



INFECTION PREVENTION
STRATEGIES, LLC

Linen Management

Infection Prevention Essentials in Long-Term Care

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Linen management

Why is healthcare linen management important?

- ✓ Because it can be a source of pathogen transmission
 - ✓ It is key to patient safety that all potentially contaminated laundry be handled in a way that prevents cross-transmission
 - ✓ CMS states that HCP must handle, store, process, and transport linen in a way that prevents the risk of transmission.
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- ▶ Laundry services are an important element of an effective infection prevention program
 - ▶ Established regulatory guidelines direct proper care and handling of linens in healthcare settings (FDA, EPA, OSHA, HLAC, AAMI)
 - ▶ Facilities must develop a policy for linen management based on regulatory guidelines
 - ▶ Education to staff on proper linen handling is key to compliance
 - ▶ Facilities must monitor laundry practices to ensure no deviations



Things to know

- ▶ How is your laundry processed? Onsite or offsite
- ▶ If offsite, is the professional laundry facility accredited?
- ▶ What is included under the *linen management policy*?
- ▶ Do you have your laundry equipment on a preventive maintenance schedule?
- ▶ Are staff trained on the policy and proper linen handling?

What key elements should be included in your linen management policy?

- ✓ Laundry services
- ✓ Laundry handling
- ✓ Laundry transport
- ✓ Laundry storage



Included in your linen program scope

- ▶ Bed linens: sheets and blankets
- ▶ Towels and washcloths
- ▶ Textile items used by nursing, dietary, rehab, beauty shop
- ▶ Mattresses and pillows
- ▶ Resident laundry



Elements of a linen management policy

▶ Laundry services:

▶ Offsite: ensure that linen is processed in a way that meets

- ✓ Regulatory requirements
- ✓ Prevents contamination with dust and dirt during transport

▶ Onsite: policy should address

- ✓ Washing temperatures
- ✓ Laundry detergents
- ✓ Cleaning and maintenance of equipment

Use of color coded or labeled bags or containers should be used to identify clean versus contaminated laundry if there is any potential for both to be housed in a common area



Elements of a linen management policy cont.

- ▶ **Laundry handling:** all used linens should be considered contaminated
 - ▶ Point of care handling
 - ✓ bagged/contained prior to leaving resident room or shower/bath area
 - ✓ Standard precaution compliance when handling
 - ✓ Once clean linen taken out of clean laundry storage, it is considered contam.
 - ▶ Leak resistant containers or bags
 - ▶ Proper handling of soiled laundry
 - ✓ Sorting or pre-rinsing should not take place in the resident room

If surveyor observes failure of staff to handle soiled linens using safe and sanitary techniques leading may lead to immediate jeopardy.



Elements of a linen management policy cont.

▶ Laundry transport:

- ▶ safely transport in a way that prevents cross-contamination
- ▶ Minimally agitate soiled linen to avoid contamination of the air, surfaces, and persons
- ▶ Ensure that hand hygiene products and PPE are easily available and readily accessible



Elements of a linen management policy cont.

▶ Laundry storage:

- ▶ Separate clean and contaminated storage
 - ✓ Soiled laundry room should have negative ventilation → functional barrier
- ▶ For offsite laundry, it should be transported to your facility in a way that ensures protection from dirt, dust, and moisture
- ▶ Clean laundry must be maintained in a way as to be kept clean
 - ✓ In a *secure room to prevent patients, family members and any other personnel from handling the linen without taking proper precautions*
 - ✓ Clean laundry storage and soiled laundry holding rooms must be clearly marked as clean and soiled
 - ✓ On a cart, covered to protect it, and labeled clean linen
 - ✓ No soiled/contaminated linen is to be on the clean linen cart

<http://www.industryperspectives.com/handling-clean-linen-in-a-healthcare-environment/>



What must be tracked/audited?

- ▶ Staff training (policy, compliance w/ precautions)
- ▶ Preventive maintenance (following manufacturer's IFU)
- ▶ Monitoring of offsite laundry facility
- ▶ Compliance with policy elements
- ▶ Audit linen handling process:
 - ✓ Is clean linen covered or behind a closed door
 - ✓ Is there separation of clean linen and soiled linen

Regardless of whether laundry is processed onsite or offsite, periodic monitoring should be performed to ensure regulatory-compliant processes and products are being used.



Outside laundry accreditation



http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/076879_a2ad48dc9b1b4f88b826dafd5d4446e6.pdf



Leading infection prevention education and training across the Rocky Mountain Region

Lice and Scabies

- ▶ Have written policy/procedure for safe handling of residents with parasites
- ▶ Policy should include water temperature for linens contaminated with parasites (high temp kills parasites)
- ▶ Ensure training for staff on safe handling of resident and linens (isolation)

<https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/pdf/guidelines/isolation-guidelines.pdf>



Resources

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Thank you

