



# Staff Dress Code and Uniform Policy

**Printed copies must not be considered the definitive version**

<b>DOCUMENT CONTROL</b>		<b>POLICY NO.</b>	62
<b>Policy Group</b>	Corporate		
<b>Author:</b>	Margo Christie	<b>Version no.</b>	3.0
<b>Reviewers:</b>	Vicky Keir Ingrid Wilson	<b>Implementation date:</b>	Oct 2012
<b>Scope:</b>	Board wide	<b>Last review date:</b>	Dec 2018
<b>Status:</b>	Approved	<b>Next review date:</b>	Mar 2021
<b>Approved by:</b>	APF 20 Dec 18	<b>EQIA date:</b>	

# Staff Dress Code and Uniform Policy

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# Staff Dress Code and Uniform Policy

## 1. Introduction

1.1 This policy applies to **all NHS employees** (inclusive of students and agency staff).

Implementation of this policy is necessary in order to comply with standards within infection control, health and safety and corporate identification. It is essential that all staff portray a professional image to patients and to members of the public which encourages trust and confidence.

1.2 This policy addresses common issues in relation to dress code and uniforms but it is not possible to detail every eventuality. Managers and staff should be guided by the principles outlined in this policy regarding the appropriateness of appearance. Staff with particular circumstances or needs should discuss these with their line manager. In the event of a disagreement then the matter will be referred to the appropriate Senior Manager for resolution.

1.3 As a result of allergies, some patients may require to be cared for in an environment free of perfume, aftershave, body lotion, hair spray and a host of other scented cosmetics. With prior notification staff may be asked, on occasion, to restrict the use of these products to an absolute minimum. Where a member of staff is unable to meet this need, the situation will be risk assessed.

## 2. Responsibilities

2.1 Each member of staff has a responsibility with respect to the impact of their appearance at work – personally, professionally and as an employee of NHS Dumfries and Galloway.

2.2	NHS Staff	All staff will be responsible for following the guidelines as set out in this document. Where staff are unable to follow the guidelines they must report this to their line manager and work together to find a solution.
	NHS Managers	Local managers will be responsible for ensuring that all staff have access to this document and ensuring that staff follow the guidelines. Managers must also ensure that staff have sufficient uniforms to comply with the guidelines within this document.
	Health Boards	The Health Boards must ensure that all staff groups are provided with the appropriate uniform and protective wear for the duration of their employment with the Health Board.

Infection Prevention and Control Team	The Infection Prevention and Control Team will be responsible for ensuring that the infection control part of this policy is kept up to date. They will also be able to provide advice and guidance to staff on the correct interpretation of this document and provide education where required.
Procurement	It is the responsibility of procurement to ensure that uniforms provided for staff comply with guidelines within this document.
Where there are insufficient supplies of uniforms and/or protective wear due to a lack of provision, wear and tear or laundering difficulties outwith the control of the staff member, then that employee cannot be held to account for any breach of these guidelines.	

### 3. Corporate Identity/Staff and Public Perception

- 3.1 All staff who wear a uniform are required to wear the NHS Scotland national uniform. Please see Appendix '1' for detail. Staff should note that failure to comply with this policy may lead to further action being taken under the Disciplinary Policy.
- 3.2 It is essential that staff portray a professional image to patients and members of the public. Any item of clothing that may distract from the principle of a professional image should not be worn. Clothes worn at work should encourage public trust and confidence. They should be clean, safe and practical for the type of work undertaken.

Personnel working within the NHS who do not wear a formal uniform are expected to dress smartly. Low cut clothing, mini skirts, designer "ripped" jeans or clothes which expose bare midriff etc. are not considered acceptable attire. Shorts may be worn providing these are smart, not sportswear and not in support of a particular national or other sports team.

- 3.3 Implementation of this policy is necessary to ensure that issues of infection control, health and safety and public confidence are addressed. It therefore applies to all staff whether or not they wear a uniform. Presentation of dress, together with consistency of style and colour (for those in uniform) plays an important part in promoting and preserving staff identity enabling patients, public and others to identify the numerous staff groups with whom they may come in contact. Each member of staff has a responsibility to respect the impact of their appearance at work – personally, professionally and as an employee of the NHS.

3.4 All staff working within hospitals and other health buildings **must carry visible identification at all times** during working hours. All staff working in the community must carry identification at all times during working hours. Identification badges must be secured away from the patient when providing direct patient care. Staff should consider the appropriateness of using a lanyard or a clip taking into consideration the clinical setting/patient group.

