



**News Release
Healthcare Laundry Accreditation Council**

HLAC Says Infection Prevention Strategies Are Incomplete Without Program to Ensure Hygienically Clean, Safe HCTs

PLAINFIELD, IL - Sept. 2, 2016 - The Healthcare Laundry Accreditation Council (HLAC) says there's a need for increased awareness among Infection Preventionists (IPs) that improperly laundered healthcare textiles (HCTs) can pose as a vehicle for the transfer of pathogens to patients and hospital workers.

"A program that ensures hygienically clean and safe HCTs must be part of ... infection prevention strategy," writes HLAC Board President John Scherberger in a commentary in *Infection Control Today* ("A Question for the IP: How Is Your Facility Laundering Its Linens Today?" - Aug. 25, 2016). HLAC is a nonprofit organization that inspects and accredits laundries worldwide that process reusable textiles for hospitals, nursing homes and other healthcare facilities.



In his commentary, Scherberger says the IP is the expert in preventing and controlling the spread of infectious diseases. But, "all too often IPs are not making the connection" to the fact that improperly laundered HCTs can pass bacteria to patients and hospital staff.

He notes that HLAC accreditation increasingly is becoming a requirement of informed hospitals for healthcare laundry to be considered as an authorized vendor. HLAC-accredited laundries process HCTs based on the highest standards for patient safety and infection prevention. These HLAC Accreditation Standards have been developed based on federal regulations and guidelines as well as best industry practices.

"The principal benefit of HLAC accreditation to healthcare customers is the knowledge and confidence that their textile provider is meeting the highest standards in the industry for processing healthcare textiles, including strict adherence to federal government regulations and guidelines," Scherberger says. "The customer can expect a consistent and smooth flow of clean textiles; and, ultimately, the knowledge of safety for their employees and the end user - the patient."

Particularly relevant to the IP, Scherberger references a new report highlighting evidence-based strategies that notes that proper laundering and handling are important in achieving and maintaining the hygienically clean quality of healthcare fabrics and textiles delivered to the point of care.

"This study is notably comprehensive - it is based on findings and recommendations from peer-reviewed studies, as well as current standards and guidelines to inhibit serious contamination during the processing of HCTs, many of which are applicable to HLAC standards," Scherberger says. "The study also makes the case that healthcare epidemiologists would benefit from gaining familiarity with HCT laundering, facility policies and procedures for management of hygienically clean HCTs - and it encourages on-site inspections of the healthcare laundry by hospital staff to ensure safe and effective service."

About HLAC

The Healthcare Laundry Accreditation Council (HLAC) is a nonprofit organization formed for the purpose of inspecting and accrediting laundries processing healthcare textiles for hospitals, nursing homes and other healthcare facilities. Visit www.hlacnet.org and on Twitter [@NewsHlac](https://twitter.com/NewsHlac).

HLAC Information: Regina Baras 855-277-HLAC (4522); rbaras@hlacnet.org
Media Information: Ken Swoyer 847-424-1256; kswoyer@hlacnet.org
www.hlacnet.org
