1. INTRODUCTION

The Dress Code has three basic principles:

- Patients should feel confident that they are being treated by a team of professionals. Your appearance is one part of ensuring patients have confidence in their carers.
- All patients should feel their beliefs are respected. Ethnic origin, religious conviction and age group can influence patients’ views on appropriate dress. Patients should be made to feel as comfortable as possible in a clinical setting and inappropriate dress can cause unnecessary offence and upset.
- Dress must conform to health & safety requirements for your protection and the protection of patients.

2. DEFINITIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word/Term</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uniform Wearers</td>
<td>Any Trust employee who is required to wear a uniform of any description.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-uniform Wearers</td>
<td>All Trust employees who are not required to wear a uniform.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note these rules apply to the clinical working environment. However, if you are entering any clinical area for any teaching activity, including assessments involving patients, you should ensure that your dress will not cause offence to staff, patients or visitors.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

To ensure that as an organisation, there is compliance with any regulations affecting the use of personal and protective clothing (PPE).

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post/Group</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chief Executive</td>
<td>Ultimate responsibility, Deploying resources for risk reduction measures</td>
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<tr>
<td>All Trust employees</td>
<td>To comply with policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust Managers/Supervisors</td>
<td>To ensure employees are compliant with policy regardless of position</td>
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<td>Non adherence is managed</td>
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5. GENERAL UNIFORM

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (GHNHSFT) expects all staff to project a professional image in all care settings at all times. This includes inpatient and outpatient departments and whenever there is patient contact. In compiling the following policy, account has been taken of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the manual handling legislation.

As a general rule in a clinical setting, men should wear a shirt with or without a tie, with smart/casual trousers. The tie must be either removed completely or tucked into the shirt whilst performing clinical procedures.

Women should wear a blouse/smart top with smart-casual trousers or skirt, or a smart dress. Dress for areas such as Psychiatry and Child Health may be more casual but the following rules must always be followed:

- Name badges/identity badges must be worn by all staff, at all times, and be clearly visible.
- In regard to patient safety, staff must be aware of the contents of the top pockets of the uniform, such as; pens, scissors or other hard and sharp objects as they may cause injury or discomfort to patients, these items should be carried inside clothing or hip pockets.
- Lanyards for uniform and non-uniform wearers within a clinical setting must not be worn as they have been shown to be contaminated by pathogens which could come in contact with patients; they play no part in patient care. Identity badges should be clipped to the clothing.
- Clothing should cover the body from the shoulder to the knee as a minimum. Bare midriffs are not acceptable.
- Clinical staff must be ‘bare below the elbows’. This is a DH guideline and is enforced regardless of ethnicity and cultural beliefs.
- Clothing should be clean and pressed.
- Clothing should not restrict easy movement and should look smart and professional.
- Clothing should not display prominent non NHS logos or pictures.
- Combat-style trousers and jeans are inappropriate.
- Staff must not wear part uniform/part mufti.
- If cardigans/jumpers/sweatshirts are worn with uniform they must comply with the uniform colour i.e. navy blue for nurses and midwives. Cardigans must not be worn whilst undertaking clinical activities or direct patient care. Other than during exceptionally hot weather, tights or stockings must be worn at all times. Tights/stockings must be smooth in texture, not ribbed or woollen, and may be black, barely black, grey or flesh-coloured.
- When wearing trousers, socks must be discreet in colour (navy blue/black). Plain not patterned.
- When a uniform dress is worn, belts and buckles are not permitted.
- Only one training school badge may be worn.
- Uniform shorts approved by the department manager may be worn. Currently approved in physiotherapy and portering.

6. FOOTWEAR

- Shoes for uniform wearers should be neat and clean and have non-slip soft soles with a low heel and a soft base to keep noise to a minimum. Footwear must be black, well fitting and provide good support and protection. The shoe must cover the whole of the foot including the toe and heel. Wearing shoes with closed toes minimises the risk of injury to the feet. Flat, well-supported lace ups remain the best choice. Court shoes and ‘Croc type’ shoes are not acceptable.
- In specialist areas where “trainers” are worn with theatre blues and greens and/or when wearing shorts in the summer weather, as a preferred option, these must be plain black or white (TOFFELN, ordered through Procurement). Refer to Theatre Dress Code Policy.
- Shoes for non-uniform wearers who work in a clinical setting should comply with the above bullet point.
- Shoes for non-uniform wearers outside of the clinical setting should be smart and clean.
- In your own interest, footwear should be comfortable to wear, but trainers are not acceptable.
- Physiotherapists are permitted to wear trainers because of their work in exercise gyms.

7. JEWELLERY

- Jewellery for uniform wearers is restricted to one pair of plain/unobtrusive studs in the earlobes only; no other facial piercings are permitted to be worn including tongue studs. For catering staff,
plain sleeper earrings apply as advised by Environmental Health. One plain ring/band is permitted on one hand only. Wristwatches must not be worn.

- Jewellery for non-uniform wearers in a clinical setting is as the bullet point above. Wrist watches must be removed before undertaking clinical duties.
- Jewellery for non-uniform wearers outside of the clinical setting must be discreet and unobtrusive.
- The wearing of facial piercings is not permitted.
- Tattoos which will be visible whilst the employee is at work should not be overtly racist, political or contain images that demonstrate violence. Employees with tattoos of this type will be expected to cover these with masking makeup bought at their own expense. Tattoos on the hands must be left uncovered to comply with hand hygiene requirements. Please consult with HR if in any doubt.
- Where, for religious reasons, members of staff wish to cover their forearms or wear a bracelet, when not involved in patient care, they should ensure that sleeves or bracelets can be pushed up the arm and secured in place for hand washing and direct patient care activity.
- Medical Alert ID tags are permitted and can be worn on the wrist. However, these must be removed as necessary to allow for effective hand washing.

