Dress Code and Appearance at Work
(including National Uniform Policy)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author:</th>
<th>Head of HR – Policy &amp; Governance</th>
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<tr>
<td>Responsible Lead Executive Director:</td>
<td>Director of Human Resources</td>
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<td>Endorsing Body:</td>
<td>Human Resources Forum</td>
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<td>Governance or Assurance Committee</td>
<td>Staff Governance</td>
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<td>Implementation Date:</td>
<td>July 2015</td>
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CONSULTATION AND DISTRIBUTION RECORD

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Distribution:
• NHSL Intranet: Firstport

CHANGE RECORD

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<td>24.2.2015</td>
<td>G Reilly</td>
<td>Title – from Uniform, Workwear and General Dress code Policy</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Policy focuses on dress code and appearance for all staff, with additional requirements for those working in a clinical capacity, whether in National uniform or not.</td>
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<td>CEL 42(2010) is appended to the policy, not embedded in the main document.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Section 4 has been reduced and simplified with content irrelevant to dress code and appearance removed</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2018</td>
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<td>General Data Protection Regulations statement added into section 3 and updated name of Data Protection Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>21.05.18</td>
<td>Ruth Hibbert</td>
<td>Update to reflect DL (2018)</td>
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1. **INTRODUCTION**

NHS Lanarkshire’s main purpose is to provide effective diagnosis, care and treatment to the people who use our services. Patients and the wider public should have complete confidence in the cleanliness and hygiene of their healthcare environment. All staff are required to present a smart and professional image to the public and service users of all ages and backgrounds.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following NHS Lanarkshire policies and procedures, available on Firstport;

- Infection Control Manual, particularly standard infection control precautions
- Hand Hygiene instructions
- Equality, Diversity and Human Rights policy
- No Smoking policy
- Standard Operating Procedure for Perioperative Attire
- Employee Conduct policy

Staff who are required to wear a uniform should also read the Scottish Government National uniform policy contained in **DL (2018) 4 National Uniform Policy, Dress Code and Laundering Policy**, which is attached to this policy as Appendix 1

2. **AIM, PURPOSE AND OUTCOMES**

This policy has been developed to ensure that;

- staff are aware of the uniform and/or dress standards that apply to them
- staff dress for work in a way that does not cause offence to patients, members of the public or colleagues
- priority is given to health and safety considerations and infection control
- the uniform and/or dress code requirements for particular groups of staff are clarified.

The policy includes;

- the requirements of the National uniform policy for those staff required to wear a uniform.
- NHS Lanarkshire’s changing arrangements for staff required to wear a uniform.
- guidance on Personal Protective Equipment
- guidance on washing uniforms and workwear

3. **SCOPE**

3.1 **Who is the Policy intended to Benefit or Affect?**

The policy applies to all directly employed staff with NHS Lanarkshire, irrespective of age, sex, disability, ethnicity/race, marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, religion or belief, pregnancy or maternity or gender reassignment. It also applies to students, workers and bank staff. NHS Lanarkshire recognises the diversity of culture, religion or
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faith and disabilities of its employees and will take a sensitive approach in relation to dress and uniform. However, priority will be given to health and safety, infection control and quality of care considerations.

NHS Lanarkshire takes care to ensure your personal information is only accessible to authorised people. Our staff have a legal and contractual duty to keep personal health information secure, and confidential. In order to find out more about current data protection legislation and how we process your information, please visit the Data Protection Notice on our website at www.nhslanarkshire.scot.nhs.uk or ask a member of staff for a copy of our Data Protection Notice.

3.2 Who are the Stakeholders

All directly employed staff of NHS Lanarkshire, students and workers.

4. PRINCIPAL CONTENT

This policy outlines reasonable and acceptable standards of dress and appearance with which all staff must comply. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action being taken.

All staff must ensure that they maintain a high level of personal hygiene, presenting a clean, neat and tidy appearance at work. In particular:

- All staff working on NHS Lanarkshire premises must ensure that clothing is suitable for the type of environment in which they work and the activities which they are expected to undertake. They must ensure that their clothing does not cause problems in complying with health and safety and/or infection control regulations.

- Hair must be clean, neat and tidy and styled in a manner suitable for the type of work being carried out with due regard for health and safety and/or infection control regulations.

- In non-clinical areas, jewellery should be minimal. Jewellery must be appropriate to the type of environment and activities carried out during the course of work.

- Visible tattoos are discouraged and, where present, must not be offensive to others. Where they are deemed to be offensive they must be appropriately covered.

