

# NHS Fife Wide Uniform Policy

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## General Note

NHS Fife acknowledges and agrees with the importance of regular and timely review of policy/procedure statements and aims to review policies within the timescales set out.

New policies/procedures will be subject to a review date of no more than 1 year from the date of first issue.

Reviewed policies/procedures will have a review date set that is relevant to the content (advised by the author) but will be no longer than 3 years.

If a policy/procedure is past its review date then the content will remain extant until such time as the policy/procedure review is complete and the new version published.

## 1. FUNCTION

NHSScotland has endorsed a new national uniform set which is mandatory for all staff who currently wear a uniform. All uniform wearers will wear the new uniform by December 2012. Appendix 2 provides information on the new uniform.

This Policy reflects guidance provided by NHSScotland ([CEL 42 \(2010\) NATIONAL UNIFORM POLICY, DRESS CODE AND LAUNDERING POLICY](#)) as the new uniform is introduced to NHS Fife. The principles apply to staff wearing the current NHS Fife uniform whilst the new uniform is phased in.

The new uniform set promotes a corporate image for NHSScotland, makes it easier for patients to identify staff and has enabled procurement of a uniform which is of high quality, fit for purpose and best value.

A uniform has many purposes such as protection, comfort and professional image and is an external reflection of the organisation. It is recognised that the appearance and standards of dress adopted by staff are an influencing factor on the confidence of service users in our ability to deliver exemplar services in a professional manner.

## **2. LOCATION**

NHS Fife

## **3. RESPONSIBILITY**

This policy applies to all NHS Fife Staff, who are provided with a uniform, and all Line Managers who have a responsibility for ensuring staff compliance with Policy.

## **4. OPERATIONAL SYSTEM**

Staff must adhere to the following statements:

### **4.1 Travelling in Uniform**

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 unless on specific duty i.e. community staff, for example district nurses, community midwives, Allied Health Professionals. 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.

This recommendation is made for the safety and security of all staff and to minimise the risk of cross infection. There is no conclusive evidence that uniforms pose a significant hazard in terms of cross infection, however the public's perception is that there may be a link between the two and seeing staff in uniform away from the workplace, reduces confidence in NHS Fife.

Requests to wear uniform out with the organisation for formal occasions or where promoting the organisation must be authorised by the appropriate Head of Department.

It is acknowledged that some staff, as part of their duties, will be required to carry out some shopping i.e. petrol purchase, lunches or when on rehabilitation visits. However, it is not acceptable for staff to *routinely* shop in uniform.

#### **4.2 Laundering of Uniforms**

The risk of uniforms being contaminated with blood or body fluids is very dependent on the tasks performed by the healthcare worker. Such contamination carries an inherent risk (low) of transmission of disease. All uniforms that are visibly soiled with blood or body fluids must be sent to the central laundry for processing.

The guidance in [CEL 42](#) has been adopted and is outlined in Appendix 1

#### **4.3 Protective Clothing**

Personal Protective equipment (PPE) consists of items of clothing that are required to protect the wearer from a hazard. Refer to GP/P4 - NHS Fife Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy – for further advice.

#### **4.4 Identity Badges**

Identity badges must be worn at all times by all staff.

#### **4.5 Appendix 3 contains operational guidance**

## **5. RELIGIOUS OR OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

The Employment Equality Regulations state that it is unlawful to discriminate against individuals because of their religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief. NHS Fife values the diversity of its staff and aims to create an environment where the beliefs of all, whether cultural, religious, non-religious philosophical are respected.

The organisation welcomes the variety of appearance brought by individual styles and choices. The wearing of items arising from particular religious/cultural norms (e.g. saris, turbans, skullcaps, niqaab, kippahs and clerical collars) is seen as part of this welcome diversity. However the health and safety of staff and service users must take precedence and risk assessments should be carried out where necessary.

- 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.

## 6. RISK MANAGEMENT

Infection Control and Line Managers are responsible for monitoring the Policy with Risk Assessments being carried where deemed appropriate.

