises (subject to immediate change due to a pandemic and application of Appendix A)**

The wearing of any designated uniforms (including scrubs) outside Trust premises is not permitted unless on Trust business or travelling directly to and from work. When travelling to and from work, or when travelling on Trust business, the uniform should be covered appropriately to maintain professional

<sup>1</sup> Managers will provide new and current staff with local uniform instructions specific to that staff group, speciality or service.

<sup>2</sup> Hospital Laundry Arrangements for used and infected linen: HSG(95)18 NHSE

appearance. Although uniforms can become contaminated with micro-organisms, there is inconclusive evidence regarding the link between contaminated clothing and the spread of infection; however it is important not to wear uniforms outside of work to promote the Trust's public image and instil public confidence.

Requests to wear uniform outside of the Trust premises for formal occasions must be made to the relevant director for the professional group.

Theatre scrubs (raspberry colour) must not be worn outside the Trust at any time. Staff must change out of these scrubs before leaving the theatre complex.

**Please see the table below for guidance on wearing uniform whilst using various methods of transport:**

Transport Method	Uniform worn?
Walking	Uniform to be fully covered, or own clothes
Public transport	Uniform to be fully covered, or own clothes
Car (from hospital car park or park and ride).	Uniform can be worn, ideally not visible when seated.
Cycling	No uniform to be worn

#### Theatre attire:

##### Within the Theatre Complex

- All Theatre personnel, including medical staff, should read the Trust Operating Theatre Uniform Guidance, freshly laundered raspberry scrubs should be used daily and changed every time it becomes stained with blood or body fluids.
- Theatre footwear provided by the department should be sent to HSDU for washing. Personal footwear may be worn in the Theatre complex but should be washed on a regular basis. Open weave type footwear, croc style shoes are **not** acceptable.
- Outside the Operating Theatre, but within the Theatre Complex, theatre personnel do not need to wear masks.
- Every individual in the Operating Theatre should wear masks when prostheses/implantation surgery is taking place, or if the patient is immunocompromised. The Infection Control Team recommend that in other cases, all the scrub team should wear masks, but that the wearing of masks by other Operating Theatre staff should be at the discretion of the Consultant Surgeons involved. Upper GI and Gynae surgeons do not need to wear masks in their theatre sessions.
- Hats should be worn to cover the hair & ears. These can either be disposable or cotton.
- Hijabs should be washed daily or use the longer hats provided by the department.
- Hair & jewellery is the same as for the Trust Uniform policy, All head and facial hair, including side hair, ears and hair at the nape of the neck should be covered completely by a clean theatre hat/ cap as surgical site infections have been traced to organisms isolated from the hair and scalp. Disposable headwear is preferable, however cloth hats are permissible. It must be changed if it becomes contaminated.
- Beards should be covered with a snood.

- Plastic overshoes should not be worn at any time. All staff who need to access the theatre complex must change into theatre scrubs. Staff, visitors or parents, should **not** wear plastic overshoes.

**Outside the Theatre Complex and for other reasons (visiting other parts of the hospital, attending meetings)**

- Gowns masks and hats are to be removed before leaving the Theatre complex.
- Theatre staff can visit all areas of the Trust wearing their scrubs. This includes the canteen and coffee shop.
- Scrubs are not to be worn outside the Hospital building.

**3.3.6 Non-uniformed Staff:**

Should wear business casual dress as a matter of course and business smart (formal attire) when appropriate to project a professional image.