- Staff who wear facial coverings for religious reasons are required to remove them whilst on duty. This will ensure that the member of staff is identifiable.

- Staff who are not required to wear a uniform must maintain an acceptable and professional standard of dress whilst at work. Examples of acceptable clothing include a combination of: skirts, blouses, smart T-shirts, jumpers, jackets, dresses, culottes or knee length shorts, business suits, jackets, trousers, polo shirts, shirts.
• Short skirts e.g. mini-skirts, shorts, low cut trousers or tops, bare midriffs, ripped/tatty and/or faded denim clothing, transparent clothes, football colours and clothing with logos or pictures which may cause offence are not permitted.

• Clothing which does not adequately cover underwear or is designed to reveal underwear is not permitted.

• Footwear must be safe, clean and in a good state of repair and with due regard to health and safety requirements. As staff must be able to respond to any emergency situation without placing themselves at risk, it is recommended that all footwear should have a retaining medium such as laces or Velcro strapping. The wearing of opened toed or open backed types of footwear, high heeled shoes is not advised. Flip flops are not permitted. Certain jobs require staff to wear protective footwear and these staff must wear the correct footwear for undertaking their work. If staff are uncertain about the correct footwear required, they must check with their line manager. During periods of inclement weather, staff must ensure that their footwear is appropriate to the prevailing conditions and that they take reasonable precautions to prevent slips, trips or falls. Staff should not assume all NHS areas are dry, ice or snow free at all times.

• The NHS Lanarkshire identification badge or staff name badge must be worn at all times and must be clearly visible to the readers. If the identity badge is worn on a lanyard this must be removed or secured whilst participating in clinical duties. For security reasons, staff visiting service users’ at home need not display their identification badge prior to reaching the service users’ home. However they must ensure they have the badge with them at all times and identify themselves prior to entering the service users’ home. The member of staff must inform their manager if their ID badge is lost/stolen. On leaving NHS Lanarkshire employment staff must return their identification badge to their line manager.

• Clinical staff (including students) who are subject to the provisions of DL (2018) 4 attached as Appendix 1, are required to wear the uniform when working in all clinical areas. Staff must not wear the uniform outwith the workplace other than when on escort duties or undertaking a community role and in these situations, the uniform must be completely covered by an outdoor coat. Theatre blues must not be worn outwith the department except whilst undertaking clinical duties.

THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL DRESS CODE AND APPEARANCE REQUIREMENTS APPLY TO ALL CLINICAL STAFF (WHETHER THEY WEAR NATIONAL UNIFORM OR NOT) WHO ARE ENGAGED IN DIRECT PATIENT CARE ACTIVITY.

• Hair must be clean, neat and tidy and worn off the collar and, if long, should be worn up. Hair accessories must be discreet.

• Headwear worn for religious purposes is permitted. For example, the Hijaab must be worn in a way that the wearer’s face remains visible. The Hijaab should be fixed in such a way that it allows quick release. The use of press-studs or Velcro will assist in achieving this.
• Beards must be neatly trimmed, unless this reflects the individual’s religion in which case it must be tidy and clean or covered.

• Nails must be short and clean. Nail varnish, nail decorations and false nails are not permitted.

• Make-up must be discreet i.e. minimal and natural-looking.

• To ensure compliance with hand hygiene regulations, commonly referred to as ‘bare below the elbows’, no hand or wrist jewellery - other than one plain band ring may be worn.

• No jewellery (including body piercing) – other than one plain band ring - may be worn. Stud earrings are permitted in the immediate period following piercing for up to 6 weeks, but must be covered whilst on duty.

• When staff who wear uniform have to go out onto hospital grounds or on escort duty during inclement weather they should wear the outdoor wear provided or an outdoor coat where none is provided.

• Clinical Staff who do not wear uniform are not permitted to wear ties or long scarves. Bow ties are acceptable where they have been laundered.

• During periods of inclement weather, Community staff may wear footwear appropriate to the prevailing conditions. Staff must ensure that they take reasonable precautions to prevent slips, trips or falls. Staff should not assume all NHS areas are dry, ice or snow free at all times

• Mules (clogs) are not permitted except in specific areas such as Theatres, Intensive Therapy Unit, Maternity Unit, Neonatal Unit and Cardiac Catheterisation Laboratory.