## 7. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- CEL 42 (2010) National Uniform Policy, Dress Code And Laundering Policy  
[http://www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk/mels/CEL2010\\_42.pdf](http://www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk/mels/CEL2010_42.pdf)
- CEL 36 (2009) NHS Scotland Uniform Policy
- CEL 46 (2009) NHS Scotland Uniform Policy
- NHS Fife Dress Code Policy
- GP/P4 - NHS Fife Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Policy

## 8. REFERENCES

- Department of Health Uniforms and Workwear. An evidence base for developing local policy. (2007)  
[http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_078433](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_078433)
- Workplace Regulations <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1999/3242/contents/made>
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg174.pdf>
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1992/2793/contents/made>

- The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations <http://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/>
- Health and Safety Regulations <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hsc13.pdf>
- Infection Control Manual <http://intranet.fife.scot.nhs.uk/uploadfiles/publications/GPI8%20-%20Infection%20Control.pdf>

### **Related Publications**

- [U-01 NHS Fife Uniform Policy - EQIA Form](#)
- [U-01 Uniform Policy - Appendix 1](#)
- [U-01 Uniform Policy - Appendix 2](#)
- [U-01 Uniform Policy - Appendix 3](#)

## **HOME LAUNDERING OF UNIFORMS**

***This guidance does not apply to theatre scrub suits, any item of PPE, or contaminated uniforms, for which Hospital/facility laundries must be used.***

The following guidance on the home laundering of uniform is for all staff unable to access an NHS Scotland laundry facility and consequently take uniform home to launder.

Where a uniform has been worn in conjunction with appropriate PPE and is not visibly contaminated with blood or other body fluids, there is no evidence it poses any risk to healthcare workers or the public.

The guidance applies to all uniform and workwear supplied by NHS Scotland.

### **Segregation**

- Used uniforms should be kept separate at all times from clean uniforms.
- If uniforms are taken home, they should be in a plastic bag. The bag must only be used once and disposed of.
- All items such as pens, coins, and tissues must be removed from pockets.
- Apply good hand hygiene practice utilising soap and warm water before handling clean uniforms and after handling soiled uniforms.
- Washing machines should be loaded in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions, and never overfilled.
- Hands must be washed after the uniforms are placed in the washing machine.

### **Temperature**

- All uniforms should be laundered at the highest temperature suitable for the fabric as per the care label at a temperature of at least 60°C.

### **Detergents and Additives**

- Uniforms must be washed separately from other items of clothing using your usual washing detergent.
- Use a detergent that is suitable for your skin type.
- Do not add bleaches to the wash process or use for a 'whitening' effect.

### **Tumble Drying/Ironing**

- Dry uniform as normal, or preferably in a tumble dryer as per the care label.
- Uniform may be ironed with a hot steam iron

### **Storage and Transportation**

- Ensure laundered uniform is stored separately from used uniform.
- Ensure all storage and transportation facilities are clean and washed regularly.

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**NHS Scotland National Uniform Specification**

<b>CLINICAL STAFF</b>	
ALL unregistered staff/support workers	<p>Pale sky blue tunic with NHS Logo and navy trousers OR Pale sky blue polo shirt option (available according to local policy)</p> <p>For Allied Health Professional support staff only: Embroidered professional role (depending on local policy)</p>
Registered nursing staff, including dental nurses	<p>Cornflower blue tunic with NHS Logo and navy trousers OR Cornflower blue Polo shirt option (available according to local policy)</p>
Allied Health Professionals	<p>Mediterranean blue tunic with NHS Logo and navy trousers: Embroidered professional role (detailed at Annex B). OR Mediterranean blue Polo shirt option (available according to local policy)</p>
Pharmacy Technicians Healthcare Scientists Clinical Dental Technicians, Dental Technicians, Dental Hygienists, Orthodontic Therapists and Dental Therapists	<p>Ocean blue tunic with NHS and navy trousers: Embroidered professional role (detailed at Annex B) OR Ocean blue Polo shirt option (available according to local policy)</p>
Senior Charge Nurses	<p>Navy blue with NHS Logo and navy trousers OR Navy blue Polo shirt option (available according to local policy)</p>
<b>FACILITIES STAFF</b>	
Facilities staff	<p>Mid green tunic with navy blue trousers OR Mid green Polo shirt option (available according to</p>

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	local policy)
Facilities supervisors	Dark green with navy blue trousers OR Dark green Polo shirt option (available according to local policy)
Admin & Clerical staff	Plain coloured mid green blouse / mid green dress shirt and navy blue dress trousers
Porters	Mid green Polo shirt with navy blue trousers Or Plain coloured mid green dress shirt / blouse (according to local policy)
Security Guards	Security staff will wear black trousers, white shirt and clip on tie, with a military style jumper OR Black t-shirt and stab vest. (according to local policy)

Additional items, such as cardigans, fleeces and jackets will also be available to order on the contract.