8. PERSONAL APPEARANCE

- Fingernails for uniform wearers and non-uniform wearers within a clinical setting must be kept short and clean. Nail polish must not be worn. False fingernails and nail extensions must not be worn.
- For uniform wearers, hair should be clean and, if it falls below the collar, tied back and above the collar.
- For non-uniform wearers, hair should be clean and, if it falls below the collar, tied back and above the collar whilst in a clinical setting.
- The face should be fully exposed when working in all clinical areas. Head attire worn routinely for religious observances should not cover the face as this is crucial for identification purposes as well as for effective communication. Headscarves etc must be tucked into the collar for infection control and hygiene reasons.
- Discreet make-up is permitted. Perfume and aftershave must be unobtrusive in nature.
- It is recognised that in today's society many individuals now have tattoos. Visible tattoos should be appropriate in size and with words or images which are unlikely to cause offence to patients; service users or colleagues (e.g. swear words, initials indicating membership of organisations promoting discriminatory behaviour, images promoting unacceptable culture references such as violence). Members of staff may be asked to cover tattoos that are likely to cause upset to others. If a member of staff attends for work with a new tattoo on an area of the body which is visible, and that tattoo is considered offensive, this may be considered a breach of this policy and disciplinary action may be taken.
- Staff with gauged or stretched ears must wear a plug or filler.
- False eyelashes are not permitted.

9. TRAVELLING TO AND FROM WORK

- Ideally uniforms should not be worn outside whilst travelling to and from work. However, if this is unavoidable, the uniform can only be worn outside the work setting if the tunic or dress is not visible, i.e. covered by a coat/jacket.
- It is not permissible to wear visible uniform whilst travelling across sites on the number 99 bus.
- Community staff must wear the Trust regulation coat/jacket over their uniform whilst on Trust business.

10. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

- Disposable plastic aprons must be worn when close contact with the patient, materials or equipment are anticipated and when there is a risk that clothing may become contaminated with pathogenic microorganisms or blood, body fluids, secretions or excretions, with the exception of perspiration.
- Uniform must be changed when excessive or visible soiling of the uniform occurs. In such circumstances, scrub wear can be used as an emergency substitute.

11. SUPPLY OF UNIFORM

- Uniform issued to staff remain the property of GHNHSFT. Staff should take good care of it and return it when they leave. Staff are responsible for ensuring the security of their uniform at all times.
- Uniform for pregnant women is available on request.
- Uniform will be replaced on a 3 year cycle or at the manager's discretion.
- Uniform is supplied to staff as four sets for full time staff and pro-rata i.e.
  - 0 -15 hours = 2 uniforms
  - 16 – 30 hours = 3 uniforms
  - 31 – 37.5 hours = 4 uniforms

12. **SMOKING**

Staff wishing to smoke must do so off Trust property, out of uniform and only during their official break times as agreed with their line manager, e.g. for nursing this is typically during a shift, one break of 20 minutes, or one hour during a night shift. Additional smoking breaks may not be taken. It is not acceptable for patients, visitors or colleagues to be exposed to the carcinogenic substances resulting from staff smoking. Staff are required to be out of uniform whilst smoking, however it is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that the clothes they wear to perform their duties at work do not smell of smoke or carry the risk of a transfer of carcinogenic substances. A line manager, in fair application of this policy, will be reasonably entitled to ask any member of staff to change their clothing in the event that they determine this policy has been breached.

13. **NON-ADHERENCE**

It is the responsibility of all Staff to comply with this policy. Team Leaders, Ward Managers and Department Heads are asked to lead by example in complying with this policy.

Continued failure by an individual to adhere to this policy may be managed under the Trust’s Disciplinary Policy.

14. **TRAINING**

Training for this policy will be covered by Corporate Induction and by line managers in Clinical areas. Refer to Induction Policy.

8. **MONITORING OF COMPLIANCE**

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<tr>
<th>Monitoring requirements and methodology</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Further actions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Include the following:</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>All staff Managers and Supervisory Staff</td>
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<td>• Compliance with uniform/dress code policy for all employees</td>
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<td>Observation and adverse reporting</td>
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9. **REFERENCES**

National Association of Theatre Nurses (NATN), UK
GHNHSFT Infection Control Policies (2008)
Department of Health – Uniforms and Workwear September 2007
http://www.dh.gov.uk/publications
<table>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>APPROVING GROUP</strong></td>
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| **APPROVAL DETAILS** | Policy approval: May 2015  
TPAG approval: 26th of May 2015 |
| **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT** | Completed May 2015 |
| **CONSULTEES** | SNMC/HR policy Group/ staff side group/H&S Group |
| **DISSEMINATION DETAILS** | Trustwide |
| **KEYWORDS** | Clothing, uniform, dress code, jewellery, footwear, smoking |
| **RELATED TRUST DOCUMENTS** | |
| **OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS** | |
| **EXTERNAL COMPLIANCE STANDARDS AND/OR LEGISLATION** | |