



Dress Policy

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The provisions of this policy, which was developed by a partnership group on behalf of Grampian Area Partnership Forum, apply equally to all employees of NHS Grampian except where specific exclusions have been identified.

NHS Grampian
Dress Policy

This document is also available in large print and other formats and languages, upon request. Please call NHS Grampian Corporate Communications on Aberdeen (01224) 551116 or (01224) 552245.

This Policy has undergone Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment.

Revision History:

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Dress Policy	3	Agreed to be refreshed by the 10 August 2017 GAPF	24 November 2025
Dress Policy	4	Footwear paragraphs (pages 4 and 5) agreed by 20 February 2020 GAPF	24 November 2025

NHS Grampian Dress Policy

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NHS Grampian Dress Policy

1. Introduction

As an NHS organisation our main purpose is to provide effective diagnosis, care and treatment to people who use our services. It must be apparent to patients, visitors, members of the public, partner organisations and patient groups that we are competent, respectful, professional, trustworthy, safe, reliable and caring. This is in part promoted by staff appearance.

This NHS Grampian Dress Policy supersedes all previous policies and guidance on this topic and is in line with the National Uniform Dress Code and Laundering Policy CEL 42 (2010)

This policy should be read and implemented in conjunction with the following NHS Grampian policies;

- Infection Control policies, particularly Standard Infection Control Precautions (SICPs) and Hand Hygiene Protocol
- Health and Safety Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Tobacco Policy
- Management of Linen Protocol
- NHS Grampian A-Z for Decontamination of Re-usable communal patient equipment

2. Policy Statements

NHS Grampian has a duty to provide person centred, safe and effective care. The appearance of NHS Grampian staff members plays an important role in the delivery of this purpose as it promotes confidence.

Person centred: all staff working in NHS Grampian are expected to present a smart and professional image which is one of many factors likely to inspire public confidence. Uniforms are provided to some staff categories to help achieve this objective. NHS Grampian photo ID badges or the ID badge of another relevant employing organisation must be worn and visible unless contraindicated by health and safety requirements.

Safe and effective: whilst involved in direct clinical care, dress will be in compliance with the principles relating to the prevention and control of transmission of infection, and health and safety regulations. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and/or scrubs are provided to some staff members to help achieve this objective. Patient care takes priority in all circumstances and therefore it may happen that the dress policy temporarily becomes of secondary importance (for example an unplanned intervention in an emergency situation).

3. Scope of Responsibilities

All staff, volunteers and students/trainees/work experience who are working in NHS Grampian are expected to present a smart and professional image at all times whenever and wherever they work. This is important in clinical areas when staff have patient contact, whether on hospital wards, in community clinics, in GP surgeries, on home visits or in the clinical skills centre with volunteer and simulated patients. Where uniforms and protective clothing are provided this must be worn correctly in accordance with this policy. Where uniforms are not required staff must dress appropriately for their role in accordance with the principles and practice set out in this policy.

Identity badges must be worn at all times. If the ID badge is worn on a neck lanyard, the badge should not come into contact with patients or their immediate surroundings during clinical examination or procedures. If using a lanyard an NHS lanyard is the preferred choice, or one that carries no advertising.

Departmental managers are responsible for considering the specific implications of this policy for the department under their responsibility, and to ensure that this is included in staff induction.

Individual departments are required to implement a dress policy for non-clinical areas that is relevant to the local situation and is compliant with the principles outlined in this document.

3.1 Responsibilities of All Staff Wearing a Uniform

- Where uniforms are required they must be worn correctly in accordance with national and local policy
- Staff wearing a uniform who are in direct patient contact must comply with the points outlined in section 3.2 to facilitate hand hygiene, examination of patients and carrying out procedures.
- Fleeces/cardigans may be worn in the uniform colour but must be removed before patient contact to facilitate hand hygiene, examination of patients and carrying out procedures (section 3.2).
- If a disability/medical condition, religious, ethnic or cultural requirement makes it difficult or impossible for a member of staff to comply, the line manager should be contacted for further advice.
- Uniforms must be clean, pressed and laundered in accordance with the national guidance or in accordance with the temperature stated on the garment care label. They must be transported to and from work in a clean disposable bag. If staining or contamination with blood or bodily fluids were to occur the uniform should be changed immediately. NHS staff without responsibilities in operating theatres may be supplied with scrubs only under these circumstances.
- No badges other than ID and professional badges to be worn
- Footwear should be comfortable and practical for the role undertaken.

Footwear should encase the foot with closed toes and heels and have a suitable closing device such as Velcro or laces, all of which provide good support for the foot. Shoes should also be soft soled to reduce noise and be low heeled to support safe manual handling procedures and to reduce the risk of slipping.

Footwear should be in good repair and be washable or wipeable.

In the event of an accident that shoes are too soiled or damaged to continue to wear, staff should, in discussion with their manager, do one of the following:

- wear their outdoor shoes if appropriate
- work differently for the rest of the shift
- agree that they go home and change their shoes and return to work
- borrow theatre shoes if it is possible

Footwear for clinical staff not required to wear uniform should be comfortable and suitable for the role. Shoes should encase the foot, be low heeled and soft soled for the reasons noted above.

Staff members required to wear specialist protective footwear essential for their employed role will have footwear supplied by the organisation, or their costs reimbursed.

Any staff member who believes they require footwear specific to their employed role for reasons of health and safety should contact their manager who will arrange for an individual risk assessment to be carried out.

This statement complies with guidance received from Corporate Health and Safety Department and reflects guidance in the National Infection and Prevention and Control Manual (IPC).

