NAME OF HOSPITAL

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENTAL POLICY STATEMENT

TITLE:
Handling and Storage of Hygienically Clean Healthcare Textiles

PURPOSE:
To ensure that all facility staff engaged in the handling and storage of hygienically clean healthcare textiles (HCTs) follow prescribed processes that will ensure these textiles delivered to the facility remain hygienically clean until such time as they are used by patients.

ORIGINATION DATE: REVISION DATES:

REVIEW DATES:

RESPONSIBILITY: Linen/Laundry Department, Loading Dock Staff, Environmental Services and Nursing, Operating Room staff and staff that handle HCTs that will come in contact with patient skin such as Radiology technicians and assorted Therapists

POLICY:
HCTs include all textiles intended for patient use, healthcare outerwear (e.g., scrub suits, physician coats, lab coats), as well as infection prevention textiles used by the Environmental Services department. Multi-Drug Resistant Organisms (MDRO) and other pathogens may be present in all areas of the facility. In order to meet the mission of the facility to provide a safe environment for staff and patients as well as to ensure positive quality patient outcomes, all facility staff need to understand the necessity of handling hygienically clean HCTs with care. Therefore, it is the intention of this facility that hygienically clean HCTs will be managed using best practices that will prevent inadvertent contamination of HCTs with MDROs or other pathogens.

It is also the policy of this facility to incorporate and follow all applicable healthcare textile guidelines and standards of the CDC, CMS, OSHA and Healthcare Laundry Accreditation Council (HLAC) Standards to ensure that HCTs are not a source of healthcare associated infections (HAIs). It is the responsibility of all above listed departments to incorporate the essential practices for management of HCTs from the regulations, standards, and guidelines listed below and to ensure that department staff are thoroughly trained to implement these practices to the fullest extent:


Copyright 2015 Healthcare Laundry Accreditation Council (HLAC)
NAME OF HOSPITAL

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENTAL POLICY STATEMENT

- www.cdc.gov/HAI/prevent/laundry.html
- www.hlacnet.org/standards.php
- www.ndhealth.gov/disease/hai/Docs/WebEx/NDHCFLaundry11162011.pdf
- shea.confex.com/shea/2010/webprogram/Paper2072.html

MOVEMENT FROM SHIPPING DOCK PROCEDURES:

1. Follow Healthcare Laundry Accreditation Council Standards 2.2.2.2 and 2.2.2.3.
2. Once HCT trucks are dropped off at an outside loading dock, their exterior surfaces are to be considered no longer clean. The trucks are to be moved to inside the facility in a timely manner to avoid the contamination potential from the weather, the environment, or unauthorized personnel tampering with the HCTs.
3. The HCT trucks are to be moved to a clean, dry storage area and unloaded as soon as possible. Plastic or disposable covers are to be removed prior to moving the trucks into a linen storage room for unloading as the covers are to be considered soiled/contaminated.
4. Hands are to be washed after removing and disposing of the truck covers.
5. Regular hand washing/sanitizing for staff is to be accomplished:
   a. Prior to transporting the clean HCTs into the linen storage area(s);
   b. Prior to touching any hygienically clean HCTs;
   c. Any time hands contact surfaces that are not as hygienically clean as the HCTs
6. Hands should be washed then gloved prior to handling clean HCTs.
7. Staff handling clean HCTs should wear single use (not necessarily disposable), clean, long sleeve garments such as isolation gowns to prevent the transference of pathogens and other flora and fauna from the staff member's arms and or uniform to the hygienically clean HCTs.
8. All clean HCT storage racks or carts must be covered with commercially available covers to prevent the contamination of HCTs from airborne dust, dirt, and pathogens.

Copyright 2015 Healthcare Laundry Accreditation Council (HLAC)
STORAGE OF HYGIENICALLY CLEAN HEALTHCARE TEXTILES

Clean HCT carts should always be located in secure closets or rooms to prevent patients, family members and all other personnel from handling the textiles without taking proper contact precautions.

1. The HCT staging and storage areas for cleaned, processed textiles must be in compliance with the following specifications:
   a. Free of vermin;
   b. Devoid of lint;
   c. Without obvious moisture contamination, including ceiling tiles staining
2. The ventilation of the storage area shall:
   a. Be designed to prevent accumulation of dust and lint;
   b. Be under positive air pressure relative to adjacent spaces, thereby preventing intrusion of contamination from soiled textile areas.
3. Shelves shall be placed approximately 2 inches from the wall to safeguard package integrity.
4. The bottom shelf shall be free from visible soil and dirt and a minimum of 8 inches from the floor for accessible cleaning and shall be of solid nonporous construction
5. The top shelf shall be a minimum of 18 inches below the ceiling to prevent impairment of ventilation, sprinklers, and lighting.
6. Cardboard must not be used as shelf liner material in the clean textiles storage area.

PATIENT ROOM PROCEDURES:

1. To maintain the HCTs' cleanliness and to avoid contact of the HCTs with contaminated environmental surfaces, all contact with clean HCTs and the isolation gown must be above waist level as contact with contaminated surfaces and the garment in the thigh and hip areas is possible.
2. The clean isolation gown will come in contact with clean HCTs. Therefore, staff must avoid all gown contact with contaminated surfaces.
3. The patient bed is typically the last piece of furniture completed in a terminally processed room so the staff must ensure that it is completely dry of disinfectant prior to making of the bed.
4. The Hygiene Specialist’s hands must be washed or sanitized and gloved prior to touching the necessary bed linens. It must be presumed that linen storage covers, cabinet and door handles and other touch-points are contaminated and those surfaces must be avoided with gloved hands.
NAME OF HOSPITAL

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPARTMENTAL POLICY STATEMENT

5. Although a clean isolation gown is in use, HCTs are not to be carried against the body or exposed to ungloved hands.

GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR MANAGEMENT OF HCTs IN PATIENT-CARE AREAS:

1. If HCTs must be left unattended either in carts in corridors or at a charting workstation, the cart and workstation should be cleaned, disinfected and capable of being locked so as to ensure the hygienic integrity of the HCTs.
2. HCTs should not be stored in patient rooms to minimize excess laundering expenses.
3. All HCTs carried into a room occupied by a patient: 1) shall be considered reserved for use by the current patient; 2) shall not be transferred to another patient's room; and 3) are to be considered contaminated in regards for use by another patient.
4. Clean HCTs that are carried into an occupied room cannot be placed back into clean inventory, even if not used or taken into the room by mistake.

PERSONAL HANDLING OF HCTs:

Due to the proliferation of pathogens on uniforms, staff shall never hug HCTs to their uniform when:
- Unloading from laundry bins/trucks onto racks in a clean linen storage area;
- Moving HCTs from storage area to carts;
- Removing from linen carts to a patient room;
- When HCTs are being used to make the patient bed.

COMPETENCY:

Demonstration of competency by individual staff members in the area of proper handling and storage of hygienically clean textiles as included in this Policy and Procedure is to be fulfilled in accordance with established facility education and training guidelines.