



SLHD Policy Compliance Procedure

SLHD Uniform and Standards of Dress Policy Compliance Procedure	
TRIM Document No	
Policy Reference	
Related MOH Policy	Uniforms Policy PD2019_012 NSW Health Code of Conduct (PD2015_049) Infection Prevention and Control in Healthcare Settings PD2023_025
Keywords	Uniform, Dress, Hygiene
Applies to	All SLHD Staff and other Workers
Clinical Stream(s)	N/A
Tier 2 Sign-off	Director, Workforce and Corporate Operations
Date approved by SLHD Policy Committee	<i>District-level documents can only be approved by the SLHD Policy Committee. Where there are X-stream implications and the document has also been endorsed by Clinical Council, this should be noted here.</i>
Author	
Status	Active/Under Review
Review Date	July 2023
Risk Rating	M
Replaces	SLHD PD2014_006
Version History	
Date	Current Version – List all revisions: January 2008, February 2008, March 2014, March 2016

SLHD Uniform and Standards of Dress

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. The Aims / Expected Outcome of this Policy Compliance Procedure	3
3. Risk Statement	4
4. Scope	4
5. Resources	4
6. Implementation	4
7. Key Performance Indicators and Service Measures	4
8. Guidelines for Uniforms and Dress	4
8.1 SLHD Staff required to wear a uniform	4
8.1.1 Nursing and Midwifery	4
8.1.2 Allied Health	5
8.1.3 Corporate and Administration	5
8.1.4 Medical Staff – Emergency Department	5
8.1.5 Oral Health	5
8.1.6 Security	5
8.2 Dress Standards for staff who are required to wear a Uniform	5
8.2.1 General Requirements	5
8.3 Dress Standards for staff who are not required to wear a Uniform	6
8.3.1 General Requirements	6
8.3.2 Mental Health	7
8.3.3 Community Health and Drug Health Services	7
8.4 Part Time and Casual Pool Staff	7
8.5 Agency / Contract Staff	7
8.6 Students	7
8.7 Operating Theatre Staff	7
8.8 Employees Working Out of Doors, Hazardous Situations or with Machinery	8
8.9 Allowances	8
8.10 Uniform Allocation and Replacement	8
8.11 Return of Uniforms on Termination of Employment	8
9. Consultation	9
10. References	9

Compliance with this Policy Compliance Procedure is Mandatory

SLHD Uniform and Standards of Dress

1. Introduction

This Policy Compliance Procedure (PCP) operationalises the requirements of the NSW Health Policy Directive [Uniforms Policy](#).

It should be read in conjunction with the following related NSW Health Policy Directives:

- [NSW Health Code of Conduct](#) PD2015_049
- [Infection Prevention and Control in Healthcare Settings](#) PD2023_025
- [Protecting People and Property: NSW Health Policy and Standards for Security Risk Management](#) IB2022_039

The NSW Health Code of Conduct (section 4.3.3) states that employees must “*dress in a way that is appropriate for the work that they do and complies with any local dress requirements*”.

NSW Health has a state-wide uniform policy which provides practical and functional uniforms in a variety of styles. Each work stream such as medical, nursing and midwifery, allied health and oral health, have their own individual colours, helping patients to easily identify members of their care team. A uniform has also been designed for clinical support staff such as administration and patient support services.

Uniform specifications and procedures are set out in the HealthShare NSW Uniforms Procedures Manual. The exception to this currently is the supply of uniforms to SLHD security staff, embroidered uniforms for Trades and Engineering staff, Aboriginal Health staff, Digital Health and Innovation staff, volunteers, scrubs provided to Pharmacy Staff, rpaVirtual Care Centre, Kidney Centre at RPA and the BEST service.

