



Linen Containment & Processing Procedure

Procedure Number
WCDHB-IC-0022

Version Nos:
6

1. Purpose

This Procedure outlines the process for the containment and processing of linen by West Coast District Health Board (WCDHB) staff members.

2. Application

This Procedure is to be followed by all clinical staff throughout WCDHB

3. Definitions

There are no definitions associated with this Procedure.

4. Responsibilities

For the purposes of this Procedure:

Clinical Nurse Specialist - Infection Control is required to:

- oversee all aspects of this Procedure
- monitor the performance of WCDHB staff members in relation to this Procedure;

Staff Members are required to:

- ensure they abide by the requirements of this Procedure;
- abide by all WCDHB Infection Control Policy and Procedures;
- abide by all WCDHB Health and Safety Policy and Procedure.

5. Resources Required

This Procedure requires:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------|
| i) Linen bags | iii) Gloves |
| ii) Transport trolleys | iv) Aprons |

6. Process

1.00 Collection of Linen

- 1.01 Soiled linen should be collected and handled with minimal agitation to prevent contamination of the air and the persons handling the linen.
- 1.02 If linen is visibly / heavily soiled, gloves and aprons may be necessary.
- 1.03 Hands should always be washed after handling soiled linen.
- 1.04 All soiled linen must be bagged at the location where it is used. It must not be placed on the floor or onto furniture or carried to the linen runner in another room. It must not be placed on another bed while bed making is in progress.
- 1.05 Linen should not be stored in bathrooms or sluice rooms.
- 1.06 Care must be taken that other objects such as sharps, patient's personal items and teeth, incontinent sheets etc are not discarded with the linen.



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- 1.07 Linen bags are not to be overfilled.
- 1.08 All linen trolleys/runners re to be covered
- 1.09 Infectious linen must be double bagged into the Impervious white linen bag with yellow stripe.
- 1.10 Items that are very wet may be wrapped in an item of dry linen to prevent seepage through the linen bag.
- 1.11 Items that are very wet and contaminated with blood or body fluids, and could leak through the linen bag, must be placed into a red striped impervious linen bag.
- 1.12 Personal washing may be hand washed on the ward or washed by the laundry as long as it is clearly labeled as such.
- 1.13 Toys, blankets, pillows from an infectious patient that cannot be wiped down with disinfectant are to be double bagged and labeled as such to go to the laundry.
- 1.14 Trolleys for transporting linen must not be used for other purposes and should not pass through food processing areas. They should be cleaned regularly after use.
- 1.15 All staff members involved with sorting and handling soiled linen must wear protective apparel to reduce skin contamination and soiling of clothing.
- 1.16 Linen should be regularly removed from the wards and transported to the laundry for processing as soon as possible to reduce smell, staining, and development of mould. The sorting area must be free of vermin.
- 1.17 Clean linen should be properly protected during storage and transport to prevent contamination, and be at least six inches from the floor.
- 1.18 In the laundry, clean linen storage rooms are separate from the main laundering facility and staff who work with clean linen do so exclusively.

2.00 Domestic Washing Machines:

- 2.01 In small units and residential homes with long term care facilities, domestic washing machines may be used for the laundering of personal items such as clothing, personalised clothing, bed linen and swimming towels.
- 2.02 Separate loads for each patient are recommended.
- 2.03 Kitchen tea towels and dish clothes should be pre soaked and given a hot wash separately from other linen.
- 2.04 Soiled clothing should be rinsed well and soaked before given a hot wash.
- 2.05 Clothing soiled by faeces should be managed separately.
- 2.06 Underwear may be pre soaked before laundering.



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7. Precautions And Considerations

- ➔ Soiled linen should be collected and handled with minimal agitation to prevent contamination of the air and the persons handling the linen.
- ➔ All soiled linen must be bagged at the location where it is used
- ➔ Personal washing may be hand washed on the ward or washed by the laundry as long as it is clearly labeled as such.

8. References

New Zealand Standard – Infection Control (NZS 8142:2000)

9. Related Documents

WCDHB Infection Control Procedure Manual

WCDHB Health and Safety Policy and Procedure Manual

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