- Identification (ID) badges used to swipe access to restricted areas must not be shared with anyone else.

- ID badges must not be used to allow others access to a restricted area at the same time, unless their identity is verified to the badge holder providing access.

- Inappropriate and/or unauthorised use of ID Badges may, depending on the circumstances, lead to disciplinary action.

Identification badges must be kept clean, with all detail legible. They can be cleaned using a detergent wipe. Identification badges must not be put in a washing machine.

3.5 Tattoos should be covered where practicable. Inappropriate and/or offensive tattoos **must** be covered e.g. any tattoo with offensive language. The Head of Service will determine what is or is not inappropriate / offensive.

3.6 Visible body piercings for instance tongue, eyebrows, lips and nose will be subject to a risk assessment with regard to health and safety.

## 4. Uniform and Dress Code

### 4.1 High Risk Areas

4.1.1 For the purposes of this policy **high risk areas** have been identified as: All clinical areas, i.e. labs, wards, operating theatres, outpatient clinics, and AHP departments, etc., kitchens and food preparation/serving areas. All staff working in these areas will be provided with a uniform.

The staff groups working in high risk areas include clinical staff, catering staff, domestic staff, healthcare support workers, nurses, midwives, ward clerk/receptionists, laboratory staff, porters and pharmacy staff. Where appropriate the following must be adhered to:

- > Cooking staff will wear a chef's uniform.
- > Catering Managers will wear white coats.
- > Staff working in laboratories will wear white coats which must be removed prior to leaving the laboratory.
- > White coats when worn must be changed daily.
- > White coats must not be worn in clinical areas i.e. all wards, outpatient consulting rooms, theatres, day surgery areas and pre-assessment areas.

To minimise infection and to maintain personal hygiene all staff working in high risk areas must change their uniform daily.

Staff should have a spare uniform available immediately for incidences of contamination.

All staff working in a clinical area must wear clothing that leaves their arms bare below the elbow to allow effective hand hygiene to be performed.

4.1.2 Hair can be a source of infection. Staff working in the identified high risk areas who have hair longer than shoulder length are required to have it **worn off the face and collar and tied up** or wear the protective hair covering provided by the NHS. Catering staff must wear both hats and hairnets at all times as supplied.

4.1.3 Staff working in the identified high risk areas are not permitted to wear finger nail polish or acrylic nails/false nails. Nails must be kept short and clean. Cosmetics and perfume should be discreet.

#### **4.1.4 Footwear**

In the identified high risk areas all footwear must have an enclosed toe and heel, be clean and in good repair.

Footwear worn by healthcare workers should not be considered P.P.E. unless the shoe area is frequently exposed to potential contamination with blood or body fluid. In this instance footwear will be supplied that does not allow leakage through the material of the shoe and the shoe must cover the foot.

Designated clogs may be worn in theatre areas but may not be worn outside this area. Clogs must have a heel strap correctly positioned to secure the foot.

#### **4.1.5 All staff, when delivering hands-on patient care, must adhere to the following:**

- > The principle of “naked from the elbow” must be adopted. This means no wrist watches (including ‘Fit Bit’), wrist jewellery or stoned rings.
- > Ties must be secured within the shirt.
- > Scissors and pens must not be carried in an outer breast pocket as they may fall out when leaning over a patient.
- > When in uniform and/or delivering hands on patient care, jewellery should be limited to a smooth, plain wedding band ring and stud type earrings only. However, when carrying out invasive procedures and when in surgical scrubs all facial, head and neck jewellery and wedding bands must be removed.
- > Jewellery that is not physically removable or is worn for cultural or religious significance will be formally risk assessed but may preclude that staff member from participating in a high risk area.

## 4.2 Low Risk Areas

4.2.1 These have been identified as offices, transport areas, maintenance areas, mail room and stores. This includes managers, administrative staff, medical secretaries, ward clerkess, transport staff, mail room staff, maintenance staff, porters, etc. A number of staff within low risk areas currently wear a uniform.

Low risk staff, when working in the high risk areas, as identified above, must wear the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (P.P.E.) as required and provided in that area and/or adhere to the dress code and uniform requirements.

