



## Drogheda Services for Older Persons, The Village Residence

<b>Document Reference Number:</b>  <b>Laundry Policy.</b>	<b>Revision Number:</b>  2
<b>Developed by :</b> Director of Nursing Office, Clinical Nurse Managers  <b>Policy Reference number:</b> HIQA Schedule 5 Health and Safety including	<b>Document Approved By:</b>  Michael McCaul       Clinical Nurse Manager's Seema Pankaj Sujitha Poykayil Sukumaran Simy Kurian
<b>First Approval Date:</b> <b>September 2008.</b>	<b>Responsibility for Implementation:</b> Director of Nursing, Assistant Directors of Nursing All Clinical Nurse Managers. General Operative Staff. Catering Staff Hygiene Staff, Health Care Assistants.
<b>Revision Date:</b>  June 2022, Sept 2023	<b>Responsibility for Evaluation &amp; Audit:</b> Director of Nursing Office.
<b>Applicable To:</b> This policy applies to all Nursing, Health care Assistant and Allied Health staff either directly or indirectly employed by The Village Residence.	<b>Ratification Details:</b> Ratified by Clinical Nurse Managers. This Policy has been updated June 2022 and is again due for review Sept 2026 or sooner should need arise.
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## **1.0 Laundry Guidelines.**

### **Guidelines for Managing Laundry and Linen and Personal Clothing in The Village Residence.**

#### **Introduction**

The risk of infection from used linen is minimal provided that it is handled, transported and decontaminated in a safe manner. The high temperature of the water, the laundry detergent and the laundering process physically removes and destroys most microorganisms. Any organism remaining is likely to be destroyed by further processes of tumble drying and ironing.

Principles of Standard Precautions which apply to the management of laundry and linen are:

- Hand hygiene- carried out following the handling of used laundry and linen and prior to handling clean linen.
- Personal protective equipment- worn when anticipated contact with laundry and linen soiled with blood or body fluids occurs
- Maintaining a clean, safe environment- by handling, transporting and processing used and soiled linen in a manner that prevents contact with skin and mucous membranes, staff clothing and avoids transfer of micro-organisms to other residents/clients and the environment.
- Prevention of exposures to staff with body fluids- by ensuring that manually sluice soiled laundry or linen is not carried out and items soiled with blood or body fluids are placed in an alginate or water soluble bag and laundered as per the guidelines below.

#### **1.1 Handling Used Laundry and Linen**

- Remove from the bed with care, avoiding the creation of dust, do not shake or place on the floor or on any clean surface.
- Place in the appropriate bag/container at the bedside or point of care.
- Wear appropriate protective clothing when handling laundry soiled with body fluids.

- Do not manually sluice or hand wash items soiled with blood or body fluids i.e. do not rinse or spray soiled items under running water.
- Place items soiled with blood or body fluids in an alginate or water soluble bag at the point of care.

Do not fill the alginate bag or water soluble bag more than 2/3 full.

Close/tie the bag. Place alginate or water soluble bags into the appropriate colour coded linen bag prior to being sent to the laundry.

- In the laundry the alginate or water soluble bag is placed directly into the washing machine.
- The alginate bag opens during the washing process as the seams/stitching dissolves.
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**Clear bag;** for used unsoiled linen.

**Red laundry collection bag;** Infectious linen (within an alginate bag)

**All infected linen to be in an alginate prior to placing in a red laundry collection bag.**

**No loose linen to be in a red laundry collection bag.**

When the item/s have been laundered it is safe to remove the item/s and the bag from the washing machine. Dispose of the alginate bag in non healthcare risk waste.

The water soluble bag dissolves completely during the wash cycle.

- Carry out hand hygiene after handling used linen and laundry.
- Ensure that sharps and other items i.e. incontinence wear are not inadvertently discarded into laundry bags.
- Ensure that laundry containers/skips are included in routine cleaning schedule.
- Do not store laundry containers/skips in clean areas such as clean linen rooms and residents living accommodation.

## **Segregation and Laundering**

Category	Description	Laundering requirements
<b>Used linen (bedding, towels, hoists slings etc.)</b>	Linen that is used but not contaminated with urine, faeces, blood, vomit, sputum or any other bodily fluid.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launder at 65°C for at least 10 minutes, or 71°C for 3 minutes.</li> <li>• A sluice cycle is not required.</li> </ul>
<b>Contaminated or infected linen and clothing</b>	Linen that is contaminated with urine, faeces, blood, vomit, sputum or any other body fluid or from a person with a known infectious condition i.e. <i>Clostridium difficile</i> infection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not manually sluice.</li> <li>• Place into an alginate bag/water soluble bag wearing gloves and apron.</li> <li>• Use appropriate sluice cycles.</li> <li>• Launder at 65°C for at least 10 minutes, or 71°C for 3 minutes.</li> </ul>
<b>Heat labile fabrics</b>	Linen that is used and cannot be washed at high temperatures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dry cleaning may be suitable for some items.</li> <li>• Fabric requiring lower washing temperatures (40-50°C) should be washed separately.</li> <li>• Please refer to laundering instructions. *</li> </ul>
<b>Microfibre cloths and microfibre flat mop heads</b>	Microfibre cloths and flat mops utilised for environmental cleaning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek manufacturer's instructions.</li> </ul>

### Transporting Used Linen

- Do not over fill laundry bags, as this may prevent closure, increase the risk of rupture of the bags in transit and thus increase the risk of injury to handlers.
- Securely close all bags before being sent to the laundry.
- At /unit level, store bags of laundry in a designated, secure location, which is cool and dry.
- Transport laundry bags in a trolley or container that will minimize the potential for contamination to the person transporting the laundry.
- Store laundry in a designated safe area, away from food preparation areas and those parts of the facility frequented by residents and their visitors. (Currently at front of Meadowview and Sunnyside)
- Laundry must not be carried through the kitchen, dining room or food storage areas.
- As laundry from this service is sent off site

- Segregation of laundry must be followed by both the contractor and the healthcare facility,
- Store in a designated secure location prior to collection,
- Holding receptacles are used and they should be stored in an area which has good access routes for uplift by the contractor.
- The receptacles should be washable and free from interference from pests.

