



**News Release  
Healthcare Laundry Accreditation Council**

**Following Up Earlier Concerns  
About Unused HCTs  
HLAC Taps Expertise of Its Accredited  
Laundries**

***Focus: Collaboration Between Healthcare Facility  
and Laundry***

PLAINFIELD, IL - July 29, 2016 - The Healthcare Laundry Accreditation Council (HLAC) is tapping the expertise of its HLAC-accredited laundries to learn best practices regarding the issue of unused healthcare textiles (HCTs). This ongoing effort is a follow-up to concerns raised by HLAC earlier this year over unsafe industry practices - specifically regarding the back-and-forth on exchange carts of unused HCTs between hospitals and laundries.

"HLAC is visiting accredited laundries to research best practices that are in place to safeguard HCTs so they are adequately protected from contamination in the laundry plant, during transport and at the hospital," said John Scherberger, board president of HLAC, which inspects and accredits laundries that process reusable healthcare textiles. "We welcome invitations to conduct site visits to see demonstrations of successful operations that ensure HCT hygienic integrity."

"For example, at one laundry we visited, we observed the importance of collaboration to ensure that hygienically clean HCTs maintain their hygienic integrity: processes and procedures that are beneficial to and attainable by both the healthcare and laundry facilities while following HLAC Standards," Scherberger said. "We found their processes exemplary in the way they meet client and laundry needs simultaneously - all to the benefit of patient and staff safety."

HLAC first raised the issue regarding unused HCTs in an article, "A Strategy for Overcoming the Hidden Dangers of Improperly Used Exchange Carts," published in *Facility Care* magazine (April 8, 2016). In the article, HLAC board members Gregory Gicewicz and Carol McLay expressed their concerns that the hygienic integrity of textiles being returned unused from hospitals was not being maintained.

As a result of these concerns, HLAC declared at that time a need to determine whether its standards regarding exchange cart systems need to be clarified or changed to resolve any existing confusion. "There is no time limit imposed for us to discover what works and what doesn't," Scherberger said. "We are not going to rush into modifying standards or setting new standards when no standards are needed."

"HLAC does not object to properly designed, executed and maintained processes, including exchange carts, that are the result of collaboration, that safeguard HCT integrity, and that ensure functional separation of clean and soiled HCTs," Scherberger said. "That is the purpose of our visits with our accredited laundries: to seek out this kind of expertise and ultimately share what we learn with the industry. We will continue to address this topic regularly as more information is learned."

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**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](http://www.hlacnet.org) and on Twitter [@NewsHlac](https://twitter.com/NewsHlac).

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