• Staff should not carry pens, scissors or other sharp or hard objects in outside breast pockets as they may cause injury or discomfort to patients during care activity. They should be carried inside clothing or in hip pockets

Changing Arrangements

Where changing facilities exist, staff who wear a uniform are required to change prior to commencing a shift and at the end of their shift, prior to leaving their workplace. Staff must not travel to and from work in their uniform where changing facilities are available. Staff must not wear the uniform outwith the workplace other than when on escort duties or undertaking a community or cross site role. In these situations, they must ensure that their uniform is completely covered by an outdoor coat when travelling to and from the workplace. At the commencement and completion of their shift they will be required to change, as above.
In locations where individual lockers are not available, staff will be allocated a locker for the duration of their shift. The key for the locker must be returned to the designated point to allow other staff access to the lockers.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

A number of clinical and non-clinical staff groups are required to wear protective clothing as part of job. The principles are based upon the need for patient safety, personal safety, statutory regulatory requirements, the work environment, health and safety requirements and infection control requirements.

Where staff are required to wear protective clothing with long sleeves e.g. lab coats they are exempt from bare below the elbows. Short sleeves must be worn under the protective clothing/lab coat in order that hands can be properly washed before entering and after leaving the lab/kitchen/workplace and at appropriate points during the working day.

**Washing Uniforms and Workwear**

All elements of the washing process contribute to the removal of micro-organisms on fabric. Detergents (washing powder or liquid) and agitation release any soiling from the clothes, which is then removed by sheer volume of water during rinsing. Temperature also plays a part. Specifically:

- a 10-minute wash at 60ºC is sufficient to remove almost all micro-organisms. In tests, only 0.1% of any Clostridium difficile spores remained. Microbiologists carrying out the research advise that this level of contamination on uniforms and workwear is not a cause for concern.

The risk of cross infection from a uniform which has been properly protected by the correct use of personal protective equipment (PPE) is minimal. By following Standard Infection Control Precautions (SICP), a uniform should be protected from contamination during all healthcare activity, following a process of risk assessment to ascertain what level of PPE is required. If the guidance below is followed, the risk of taking home infections/micro organisms on uniforms from the healthcare environment is minimal. Uniforms must be changed daily.

Where uniforms have been worn (in conjunction with PPE as appropriate) and are not visibly contaminated with blood of other body fluids, the uniform may be home laundered providing the procedure below is followed:-

**Used Uniforms – Not Visibly Contaminated**

- Where staff can change out of their uniform, the uniforms should be taken home in a plastic bag. The bag must only be used once and disposed of. If changing facilities are not available, staff must follow the guidance within the uniform policy when wearing their uniform to and from work.

- Uniforms/and workwear should be laundered at the highest temperature suitable for the fabric, as per its care label.
Uniforms and workwear must be washed separately from other items of clothing using your usual washing detergent.

Hands must be washed after the uniforms are placed in the washing machine.

Dry uniform as normal, preferably in a tumble dryer.

Iron with a hot steam iron.

Contaminated Uniform

Where the uniform is visibly contaminated with blood or other body fluids, for example, following a PPE failure or other incident or on the advice of Infection Control, the following procedure will apply:

The member of staff should change out of the uniform as soon as possible following local procedure i.e. when removing the soiled garments, if it is a tunic, and the front of the garment has been contaminated, it may be advisable to firstly turn the garment round so that the back of the garment is to the front, prior to removing it over the head. This will reduce the risk of contamination to the face.

The duty manager will assess if the uniform will be condemned, following local procedure for safe disposal.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees must
- Ensure they are familiar with the policy and procedures
- Comply with the policy
- Attend training as necessary

Managers must
- Ensure they communicate with staff about the policy
- Consistently implement the policy at their local level
- Keep accurate records

Staff Side Representatives must
- Support the principles and procedures in the policy
- Act in accordance with NHS Lanarkshire’s Partnership Agreement
- Undertake training as appropriate

Human Resources Staff must
- Provide awareness training as appropriate
- Provide expert advice and support on the application of the policy
- Monitor and review the policy
6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The replacement costs of condemned uniforms are an ongoing financial cost.

7. COMMUNICATION PLAN

This policy will be launched using the weekly staff briefing and it will be available on Firstport.

This policy will also be discussed at the appropriate management team meetings and local partnership fora.

8. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT – Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years via the Joint Policy Forum.

9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This policy meets NHS Lanarkshire’s EDIA

10. SUMMARY OR FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

This policy reflects the requirements of the National Uniform Policy DL (2018) National Uniform Policy, Dress Code and Laundering Policy

11. REFERENCES

NATIONAL UNIFORM POLICY

Section 1
National Uniform Specification
The national uniform policy will apply to all staff who currently wear a uniform and has established national standardisation across Scotland. The specification for all staff groups has been agreed and is detailed below in Table 1.