### **Storage of Clean Linen**

- Store in a manner that protects it from contamination i.e. in a designated clean dry location on shelving raised at least six inches above the floor level.
- Shelving units in the linen storage area should be suitable for cleaning and included in a cleaning schedule.
- Where a trolley is used to store clean linen it should be designated for this purpose.
- The trolley should be impervious to fluids, capable of being closed and easily cleaned. Do not store clean linen in bathrooms/dirty utilities.
- Clean linen should be handled with clean hands.

### **Protection of all Staff Handling Laundry**

To minimise the risk of infection to staff handling laundry it is important to ensure staff:

- Are offered hepatitis B immunisation.
- Are trained to carry out the necessary procedures involved in handling laundry.
- Cover any skin lesions with a waterproof dressing.
- Have access to conveniently located hand hygiene facilities.
- Have access to and wear appropriate personal protective equipment as necessary.
- Are aware that eating is not permitted while handling laundry
- Have access to showers in the event of a spillage, accident or contamination

## **How should laundry soiled with body fluids be handled and washed?**

Do not manually sluice or hand wash items soiled with blood or body fluids i.e. do not rinse or spray soiled items under running water.

A domestic style machine is not recommended for processing laundry soiled with blood, vomit, faeces etc. as the temperatures required to disinfect may not be reached and the machine will not have a sluice cycle.

Where there is a requirement to launder linen and clothing soiled with blood, vomit, faeces etc. a washing machine with a sluice cycle and capability of a disinfectant cycle i.e. attain and hold temperatures of 71°C for 3mins or 65°C for 10mins is recommended.

- Water soluble or alginate bags are recommended for use where laundry is soiled with body fluids, the purpose of which is to reduce the risk to staff handling soiled laundry.
- Items soiled with blood or body fluids are placed in an alginate or water soluble bag at the bedside/in the bathroom.
- Do not fill the alginate or water soluble bag more than 2/3 full.
- Close/tie the bag and place the bag into the machine.
- The alginate bag opens during the washing process as the seams/stitching dissolves, when the item/s have been laundered remove and dispose of the alginate bag.
- Water soluble bag dissolves completely during the wash cycle.
- Where, on an infrequent basis, it may be necessary to launder an item soiled with body fluids in a domestic machine this should be dealt with in a controlled manner by:
  - using disposable gloves and paper tissue, remove any solid matter (faeces, vomit), and flush into the toilet,
  - then place the item directly into the machine or use an alginate bag and place the bag directly into the machine (water soluble bags which dissolve completely are not suitable for a domestic washing machine), or wash separately using a cold pre-wash cycle followed by a hot wash cycle suitable for the fabric using laundry detergent.

- If clothes/ or linen are heavily soiled disposal of the item should be considered following discussion with the client and /or family.

### **Linen, Sheets, Towels, quilt covers**

At present the Celtic Linen provides laundry services.

Collections take place on a Tuesday of each week and collection usually takes place before mid-day.

Used bed linen and towels is collected and clean linen supply is delivered.

**Resident's clothes or personal items DO NOT GO TO CELTIC LINEN**

**Celtic Linen contact details:** Phone: [\(053\) 916 5700](tel:(053)9165700)

### **Resident's Personal Laundry.**

Resident's Personal laundry is undertaken done by Trinity laundry, on Tuesday and Friday

Used laundry is collected and clean laundry is returned on these days.

In order to ensure an effective service the following is essential –

- That all items are clearly labeled with residents name:
- That all used linen is ready for collection:
- That clean linen is delivered to designated area on same day:
- CONTACT DETAILS TRINITY LAUNDRY:

Address: 22 Trinity St, Rathmullan, Drogheda, Co. Louth, A92 WCK4

### **Delivery/ Sorting of Clean residents Laundry:**

Clean residents personal laundry will be delivered to each unit on Tuesday, Thursdays and Saturday.

In absence of the Home Maker /general maintenance person a care assistant from each unit should retrieve their unit laundry.

It is the responsibility of the staff on each unit to sort out same.

Personal items of clothing must be clearly identified by name, unit and centre.

Each unit is responsible for labelling of resident personal laundry.

### **Storage of Bed Linen and towels;**

Clean linen should be stored in a designated cupboard or room that is only used for the purpose of storing linen. Under no circumstances should clean linen be stored beside used linen.

**Laundry must not be laundered in The Village Residence but must be sent to Laundry Services, Celtic linen or Trinity laundry.**

**The washing machine in The Village Residence is only for the washing of CLEANING EQUIPMENT USED BY Hygiene Staff.**

**All staff must adhere strictly to this policy in The Village Residence and this Guideline should be brought to the attention of new staff during the induction process.**

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