- Uniforms should only be worn in the work environment but there may be occasions when it is appropriate to be in uniform out with the workplace whilst engaged on NHS Grampian business. Staff may need to travel to work in uniform due to limited changing facilities, if this is done the uniform must be hidden by an over garment **Staff must not undertake personal activities such as shopping whilst wearing their uniform.**
- Staff should not smoke in uniform, personal protective equipment wearing an ID badge or when otherwise identifiable as on NHS Grampian business (in line with NHS Grampian Tobacco Policy)

3.2 Responsibilities of Staff whilst in Direct Patient Contact

Compliance with Hand Hygiene Protocol.

- Sleeves will be either short, $\frac{3}{4}$ length or rolled up away from the wrists prior to hand hygiene, whilst examining patients or when carrying out procedures. This will enable effective hand decontamination to be carried out and reduce risk of cross infection.
- Fingernails should be kept short and clean. They will not be visible above the fingertips when viewing hand from the palm side. Long nails or nails with sharp edges can pierce fragile skin and can puncture protective gloves. False fingernails including gel nails are not appropriate in a clinical setting. Nail varnish will not be worn.
- Rings with stones, ridges, sharp edges or crevices must not be worn. A plain, smooth 'wedding' band is acceptable. Any ring must be small enough to allow the use of gloves, without risk of tearing. Visible intradermal jewellery is not allowed, (excepting earrings – see below) especially if it interferes with hand washing
- Wrist watches will not be worn.
- Bracelets, rubber charity bangles, wrist worn fitness devices fabric or leather tie-on type of bracelet are not appropriate wear in any clinical area.

- Religious/Faith bracelets that cannot be removed should either be pushed up the arm to allow for hand hygiene or where this is not possible they should be covered by a long cuffed glove, if possible these should be removed to facilitate effective hand hygiene.

Other Key Points

- Ties, if worn will be tucked in or secured by means of a clip or tie-tack. Similarly, headscarves will be worn in a way which avoids contact with patients and their immediate surroundings.
- Hair must be clean, neat and tidy, longer hair must be clipped back from the face and tied up off the collar at all times in clinical areas. Hairstyles should not require frequent readjustment.
- Head wear must be clean and staff must ensure it does not obscure the face while delivering patient care.
- Facial hair should be kept clean, neatly trimmed or rolled and tucked.
- Make up should be kept light, false eyelashes are not permitted as they can easily fall off and pose a contamination risk.
- Jewellery will, in the clinical area, be kept to a minimum, necklaces and long dangling earrings should not be worn as these can interfere with clinical examination and procedures, all clinical staff can only wear a maximum of one pair of stud earrings. For intradermal piercing see above
- Denim jeans, shorts, very short skirts, tops with low or revealing necklines or any clothing which exposes the midriff or underwear are not appropriate.

3.3 Responsibilities of All Staff Wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) or Wearing “Scrubs”

- PPE must be worn in accordance with health and safety policies, local dress codes and job role.
- Single use plastic aprons must be worn where there is a possibility or a risk of transmittable infection, soiling or contact with blood or body fluids or when providing personal or clinical care, or serving food. **These aprons must not be worn outwith the ward/clinic/unit.**
- “Scrubs” should always be clean and uncontaminated. If staining or contamination with blood or bodily fluids were to occur they should be changed immediately. Otherwise they are changed at least daily.
- Staff whilst wearing “scrubs” who are in direct patient contact must comply with the points outlined in section 3.2 (above).
- Staff wearing scrubs should not leave the hospital building to frequent other buildings on campus
- Unless required, “scrubs” should not be supplied to non-NHS Grampian staff as this would constitute a security risk.
- Caps worn to prevent hair from falling in to an open wound or sterile surface should be used as supplied. They are disposable and single use only; **do not wear caps outwith the theatre or procedure area.**

- Face masks should cover the nose and mouth, fitting the contour of the face and should be tied securely, some surgical procedures may not require this. They are disposable and single use only. **Do not wear masks outwith the theatre/procedure area.**
- Special footwear worn in theatres is for that use only and must be cleaned after every use and/or session. Footwear contaminated with blood or bodily fluids should be decontaminated as NHS Grampian A-Z for Decontamination of Re-usable communal patient equipment. **Do not wear theatre footwear outwith the department.**
- The use of overshoes is not allowed.
- White coats will not be worn as part of (PPE) except within the Laboratories and Pharmacy.

3.4 Responsibilities of All Staff Not In Any of the Categories Above

- All staff, wherever they work should be aware of the principles outlined under “Scope” in section 3. It is not realistic for the policy to be descriptive in detail for each of the wide variety functions within the NHS Grampian organisation.
- Staff who enter the patient environment in clinical areas need to adhere to the dress code outlined in section 3.2, and comply with the Hand Hygiene protocols.
- Staff who have no clinical role must adhere to local protocols as agreed with local management team in regard to use of e.g. hairnets for food production and protective headwear for facilities staff.

4. The Role of Line Managers

- Consider this policy and its implications for the area that you are responsible for.
- Ensure that each and every member of staff receives specific instructions relating to the implications of this policy to the local area of work.
- Ensure that all staff comply with the policy.
- Respect the religious, ethnic and cultural requirements of staff.
- Resolve or report any circumstances which make compliance difficult.

5. Monitoring

Managers will be responsible for monitoring the compliance of staff. Scrutiny of grievance cases, disciplinary and harassment cases will be undertaken to assess any adverse impact on any particular group.

6. References

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9. National Uniform Policy, Dress Code and Laundering Policy CEL 42(2010)
10. NHS Grampian Tobacco Policy (2016)