This PCP establishes that all SLHD are expected to uphold a high standard of dress, and further that:

- All staff are expected to be well presented and neat at all times
- A uniform (excluding shoes) will be provided to full time, part time and casual staff members who are required to wear a uniform
- As required and outlined in the NSW Health Uniforms Policy, SLHD staff will wear an identification (ID) badge including their first name and family name, always when on duty
- For staff working in Emergency Departments, Mental Health Units and Drug and Alcohol Units, displaying a first name and initial will be sufficient for identification purposes
- Additionally, in accordance with the *Protecting People and Property: NSW Health Policy and Standards for Security Risk Management in NSW Health Agencies*, a risk assessment should be undertaken by the Local Health District should safety or security concerns regarding the display of family names on name badges be raised.
- The identification card must always be worn by staff and be available to view when required. Identification cards need to be clean and not contain stickers, ornaments or other objects affixed to it. Photographs on the identification card should clearly be of the wearer.

Managers are to directly monitor the standard of dress in their department. It is the Manager's responsibility to ensure that staff comply with this PCP.

2. The Aims / Expected Outcome of this Policy Compliance Procedure

- The SLHD image will be reflected in the clean, neat, tidy and professional appearance of the workforce which promotes patient and public confidence.
- Risks to patient safety and employee welfare, particularly within the clinical setting, will be minimised.
- Adherence by all employees to ensure compliance with relevant Infection Prevention, Work Health and Safety (WH&S) and Code of Conduct legislation or policies.

3. Risk Statement

SLHD Enterprise Risk Management System (ERMS) Risk 2, Preventing and Controlling Healthcare Associated Infections:

- Staff wear clothing that minimises the risk of infection and risks to staff members and patients
- Items are not worn that could compromise patient or staff safety during care
- SLHD staff present in a professional manner

4. Scope

Compliance with this PCP is mandatory for all SLHD employees, volunteers, agency staff, and students.

5. Implementation

Staff on commencement are briefed on the requirements of this PCP at Department Orientation.

Changes to this policy are formally provided to all facilities for direct communication to all staff.

All SLHD Managers are required to ensure compliance with this PCP.

6. Key Performance Indicators and Service Measures

Monitoring of:

- Disciplinary action taken against staff members due to inappropriate standards of dress and/or non-compliance with uniform requirements
- All staff required to wear a uniform have been allocated a uniform
- Incidents and near misses related to uniform breaches

7. Guidelines for Uniforms and Dress

SLHD Staff required to wear a uniform

7.1.1 Nursing and Midwifery

Nursing and Midwifery staff who work in a clinical area and who provide direct patient care and treatment to patients are required to wear a uniform. This includes:

- Nurse / Midwife Practitioners
- Clinical Nurse / Midwife Consultants
- Clinical Nurse / Midwife Specialists
- Clinical Nurse / Midwife Educators
- Registered Nurses and Midwives
- Enrolled Nurses
- Assistants in Nursing
- Nursing / Midwifery Unit Managers

7.1.2 Allied Health

- Occupational Therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Podiatrists
- Radiographers
- Orthotists/Prosthetists
- Medical Imaging or Medical Radiation Scientists
- Allied Health Assistants/Exercise Physiologists
- Pharmacy Assistants
- Pharmacy Technicians
- Other Allied health clinicians upon request and approval from their Line Manager, Director Allied Health and General Manager / Service Director

7.1.3 Corporate and Administration

- Frontline administrative staff (at all levels) who may be seen by patients or members of the public
- Trades / Gardening staff / Operations Assistants
- Hospital Assistants / Porters / Wardspersons
- Motor Vehicle Drivers
- Fire Officers
- Supply Officers
- Sterilisation Technicians

7.1.4 Medical Staff

- Medical staff within Critical Care (ICU and Emergency)
- Medical staff within the Operating Theatre environment including Anaesthetics
- Medical staff within Radiology
- Medical staff within Neonatology

7.1.5 Oral Health

- Dental Assistants
- Dental Therapists

7.1.6 Security

- SLHD Security staff are supplied, via the facility Security Manager, a separate security uniform comprising a charcoal-coloured suit, white shirt, detachable tie, pullover or jumper, short sleeved polo shirts, all weather jacket and boots.

