

INFECTION CONTROL AND LINEN HANDLING PROCEDURES

All healthcare textiles will be handled and collected in accordance with OSHA regulations and federal guidelines with the goal of minimizing potential exposure to patients, hospital personnel, or laundry personnel to Bloodborne pathogens or other infections agents. All soiled healthcare textiles will be assumed to be contaminated, and Universal Precautions shall apply at all times to all personnel who handle soiled textiles.

In order to separate the soiled textile processing area from clean textile processing and storage, the facility is divided into two sections. The first is the soiled side of the plant in which the soiled linen from the accounts is received, sorted, and loaded into washers. From this section of the facility, the linen, after it has been washed, moves to the finish side of the plant. The finish side encompasses the drying, ironing, folding and packing sections.

TRANSPORTATION AND PROCESSING OF SOILED LINEN

The collection of soiled textiles begins at the point of collection designated by the customer in accordance with their contract. All soiled linen should be enclosed in plastic bags placed within carts by hospital personnel before it is picked up from the accounts. These collection bags must functionally contain wet or soiled textiles, preventing contamination of the environment during collection, transportation and storage prior to processing. The drivers should have no direct contact with the soiled linen. In case of a bag accidentally tearing open, disposable gloves and antiseptic hand sanitizer are to be maintained in all vehicles. The driver should first put on disposable gloves, then pick up any soiled linen that may have fallen onto the truck bed, and finally should remove the gloves and sanitize their hands. If they still at the facility, they should also wash their hands there. All drivers will receive training in Bloodborne pathogen and the proper handling and transporting of soiled linen and will be offered the hepatitis vaccination program.

When soiled linen is loaded onto a truck, care must be taken to insure the soiled linen never comes in contact with clean linen. Whenever possible, all clean linen should be removed from the truck before any soiled linen is loaded. When the route includes multiple deliveries, the carts should be kept as separate as feasible. Care must be taken that the carts of clean linen remained covered, and that no soiled linen comes in contact with it.

The employees sorting and working with the soiled linen are required to wear the required personal protective equipment. This includes a full set of scrubs, long-sleeved impervious lab coat, shoe covers, hair net, and gloves. Face masks are worn as appropriate. All soiled sort employees and washroom personnel must follow Universal Precautions when handling the linen. The washer-extractor operator is required to wear PPE when loading soiled linen into the washer. The tunnel operator is required to wear PPE if a bag of soiled linen opens and they are picking up the soiled linen to place it into a different bag. Upon leaving the soiled side, all employees are required to remove their

personal protective equipment and thoroughly wash their hands. Hand washing facilities are conveniently located next to the sorting deck.

Any sharps found in the linen are immediately placed in a sharps container located on the sorting deck. Any medical waste that is found is immediately placed in a contaminated waste container for pick-up by an appropriate agency.

Eating and drinking are not permitted on the soiled side of the plant.

New employees attend an educational inservice which discusses the company's infection control plan, blood borne pathogen standard and the service the company provides. Employees are not to work on the soiled side sorting area until they receive the proper training.

The linen is properly sorted by category by the soiled sort personnel. Any instruments discovered in the linen are placed into a sharps container located in the area and logged on the Sort Deck Daily Log.

The linen is then washed through either the tunnels or washer extractors and continues to the appropriate dryer for processing. If the linen is processed through a tunnel washer, it enters on the soiled side of the plant and exits on the clean side. The linen is then sent by the finish side rail system for ironing, folding and order completion. If the item is processed through a washer extractor, care must be taken to insure that clean linen coming out of the washer extractors does not come in contact with soiled linen. After the soiled linen is loaded into a washer extractor, the loading area of the washer shall be sprayed with a disinfectant to insure the clean linen coming out of the washer does not contact a soiled surface. Separate carts are used for soiled linen going into the extractor and clean linen coming out of them.

All linen carts used for soiled linen must pass through the cart washer as they are sent from the soiled side to the clean side of the plant. All carts are dried at the end of the cycle.

The clean linen is placed in the hospital carts and covered with poly protective wraps. The carts are weighed on an electronic scale for accurate billing and production scheduling. The linen is delivered to the accounts in the company trucks. The trucks are swept out on the soiled side after unloading and disinfected with Ecolution spray disinfectant weekly. A log is maintained in the truck bed.

Washing And Drying Process

The wash formulas have been tailored to our accounts' needs by a representative of Gurtler, Inc. Care has been given to ensure proper balance needed to achieve maximum washing properties, minimum fabric damage, softness, whiteness and maximum germicidal properties.

Wash formulas are monitored by monthly titrations performed by a representative from Gurtler Inc.

All wash formulas are automatically controlled to respond to proper amounts of wash product, temperature, water, time and mechanical action.

Components used by Tri-State in the control of bacteria include:

- High water temperatures(in excess of 160°F)
- Mechanical action
- Detergents
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Sour at proper ph level
- Softeners
- Ironer chest temperatures of at least 300 degrees
- Dryer temperature of 225 degrees

Finish Side

Care should be taken while handling clean linen to keep it away from the face and body as well as to prevent it from coming into contact with the floor. Food and drink should also be kept away from the clean linen.

In-Service Education

All employees must attend the appropriate training in services for educational purposes such as: Infection Control and Bloodborne Pathogen Standards, Hazardous Communication (Right to Know) and Back Safety. Management members are encouraged and do attend formal outside educational seminars to keep current with standards and to enhance their understanding of linen use and the laundry processing environment.

Housekeeping

Tri-State follows a regular schedule of housekeeping procedures designed to minimize contamination of clean linen items. Floors and equipment in the soiled linen area are cleaned on a regular basis with the appropriate cleaning supplies. The ceiling has been equipped with fans which automatically blow down accumulated lint each night. All clean linen is covered before this takes place. The finish side is kept clean by housekeeping and maintenance personnel as well as the laundry personnel in the immediate area.

The shipping carts are cleaned before moving from the soiled side to the finish side in the cart wash.

The responsibility for maintaining a clean work environment is shared by all employees of Tri-State.

Quality Assurance

Tri-State puts forth diligent effort in its quality assurance program to deliver to all accounts clean, sanitized linen with minimal amounts of stained and torn pieces. The maintenance and washroom personnel check wash detergent, bleach, PH and sour softener quantities.

The management personnel keep constant communication with each account to aid in accurate information regarding special handling, requests and concerns.

Stain and mending bags are provided at each account to ensure that unsatisfactory linen items are removed from the system and the hospital is not charged for any reprocessing.

The Quality Assurance mender has received instruction regarding the proper handling of worn, torn or stained items.

Approved by: Kenneth Schehl President

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