Uniform colours and shades
The purpose of the uniform colour coding is to make it easier for patients, members of the public and staff to identify the different roles played by staff. Clinical staff will wear blue and non-clinical staff will wear green. It must be noted however, that the colour coding is not the only means of communication and it is expected that verbal communication and staff identifiers will still play their part.

The Clinical team
Clinical staff will wear a uniform in one of five shades of blue as detailed in Table 1 below.
Cornflower Blue uniform
The cornflower blue uniform is only for Nurses who are registered with the Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC) and Dental Nurses who are registered with the General Dental Council (GDC).

Navy Blue Uniform
The navy blue uniform was developed to ensure the nurse in charge is clearly visible to patients and the public. For this purpose the navy blue uniform will be worn by Senior Charge Nurses, and Hospital At Night Nurse Practitioners. In addition, Senior Midwives and Community Nurse Team Leaders should wear navy blue uniform where their duties are similar to a Senior Charge Nurse in that it is important for them to be visible to patients and the public as being the nurse in charge in hospital wards, clinics and health centres.

Boards must ensure that use of the navy blue tunic must not be extended to denote other specialist or senior nurses even if these are practising at the same or more senior level than the Senior Charge Nurse. Nor should it be used for any general management, supervisory or team leader roles in any other staff groups, or used by staff ‘acting up’ and assuming responsibilities of the Senior Charge Nurse.

Smoked Berry Burgundy Uniform
The smoked berry burgundy uniform has been developed in response to the Vale of Leven Report, it is to be worn by Clinical Nursing Managers of Grade 8A or above only (e.g. Associate/Deputy Nurse Directors and Nurse Directors). The uniform was developed to ensure visibility of senior nurse leadership to patients and the public. The smoked berry uniform should be worn by Clinical Nursing Managers when they are in a clinical setting.

The Non-Clinical team
Non-clinical staff who currently wear a uniform will wear the mid-green national uniform as detailed in Table 1 below. Non-clinical staff groups include Catering, Domestic, Porters, Admin & Clerical and Facilities.
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The dark green uniform is only for Catering and Domestic supervisors and must not be used to denote supervisors or managerial roles in any other staff groups.

Trousers
Navy blue trousers are available in a unisex cargo style and ladies and gents tailored styles. It is anticipated that the cargo style will be worn with tunics and polo shirts and the tailored trousers worn with shirts and blouses. However this is a matter for local policy.

Polo shirts
Polo shirts are available to order as an alternative to tunics. Whether staff are permitted to wear a polo shirt will be determined by local policy. However, the general rule is that staff who currently wear a tunic will continue to do so.

Specialist Items
Specialist items required to meet religious or medical needs are available to order on National Uniform contract. These could include any adaptation to the standard items, and you should contact the supplier directly to discuss your requirements. Where a specialist item is required on religious grounds, it must be authorised by the staff member's line managers, who are responsible for ensuring that any garment purchased adheres to the NHSScotland Dress Code. Where a specialist item is required for medical reasons, Occupational Health are required to confirm that it is required, and is compliant with the Dress Code. These items will be manufactured on a bespoke basis, and will have a lead time of 6 to 8 weeks.

A tunic with three-quarter length sleeves will be available for clinical staff with direct patient care responsibilities who have a religious or medical requirement to cover their upper forearms. As set out in the NHSScotland Dress Code policy, three-quarter length sleeves must not be loose or dangling. They must be able to be rolled or pulled back and kept securely in place during hand-washing and direct patient care activity.

A tunic with full length sleeves will be available for staff who do not undertake patient care activity and who have a religious or medical requirement to cover their arms.

Staff group - policy exceptions
Prosthetists/Orthotists – white workwear is required when working with plaster. These staff groups should therefore wear the national white tunic and trousers which is available as a special item on the national contract, when working with plaster. Both staff groups will wear the appropriate national uniform when not working with plaster.

The white uniform may be applicable for other staff other than Prosthetists and Orthotists who are working with plaster however normal Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) e.g aprons worn over the national uniform should be considered first to determine if a white uniform is actually required and is being used appropriately.

As with Prosthetists and Orthotists, the white uniform should only be worn when working with plaster and staff must wear their appropriate national uniform for other duties. It must not be used as protective clothing for other staff groups not working with plaster, nor should it be used as an alternative uniform to the appropriate national uniform colours.
Aroma Café staff and Beardmore Hotel Services – staff in these areas perform different functions to core facilities staff, and they are excluded from the uniform policy.