7.2 Dress Standards for SLHD Staff

7.2.1 General Requirements

- Only items of apparel supplied by the Local Health District or authorised by SLHD under the HealthShare NSW Uniform entitlements are to be worn by SLHD employees.
- Fingernails are to be kept clean and short in accordance with NSW Health, SLHD and Facility/Service-level Infection Control Guidelines.
- False nails, nail extenders, nail lacquer and nail art are not to be worn by staff providing direct patient care due to chipping and contamination issues.
- Open footwear must not be worn in clinical areas. Footwear should be non-slip, enclosed and of a practical height that does not pose a Work Health Safety (WHS) risk.

- Shoes worn with scrubs should be leather and one colour (black/navy), and capable of protecting staff from injury from sharp objects and body fluid spills.
- Hair must be clean, neat and tied back if below collar line.
- Jewellery should be kept to a minimum. Necklaces are a choking hazard. Earrings should be studs.
- Staff are to comply with any Facility/Service requirements to be 'bare below the elbows' in clinical areas. Infection control requirements direct that any underclothing must not extend beyond the elbow. Long sleeve underclothing must not be worn even if the sleeves can be pulled or rolled up.
- Skivvies/long sleeved t-shirts are not to be worn underneath uniforms/scrubs.
- Facial piercings should be removed while working. If this is impractical, employees should ensure that the piercing does not pose a WHS risk. Earrings should be studs.
- Shorts are not to be worn with the exception of Gardening and Relocation staff or where approved by the Chief Executive.
- The visibility of offensive body art/tattoos must be appropriately covered. This may include tattoos that may have sexist, racist or other messages or artwork that may be deemed offensive.

7.2.2 Footwear

Consistent with workplace health and safety, footwear for all staff working in clinical areas and other high-risk areas (e.g. engineering) must have the following characteristics:

- Be a shoe or boot style with fully enclosed toes, heel and foot, with non-perforated uppers and slip-resistant
- The shoe is to be capable of protection from injury due to sharp objects, heavy objects and body fluid or other spills
- Be well fitting with no slipping off the foot or 'clawing' of the toes to ensure footwear remains in place
- Be always kept clean and in good repair, and a single colour that promotes a professional image (e.g. black/navy)
- Sports shoes may be worn, provided they meet the above criteria
- No employee shall be permitted to be barefoot, wear thongs, scuffs, backless shoes, open toed shoes, sandals, slippers or Ugg boots while on duty in SLHD premises.

7.3 Dress Standards for staff who are not required to wear a Uniform

7.3.1 General Requirements

- All clothing must be clean, neat and in good order.
- Skirts must be no shorter than just above the knee.
- The following are not authorised to be worn:
 - Items of apparel with writing, slogans or advertisements.
 - Tank / singlet tops / spaghetti straps
 - Patches, fringes or clothing with holes
 - Shorts (that are not NSW Health uniform shorts)
 - Thongs or 'Crocs' or similar
 - Denim jeans or jackets
 - Athletic wear
 - Midriff or low-cut tops
 - Tracksuit pants
 - Football type socks (dress socks only are to be worn)
 - Open toed footwear must not be worn in clinical areas

7.3.2 Mental Health

Mental health staff are not required to wear a uniform but are expected to dress in a professional manner and comply with this PCP.

In general, clothing must be clean, neat and in good order. Skirts or dresses must be no shorter than just above the knee and consideration should be given to clinical tasks which require manual handling such as restraint. All males must wear shirts with a collar (Polo shirts are acceptable). Closed-toed shoes must be worn.

Shorts, leggings, and active wear is not to be worn except when participating in physical activity such as group exercise or outings. No military style clothing should be worn.

Following consultation with staff and managers, jeans may be worn. They must be one solid colour (not acid/stone washed or similar) and must not be overly decorated with pockets or tags. No rips or tears allowed in jeans.

7.3.3 Community Health and Drug Health Services

Community Health staff and Drug Health Services staff in the community, may not be required to wear a uniform when authorised by their facility and approved by the Chief Executive. These staff are required to wear clothing appropriate to the community health setting. Jeans are not to be worn as part of work attire unless approval has been granted by the relevant General Manager.