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## Operational Guidance

STANDARD	RATIONALE
<p>Where changing facilities are available, staff wear their own clothes when travelling to and from work places, with the exception of community based staff.</p> <p>Aprons/gowns must be worn where contamination might occur and must be appropriate for use and fit for purpose e.g. disposable, single use, plastic aprons must be worn when exposure to blood and other body fluids might occur.</p> <p>Aprons must be changed when moving between patients at all times</p>	<p>To minimise the risk of attack or injury, minimise the risk of cross infection (both in reality and in the public's perception).</p> <p>To protect staff contamination and minimise cross infection</p> <p>To minimise cross infection</p>
<p><b>Uniforms:</b> must be clean and changed daily if staff are providing direct patient care.</p> <p>Uniforms must be of a good fit</p> <p>Staff use designated changing facilities where available and are discouraged from using staff or public toilet areas as changing areas.</p> <p>Clean uniforms must be returned to the appropriate sewing room or Head of Department on termination of employment</p>	<p>Reduce the risk of cross infection</p> <p>The uniform/ clothes must permit the healthcare professional to have full and unrestricted freedom of movement. All postures should be able to be undertaken safely without compromising the dignity of either the health professional or patient.</p> <p>The healthcare professional must be able to perform all clinical duties comfortably and safely.</p> <p>To minimise cross infection</p> <p>To contain cost and minimise risk of uniforms being used for non NHSScotland business</p>

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<p><b>Tattoos:</b> Inappropriate tattoos must be covered at all times. The head of service / department will be responsible for determining whether a tattoo is inappropriate or not i.e. any tattoo with offensive language is deemed offensive.</p>	<p>Maintains a professional appearance</p>
<p><b>Hair:</b> Long hair i.e. below collar length, must be tied back and up with a plain band or clasp. No decorative slides, bands or bows should be worn.</p> <p>Hair should be worn within the range of natural colours e.g. not bright pink or green.</p>	<p>Maintains a professional appearance, reduces cross infection</p> <p>Maintains a professional appearance</p>
<p><b>Headscarves:</b> Where a scarf worn as part of religious observance, staff must ensure that the flow of the garment does not interfere with work practice. The scarf / veil must be changed on a daily basis</p>	<p>To minimise cross infection and the risk of personal injury.</p>
<p><b>Jewellery:</b> Staff involved in direct patient care should keep jewellery to a minimum.</p> <p>Wristwatches and bracelets <i>must not</i> be worn in clinical areas by those members of staff involved in direct patient care.</p> <p>Fob watches may be worn.</p> <p>Jewellery is restricted to wearing one plain wedding band and one pair of plain stud earrings.</p> <p>Wedding rings or other rings should <b>not</b> be worn on chains around necks.</p>	<p>Jewellery may pose a Health &amp; Safety risk:</p> <p>These restrict effective hand washing</p> <p>Staff should be aware that during clinical contact fob watches could potentially be dangerous when working with a confused or violent patient or when working with machinery.</p> <p>Rings with stones are hazardous and can scratch patients; the stones may become dislodged.</p> <p>Jewellery that is hanging e.g. a necklace, could potentially be dangerous when working with a confused or violent patient or when</p>

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<p>Ankle chains, bracelets and other visible body piercing jewellery must not be worn</p> <p>Any visible body piercing (except earrings – plain studs) should be removed whilst at work.</p>	<p>working with machinery.</p> <p>To maintain a professional image and minimise risk of cross infection</p> <p>To prevent injury to staff and minimise risk of cross infection</p>
<p><b>Footwear:</b> Must be clean and in a good state of repair. Shoes must have enclosed toes and heels.</p> <p>Shoes should be black or navy however it is acknowledged that many staff, in particular those involved with moving and handling of patients, prefer to wear trainers. If trainers are worn with a clinical uniform, they should be where possible black or navy or white, must be clean and of a non-pervious material. Plastic clog-like shoes with holes in the front e.g. Crocs or similar, must not be worn.</p> <p>It is acknowledged however that clogs continue to be the shoe of choice in theatres</p>	<p>To uphold the professional appearance of the uniform and its wearer. To prevent injury</p> <p>To maintain a professional image and minimise cross infection. To prevent injury</p>
<p><b>Fingernails:</b> Keep finger nails short and clean. No nail varnish or false nails or extensions should be worn in clinical areas by those members of staff involved in direct patient care.</p>	<p>False nails harbour micro-organisms and can reduce compliance with hand hygiene.</p> <p>Long nails may cause injury to patients. It has been shown that nails, including chipped nail polish can harbour potentially harmful bacteria, which could then be transmitted to those who are receiving care.</p>
<p><b>Perfume / Aftershave:</b> Must be discreet</p>	<p>Patients may find it nauseating</p>

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