## 4.3 General Arrangements

4.3.1 Staff who are issued with a uniform as part of their employment with the NHS are responsible for regularly checking that it remains in good condition. They should alert their line manager promptly when a replacement uniform is required. Where a replacement uniform is required, staff must exchange the uniform that is being replaced. This will ensure that uniforms are only issued when required and also that uniforms are disposed of appropriately.

4.3.2 Where changing facilities are provided staff must use them. **Staff must not travel to and from work in uniform.** Staff must change into uniform prior to commencing work and out of uniform before leaving the workplace.

Where there are no changing facilities, staff are reminded of the risk of cross infection when wearing uniforms out of working hours and are required to change out of uniform as soon as possible after leaving the workplace.

It is accepted that staff working in the community will wear their uniform while travelling between patients, while carrying out business on behalf of NHS Dumfries & Galloway, while purchasing petrol or purchasing their lunch. **It is not acceptable for staff to wear their uniform whilst undertaking personal business e.g. shopping, banking etc.**

4.3.3 Uniforms will only be worn while on official NHS business. **Wearing a uniform to access restricted areas out-with working hours or to falsely represent someone as working for the NHS may, depending on the circumstances, lead to disciplinary action.**

Full uniform must be worn on duty to present a professional image and to comply with Health and Safety requirements in respect of Moving and Handling. When a uniform is worn this should be the complete uniform for that staff group as issued by NHS Dumfries and Galloway. Uniforms should be neat and clean. Protective clothing if issued must be worn at all appropriate times whilst on duty.

**Scrubs may not be used as a replacement uniform and may only be worn in designated areas i.e., Theatres, Central Sterile Supply Department and Cresswell Birthing Suite.**

4.3.4 Hands must be decontaminated before and after changing uniform. The single most important principle of preventing cross-infection is effective hand hygiene.

4.3.5 Shoes and Trainers must portray a professional image.

When an employee is carrying heavy loads the footwear must offer the feet protection. Steel toe cap shoes are considered P.P.E. for catering, stores, estates/maintenance, portering and transport staff. Safety shoes provided for catering use are to be worn internally only – i.e. a separate pair of shoes to be worn to and from work and PPE shoes to be worn solely at work.

**Staff who work with potentially unstable/unpredictable loads, such as patients or objects must have footwear that provides a stable (not rocker-bottom), non slip base that is secure on their foot.**

#### 4.4 Smoking Policy

Smoking and using nicotine replacement products to vape is not permitted inside the buildings, or on the grounds of NHS premises.

Full details of the current smoking and use of nicotine replacement products guidelines and legislation is available in a separate policy document. Please refer to NHS Dumfries and Galloway's Smoke Free Policy.

The smell of stale cigarettes can be unpleasant and smoking while in uniform does not demonstrate a health promoting image to patients or members of the public. Smoking in uniform/working clothes is not permitted.

### 5. Laundry

Scientific tests, literature reviews and expert opinion suggests that there is little difference between domestic and commercial laundering in terms of removing micro-organisms from uniforms and work wear.

Staff who wear the NHS Scotland uniform are required to launder their uniforms at home. When the guidance below is followed the risk of taking home infection/micro-organisms on uniforms from the healthcare environment is not an issue.

#### 5.1 Procedure for home laundered uniforms

- Uniforms should be carried separately in a disposable bag.
- Washing machines should be loaded in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and never overfilled.
- Uniforms should be laundered at the highest temperature suitable for the fabric as per the care label.
- Apply good hand hygiene practice utilising soap and warm water before and after handling soiled uniform.

- Uniforms must be thoroughly dried and ironed with a hot iron or tumbled dried on a hot setting.
- Ensure a laundered uniform is stored separately from a used uniform.

## 5.2 Procedure to be followed if a uniform is contaminated with blood/body fluids.

Appropriate PPE must be worn to protect uniforms from contamination.

The following guidance is for uniforms which are lightly soiled with blood/body fluid:

- If a uniform is contaminated by a blood/body fluid, the member of staff must change their clothing immediately, placing the soiled garment/s into a patient clothing bag with water soluble seal. These bags are available at ward level. Hands must be thoroughly washed and dried after placing the clothes into the bag.
- The bag must then be placed into another outer plastic bag to transport the clothing home.
- The water soluble clothing bag should be placed directly into the washing machine, and laundered separately at as high a temperature as possible (minimum 60°C) using normal laundry detergent. Hands must be thoroughly washed and dried at this point.
- The remainder of the water soluble clothing bag should be removed from the washing machine and disposed in the household domestic waste.
- Hands must be thoroughly washed and dried at this point.
- At the end of the cycle the clothing should be thoroughly dried and ironed with a hot iron.