**Staff who do not wear national uniform**

Staff in a variety of roles and settings will not wear the national uniform for a range of safety, clinical and other reasons. If staff are required to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) instead of a uniform, for example, chef’s whites, then this will continue.

**Allied Health Professionals**

AHP staff will have their professional role embroidered on their tunics.

**National uniform for students**

Nursing and Allied Health Professional (AHP) students will wear the national student uniform. This is a silver-grey tunic in the same style and fabric as the national uniform for staff. This will be worn with the national uniform navy blue trousers. This uniform which has been rolled out to students in the September 2010 intake will be embroidered with the appropriate University / College logo.

The national student uniform does not apply to medical students (Doctors and Dentists). Medical students are not included in the National Uniform policy. The national uniform for students is not intended for NHSScotland employees who are undertaking study or training.

**Private Finance Initiative (PFI) Hospitals**

The national uniform is available for Boards to purchase on behalf of their PFI contractors. This will achieve consistency and ensure that patients and the public can identify non-clinical staff. These uniforms will be branded with the NHSScotland logo. PFI contractors are not permitted to add any additional embroidery to the uniform. Where Boards and their PFI contractors choose not to adopt the national uniform, efforts should be made to persuade PFI contractors not to adopt blue uniforms as this will lead to confusion in the identification of clinical staff.

**TABLE 1: NHS Scotland National Uniform Specification**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clinical staff</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Nursing Managers (Band 8A or above)</td>
<td>• Smoked Berry burgundy tunic/polo shirt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate/Deputy Nurse Directors</td>
<td>• Navy blue trousers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nurse Directors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Charge Nurses / midwives</td>
<td>• Navy blue tunic / polo shirt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Team Leaders</td>
<td>• Navy blue trousers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital At Night Nurse Practitioners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Nurses including Dental Nurses</td>
<td>• Cornflower blue tunic or cornflower blue polo shirt</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Navy blue trousers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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| Allied Health Professionals (AHP) | Mediterranean blue tunic or Mediterranean blue polo shirt  
|                                  | Navy blue trousers  
|                                  | Allied Health Professionals will have their professional role embroidered on their tunic/polo shirt |
| Healthcare Scientists, Pharmacy Technicians, Dental Care Professionals including Dental Hygienists, Orthopaedic Practitioners (holders of BCC - British Casting Certificate) | Ocean Blue tunic or ocean blue polo shirt  
|                                  | Navy blue trousers  
|                                  | These staff groups will have their professional role embroidered on their tunic/polo shirt |
| All unregistered staff, support workers and trainees | Pale sky blue tunic or pale sky blue polo shirt  
|                                  | Navy blue trousers  
|                                  | Support staff for Allied Health Professionals, Healthcare Scientists, and Pharmacy Technicians can have their department embroidered on their tunic/polo shirt or have the option to wear a non-embroidered tunic/polo shirt. This depends on local policy. |

- Polo shirts are available as an alternative to tunics depending on local policy.

A range of outer garments, including cardigans, fleeces, and shower proof jackets are available. Where staff require a heavy duty 3 in 1 water resistant jacket for prolonged use in harsh weather conditions, this is considered a specialist item of PPE, and is available, according to local policy, from the national (PPE) contract.

| Non-clinical staff |  
|---------------------|---
| Catering and domestic staff, including non-clinical staff trainees. | Mid-green tunic or mid-green polo shirt  
|                                  | Navy blue trousers |
| Catering and domestic supervisors | Dark green tunic or dark green polo shirt |
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Section 2

**TABLE 2: National Uniform Embroidery**
Tunics and polo shirts with the following embroidery will be available to order. It is not permissible to embroider any other job title or department. It is permissible for unregistered staff to wear the pale blue tunic with no embroidery, and this should be determined by local policy. Embroidery will only be available on the tunic colours as detailed below. Boards are not permitted to add to this list and create embroidery for any other staff groups.