7.3.4 Part Time and Casual Pool Staff

Part time and casual staff required to wear a uniform will receive an allocation of uniforms related to the average number of hours worked. Additional garments will require the approval of the relevant Service Director or facility General Manager.

7.3.5 Agency / Contract Staff

All agency staff are required to wear Agency Identification Badges and attire is required to clearly represent the relevant profession. Attire must comply with this PCP.

7.3.6 Students

Students are required to wear a uniform as stipulated by their education provider and attire is to comply with [section 7.2.1 'General Requirements'](#).

7.3.7 Operating Theatre Staff

- Theatres staff are provided with surgical scrubs.
- Surgical scrubs are not to be worn in areas outside of the Theatre Complex, except where authorised.
- Staff wearing surgical scrubs are NOT permitted in the staff dining or cafe areas. All staff entering the theatre complex must change into theatre clothing. It is not acceptable for staff to perform routine work (outside of theatre or labour ward) in theatre attire. Staff in theatre attire may attend to emergencies, urgent matters in clinical areas e.g. Emergency Department. However, when staff return to theatre, they are to change into a fresh set of theatre scrubs.
- Staff must always cover the theatre scrubs with a gown and remove shoe covers when leaving the theatre complex to attend to urgent matters outside. These are to be replaced on re-entry to theatres.

7.3.8 Employees working outside, in hazardous situations or with machinery

Employees who work outdoors, in hazardous situations or with machinery are to be supplied with protective clothing as determined in their relevant industrial Award.

8. Allocation and Award Provisions

NSW Health is required to provide an allocation of garments to staff required to wear a uniform. There is an allocation model provided through the Total Apparel Management System (TAMS) and is dependent on classification and work pattern, as well as wear and tear. TAMS is the system provided through HealthShare NSW for uniform management and ordering. TAMS can be found on the HealthShare site. There is a link available on the Workforce Services tab on the SLHD Intranet.

8.1 Allowances

Relevant Awards determine the uniform related allowances payable to employees. Please discuss relevant uniform related allowances with your manager or workforce department.

8.2 Return of Uniforms on Termination of Employment

All NSW Health uniforms issued to employees remain the property of NSW Health.

Should an employee who has been issued with a state-wide uniform through HealthShare NSW, move to another Local Health District, or other organisation within NSW Health, with the same uniform entitlement, uniforms should be retained.

Staff who have uniforms that are not supplied through HealthShare NSW (such as security staff), must return uniforms to their manager on termination of service.

There is a security risk if uniforms are kept or put into charity bins or inappropriately advertised for swap or sale as there is potential for the general public to obtain the uniform and use it to access health facilities.

Uniforms must also be returned to the employer in the following cases:

- Transfer of employment within SLHD and different uniform or no uniform is required.
- Uniform is no longer fit for purpose or not in good condition; i.e. wear and tear, faded, torn etc.
- Uniform no longer fits due to size changes
- Change in NSW Health issue of uniforms

Uniforms need to be returned to the manager at the conclusion of employment. There are processes in place for disposal and recycling of uniforms at each facility. The 'Property Return Checklist', which is part of the 'Termination of Employment Form' is to be confirmed by signature on return of uniforms.

9. Consultation

Nursing and Midwifery Services
Drug Health Services
Allied Health
Mental Health Services
Workforce Services
SLHD Sustainability Committee
SLHD Joint Consultative Committee
SLHD Policy Committee

10. References

NSW Health, [Uniforms Policy \(PD2019_012\)](#)

NSW Health, [Code of Conduct \(PD2015_049\)](#)

NSW Health, [Infection Prevention and Control in Healthcare Settings](#) PD2023_025

Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection in Healthcare (Australian Government).

Infection Prevention and Control Practice Handbook V3 - Section 4 Risk Mitigation: Standard Precautions 4.12

Industrial Relations Commission of New South Wales, Public Health System Nurses' and Midwives' (State) Award, Schedule B

Industrial Relations Commission of New South Wales, Health Employees Conditions of Employment (State) Award (Schedule 1)