If the uniform is grossly soiled, consideration must be given to having the uniform destroyed.

- Staff should change the uniform immediately.
- Staff should seek approval from their line manager or Infection Prevention and Control Nurse to condemn the uniform.
- Grossly soiled uniforms should be disposed of via the clinical waste stream.

## 6. Replacement of Uniforms

- 6.1 Re-issue of uniform is made following discussion with Manager/Head of Department on the basis of:

Substantial Weight Gain/Loss  
Change of role/Damage or loss  
Medical Reasons/Pregnancy

Maternity Uniforms are provided when required.

- 6.2 When items of uniform require replacement the member of staff must approach his/her line manager to request re-issues.

- 6.3 On issue of replacement uniforms staff must ensure that all items that are being replaced are handed back to the appropriate department. Items must not be added to normal household waste to prevent improper re-use.

## **7. Leaving Service/Termination of Employment**

- 7.1 On leaving service/termination of employment regulations in respect of income tax dictate all items must be returned to the employer. Failure to return is regarded as a serious breach of contract. Payroll Section is notified by the Line Manager to enable reporting to the Department of Inland Revenue to allow reclaim of income tax.
- 7.2 It is imperative that corporate badges and identity badges are returned to line managers to prevent improper re-use. Name badges are destroyed, and identity badges are returned to the appropriate Department. Failure to return badges is regarded as a serious breach of contract. Notification will be made to the relevant professional bodies and/or future employers following such breach of security.

## **8. Students**

### **This policy applies to all students**

Nursing, Midwifery 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. Each uniform will be embroidered with the appropriate University/College Logo.

The national student uniform does not apply to medical students (Doctors and Dentists).

Name badges are worn in conjunction with the uniform as an aid to communication and to enhance security. All name badges must be returned to the education establishment e.g. School of Nursing and Midwifery, at the completion/discontinuation of the course/programme. Students should also carry their matriculation card at all times. Badges will be issued free of charge to students at the start of their course/programme. In the event of loss or breakage, or if there is a change of name, replacement badges will be obtained from the Student Practice Development Centre for which a charge will be made.

## **9. Equality and Diversity**

NHS Dumfries and Galloway has a responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The PSED requires NHS Dumfries and Galloway to pay due regard to the following aims (in relation to the 9 protected characteristics of

Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation) to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not by:-
  - Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people because of their protected characteristic
  - Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
  - Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life, or in other activities where their participation is proportionately low.
- Foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Board will ensure that this Staff Dress Code and Uniform Policy does not discriminate against individuals either in the way it has been designed or how it is implemented in practice.

## NHS Scotland National Uniform Specification

<b>Clinical Staff</b>	
Senior / Lead Nurses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maroon tunic and blue trousers</li> </ul>
Community Nurse/Midwife Team Leaders  Hospital at Night Nurse Practitioners * Dumfries and Galloway Policy is that H@N ANPs will wear the cornflower blue tunic unless they are in Charge of the Hospital during the night.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navy blue tunic / polo shirt</li> <li>• Navy blue trousers</li> </ul>
Registered Nurses / Midwives including Dental Nurses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cornflower tunic or cornflower blue polo shirt.</li> <li>• Navy blue trousers</li> </ul>
Allied Health Professionals (AHP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mediterranean blue tunic or Mediterranean blue polo shirt</li> <li>• Navy blue trousers</li> <li>• Allied Health Professionals will have their professional role embroidered on their tunic/polo shirt</li> </ul>
Healthcare Scientists, Pharmacy Technicians, Dental Care Professionals including Dental Hygienists, Orthopaedic Practitioners (holders of BBC – British Casting Certificate).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ocean blue tunic or ocean blue polo shirt</li> <li>• Navy blue trousers</li> <li>• These staff groups will have their professional role embroidered on their tunic/polo shirt.</li> </ul>
All unregistered staff, support workers and trainees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pale sky blue tunic or pale sky blue polo shirt</li> <li>• Navy blue trousers</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>