<b>Professional dress for non-uniformed staff</b>	
<b>All clothes should be of good repair so as not to be deemed offensive to patients, colleagues and the public</b>	
<b>Business Casual</b>	
Men – what to wear	Collared tucked in shirt Polo shirt Sweater Tie (optional) Jacket (optional) Formal style trouser Formal style enclosed boots / shoes
Men – what not to wear	Jeans, cargo trousers T-shirt (unless under a shirt) Sweat pants Shorts Camouflage (unless part of military uniform) Flip flops, sandals Sports shoes Clothing with a slogan
Women – what to wear	Skirt (not mini) Dress (not mini) Tailored trousers Jacket or smart cardigan Shirt, Blouse Boots, flats or low-mid heels in a subtle colour Open toed shoes and sandals (in non-clinical area only see 6.2.2)
Women – what not to wear	Jeans, leggings, jeggings Miniskirts, mini dresses, Sun, beach or spaghetti strap dresses Halter tops, tops with bare shoulders

	Any clothing that is overly revealing of cleavage, stomach, shoulders or thighs is unacceptable Sweatshirts Flip flops, stiletto heels, sloganed clothing. Sports shoes
<b>Business smart</b>	
Men	Tailored coordinated suit, blazer Formal shirt, conservative tie (optional) Dark enclosed shoes and socks
Women	Tailored, coordinated suit with skirt length as above Trousers, blouse with conservative necklines Classic toe, low/medium heeled shoes

Required standards of Appearance for all Non-Uniformed:

REQUIRED STANDARD	RATIONALE
Hair must be clean, neat and tidy and a colour that would not draw undue attention. Hair accessories and fastenings should be discreet. Any headwear worn for religious purposes should be clean and laundered on a daily basis and should be in keeping with the overall corporate appearance.	Corporate appearance.
Nail varnish, acrylic and gel nails must be discreet and enable the wearer to carry out their duties effectively.	Corporate appearance. Excessively long nails can interfere with keyboard and other duties.
Jewellery, piercings & makeup should be discreet and in keeping with the overall appearance. Excessively long or hanging jewellery should be avoided.	Corporate appearance. Excessively long or hanging jewellery could pose a safety risk.
All clothes/ uniform should be smart, clean and in good repair. An overall professional appearance which cannot be deemed offensive to patients, colleagues and the public should be maintained e.g. no low necklines, bare midriffs, very short skirts or potentially offensive slogans or tattoos. Denim, leggings and strappy vest tops should not be worn. In some areas defined safety clothing should be worn to comply with legislation (detailed in local guidance)	Corporate appearance. Health and Safety guidance.
Tattoos that could be deemed inappropriate or offensive to any patient or member of staff must be covered	Professional appearance.

3.3.7 Shoes for non-clinical staff should be professional and smart, fully enclosed and with a low / mid heel, but in extreme weather or for medical reasons, sandals may be allowed at the discretion of the line manager. Soft-soled shoes will be worn by staff who visit clinical areas ward areas to reduce noise. Training shoes or pumps should not be worn unless approved as suitable by the manager.

3.3.8 Non-uniformed staff will wear protective clothing if involved in direct contact with patients as described in the Infection Control Policy and Guidelines.

3.3.9 Non-uniformed staff involved in direct patient contact will wear short sleeves/ sleeves rolled up and remove all jewellery including wrist watches (plain wedding band allowed) whilst in direct contact with patients to enable adequate hand washing (Naked Below the Elbow).

#### 4 TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

All managers will bring to the attention of staff the requirements of the policy on induction and any updates to policy to established staff.

#### 5 REFERENCES AND ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION

Guidance on uniforms and clothing worn in the delivery of patient care - Royal College of Nursing 2005  
Pathogenic Organisms associated with artificial fingernails worn by health care workers, Hedderwick, McNeil, Lyons and Kauffmann: Infection control and Hospital Epidemiology, Aug 2000, Vol 21, Iss 8; page 505

Hospital Laundry Arrangements for used and infected linen: HSG(95)18 NHSE

PHT Health and Safety Temperature Guidance - Liquid Nitrogen - Code of Practice

*An Organisation-Wide Policy for the Development and Management of Procedural Documents*: NHSLA, May 2007. [www.nhsla.com/Publications/](http://www.nhsla.com/Publications/)

#### 6 EQUALITY IMPACT SCREENING

The Trust is committed to ensuring that, as far as is reasonably practicable, the way we provide services to the public and the way we treat our staff reflects their individual needs and does not discriminate against individuals or groups on any grounds.

Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust is committed to ensuring that, as far as is reasonably practicable, the way we provide services to the public and the way we treat our staff reflects their individual needs and does not discriminate against individuals or groups on any grounds.

This policy has been assessed accordingly.

Our values are the core of what Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust is and what we cherish. They are beliefs that manifest in the behaviours our employees display in the workplace.

Our Values were developed after listening to our staff. They bring the Trust closer to its vision to be the best hospital, providing the best care by the best people and ensure that our patients are at the centre of all we do.

We are committed to promoting a culture founded on these values which form the 'heart' of our Trust:

#### ***Working together....***

for Patients

with Compassion

as One Team

Always Improving

This policy should be read and implemented with the Trust Values in mind at all times. This procedural document has been assessed accordingly. The assessment document is held centrally and is available by contacting the Governance Co-ordinator.

**7 MONITORING COMPLIANCE**

*Detail how compliance with the policy will be monitored. If possible this should make use of existing outcomes metrics in the Trust that demonstrate effectiveness and compliance.*

This procedural document will be monitored to ensure it is effective and to provide assurance of compliance.

Element to be monitored	Lead	Tool	Frequency of Report	Reporting arrangements	Lead
Improvements to Trusts professional image	Divisional and Corporate leads	National Staff Survey	Annual NSS action plan	Policy audit report to: Divisional and Corporate performance reviews	Divisional and Corporate Management teams
				Policy audit report to:	
				Policy audit report to:	

## Appendix A: Roles and Responsibilities

### Clinical Uniforms – During A Pandemic

#### Introduction

These guidelines have been written to inform staff of the changes required to the Trust Uniform Policy when the Trust is operating during a pandemic. These guidelines will remain in place until further notice.

The appropriate use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will protect staff uniform from contamination in most circumstances. The Trust has provided changing facilities, where staff can change in to and out of uniforms prior to and post work.

#### Clinical Patient Facing Staff

- Staff MUST not travel to and from work via any transport method in their clinical uniforms.
- Clean uniforms should be brought to work in a clean bag.
- All Clinical staff that currently wear a Trust issued uniform, will continue to wear the issued uniform. Staff should have the minimum of three sets of uniform, ideally they should hold five sets. (Any staff who do not have three sets should inform their manager ASAP).
- Clinical patient facing staff who do not usually wear uniform will be issued one set of surgical scrubs on a daily basis.

#### Self Laundering of Clinical Uniforms

Staff laundering their own uniforms should:

- Take their clinical uniform home in a designated plastic/laundry bag.
- Place their uniform directly into the washing machine.
- Wash their uniforms at 60°C as a minimum temperature, (ideally at maximum temperature the fabric can tolerate).
- Wash uniforms separately from other household items.
- If possible tumble dry
- Iron the uniform at maximum temperature the fabric can tolerate.

#### Trust Laundered Scrubs

On arrival at work:

- Those personnel who are entitled to wear scrubs will collect their one set of scrubs for the day, from the Theatres changing room.
- Change into scrubs.
- Move to clinical area.

On completion of work:

- Move to changing area
- Place scrubs into laundry bin
- Wash your hands
- Change back into personal clothing.

No scrubs are to be worn outside of the Trust. Clinical uniforms should not be worn outside of the Trust grounds.

### **Personnel within the Trust Hotel Accommodation**

Personnel who are living within any of the designated hotels will be required to have their clinical uniforms only laundered, will be done by the Trust.

- Dirty clinical uniforms should be placed in a plastic bag and are to be dropped at the sewing room B level at the end of your shift.
- Clean clinical uniforms can be collected from A level.

### **Personal Clothing**

Personal clothing will be laundered via the hotel laundry service. This is **Non Clinical** clothing only.

Non uniformed staff should not be involved with patient care however practically these staff should change and wash their personal clothing daily.