| Mediterranean Blue (Registered AHP staff) | Physiotherapist  
Occupational Therapist  
Radiographer  
Podiatrist  
Orthoptist  
Speech and Language Therapist  
Orthotist  
Arts Therapist  
Dietitian  
Prosthetist |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ocean Blue (Qualified Healthcare Scientists, Dental Care Professionals, Pharmacy Technicians, Orthopaedic Practitioners) | Clinical Physiologist  
Clinical Dental Technician  
Dental Technician  
Dental Hygienist  
Orthodontic Therapist  
Dental Therapist  
Pharmacy Technician  
Orthopaedic Practitioner |
Pale-Sky Blue
(Support staff to AHPs, Healthcare Scientists, Pharmacy Technicians, Orthopaedic Practitioners).
Embroidery is not required for Dental Care Professional support staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pale-Sky Blue</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pale-Sky Blue</td>
<td>Radiotherapy*</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Support staff to AHPs, Healthcare</td>
<td>Imaging*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scientists, Pharmacy Technicians,</td>
<td>Podiatry</td>
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<td>Orthopaedic Practitioners)</td>
<td>Orthoptics</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Speech and Language</td>
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<td>Therapy</td>
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<td>Orthotics</td>
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<td>Arts Therapy</td>
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<td>Pharmacy</td>
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*Radiotherapy applies to those working in the 5 Cancer Centre, and Imaging is for staff supporting Radiographers elsewhere in NHS Scotland.

Evidence-based Principles to inform local policies for Staff
The way staff dress sends messages to the patients they care for, and to the public about their professionalism and standards of care.

These guidelines reflect evidence-based good practice and aim to set out core principles that should inform the development of local policy. The following principles are by no means exhaustive, but are intended to give some examples of the issues which Boards should consider. These guidelines set out standards of dress for all staff, including those who do not wear a uniform.

In developing local uniform and workwear policies, Boards should conduct a full risk assessment to ensure that local policy is appropriate for different categories of staff. Boards should look to support staff in complying with both the needs of the service and any disability, religious or cultural requirements.

Boards must ensure that where appropriate, their dress code policies comply with these principles:

Staff must dress in a professional manner which is likely to inspire public confidence;
- for example: in clean uniform (where uniform is a requirement), which has been laundered in accordance with the Uniform Laundering Policy (Section 3).
- When providing patient care, hair should be tied back off the collar, with nails kept short and clean.
- Wear clear identifiers (e.g. badges etc).
- Where changing facilities are available, staff should change into and out of uniform at work and should change out of their uniform at the earliest opportunity at the end of their shift. It is preferable that staff should avoid undertaking activities in public, such as shopping, whilst wearing their uniform, except where such activities form an integral part of their duties.

Appropriate steps must be taken to adhere to good practice, and to minimise the risks of infections and cross contamination for patients and the public;
- for example: staff should wear short-sleeved shirts/blouses and avoid wearing white coats or neck ties when providing patient care; staff may wear full length sleeves when not engaged in patient care activity;
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- Staff should not wear false nails or hand or wrist jewellery (other than a plain wedding ring or one other plain band) when providing patient care.
- Where for religious reasons, staff wish to cover their forearms during patient care activity; it is acceptable to wear disposable over-sleeves where gloves are used, with strict adherence to hand and wrist washing before and after use. Over-sleeves must be disposed of as disposable gloves.
- Where for religious reasons, staff wish to cover their upper forearms during patient care activity, it is acceptable to wear three-quarter length sleeves. Three-quarter length sleeves must not be loose or dangling. They must be able to be rolled or pulled back and kept securely in place during hand-washing and direct patient care activity.

All appropriate health and safety requirements for staff should be met
- for example: Staff should not wear excessive jewellery;
- Staff should wear soft-soled, closed toe shoes;
- Staff should not carry pens or scissors in outside breast pockets.

Staff must dress in a manner which is sensitive to the social, cultural and diversity and equality needs of other staff, patients and carers/visitors.

We asked Health Protection Scotland to review the current evidence on uniforms worn in healthcare settings as work wear, and to ascertain whether uniforms pose any risk of infection. Their report considered national and international policy and guidance and available scientific literature. These conclusions are based on the current available evidence and consensus from the policy/guidance reviewed, including:

- NHS Board Policies from NHSScotland – reviewed and summarised by HPS (unpublished) October 2009

The report concluded:
- Healthcare workers’ uniform must never be considered as PPE as uniform does not have the properties or function of PPE.
- Uniform and home laundering can be an emotive issue for staff, however, providing that PPE is worn appropriately, there is no evidence suggesting that this poses any risk to healthcare workers or others.
- There is no evidence available to suggest that home laundering is an ineffective method of laundering uniform.
- There is a public perception that there is a risk of infection from staff wearing uniform out with the healthcare setting, this is a perceived risk with no evidence to substantiate it, however this must be considered when offering guidance to staff travelling to and from work in uniform.