<b>Non-Clinical Staff</b>	
Catering and domestic staff, including non-clinical staff trainees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid-green tunic or mid-green polo shirt</li> <li>• Navy blue trousers</li> </ul>
Catering and domestic supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dark green tunic or dark green polo shirt</li> <li>• Navy blue trousers</li> </ul>
Porters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mid-green Polo shirt or mid-green dress shirt/blouse</li> <li>• Navy blue trousers</li> </ul>
Administration and Clerical Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plain coloured mid-green blouse/dress shirt</li> <li>• Navy blue dress trousers</li> </ul>
Security Guards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White shirt/blouse (available with or without epaulettes) and clip in tie with military style jumper or black t-shirt and stab vest depending on local policy</li> <li>• Black trousers</li> </ul>

- Polo shirts are available as an alternative to tunics depending on local policy, i.e. at the discretion of the line manager.
- A range of outer garments, including cardigans, fleeces and shower proof jackets are available.

[www.scotland.gov.uk](http://www.scotland.gov.uk)

## Tax Relief Guidelines

The expenses that can be allowed as a deduction from employment income are limited by Section 198 of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988. To qualify for relief, expenses must be expended wholly, exclusively and necessarily in the performance of the duties of employment.

A deduction can therefore be claimed for the cost of cleaning, repair or replacement of specialist clothing. It is not always possible to calculate the cost of washing specialist clothing and so the Inland Revenue will allow a flat rate expense (Table 1).

**If the employer provides laundry arrangements, even if you decide not to use the facility, tax relief is not applicable.**

If you do not wear a uniform for your work, but need separate work clothes, or have to launder the clothes you wear at work at high temperatures, you should apply for laundry costs under this management.

It is possible to claim for years other than the current tax year if you have never claimed before. To do this you will need to fill out a tax relief form supplied by contacting your local Tax Office direct.

The amount of tax relief you can claim depends on your occupation.

nurses, midwives, podiatrists, dental nurses, occupational, speech, physiotherapists and other therapists, healthcare assistants, phlebotomists and radiographers, plaster room orderlies, hospital porters, ward clerks, sterile supply workers, hospital domestics and hospital catering staff	£125
laboratory staff, pharmacists and pharmacy assistants	£80
uniformed ancillary staff - maintenance workers, grounds staff, drivers, parking attendants and security guards, receptionists and other uniformed staff.	£80

Last updated 4 Dec 2018

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/job-expenses-for-uniforms-work-clothing-and-tools>

**References:**

CEL 42 (2010) National Uniform Policy, Dress Code and Laundering Policy, Scottish Government.

Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)

Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations (1992)

Workplace (Health and Safety and Welfare) Regulations (1992)

Manual Handling Operations Regulations (1992)

Department of Health (2004) Standards for Better Health

Scottish Executive (2002) The Watt Group Report, A Review of the Outbreak of Salmonella at the Victoria Infirmary

National No Smoking Policy (2015)

## DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

### 1. Document Status

<b>Title</b>	Staff Dress Code and Uniform Policy
<b>Author</b>	Margo Christie, Associate Nurse Director
<b>Approver</b>	APF
<b>Document reference</b>	Policy Number 62
<b>Version number</b>	3.0

### 2 Document Amendment History

Version	Section(s)	Reason for update
2.0	1.4	Social, Cultural – Equality and Diversity Deleted for v 3.0
	3.2	Insert of national date for implementation of uniform.
	3.6	Facial Piercing Inclusion of statement I recommendation re risk assessment.
	4.5	Inclusion of community staff where uniform between patients.
	4.8	Additional text.
	4.13	Additional text appropriate footwear.
	4.17	Smoking Policy - Inclusion of additional smoking policy guidance. Reinforcement of Policy.
	5.2	Updates.
	8	Updates re student uniform.
3.0		1.4 Added following a patient concern and changes to jewellery in High Risk areas Addition of Nicotine Replacement Products Information

### 3. Distribution

Name	Responsibility	Version number
Board Secretary	Place on policy register	3.0
Workforce Directorate	Place on intranet	3.0
APF	To approve	3.0

### 4. Associated documents

None

### 5. Action Plan for Implementation

Action	Lead Officer	Timeframe
Update policy register	Corporate Business Manager	20 December 2018
Place on intranet	Workforce Directorate	20 December 2018
Use Policy	All staff	20 December 2018

Title: Staff Dress Code & Uniform Policy

Date: December 2018

Version: 3.0

Author: Margo Christie, Associate Nurse Director

*The only current version of this policy is on the intranet*