

Guidance at a Glance – Laundry

These guidelines support the delivery of care in community and social care settings. This guidance reflects best practice/national guidelines.

KEY POINTS

Laundry management plays an integral role in preventing the spread of infections. Linen, such as bedsheets, towels, resident clothing and staff uniforms/staff clothing all have the potential to become contaminated with blood, urine and other bodily fluids. Therefore it is essential that there are the correct processes in place to manage soiled linen effectively and prevent any infections spreading.



Separation of linen

To ensure that there is reduced risk of cross contamination laundry should be separated into categories, usually these are:

- Soiled linen
- Clothes – separated by colour
- Towels and flannels

HANDLING LINEN

- All soiled clothing should be put in a red alginate bag.
- PPE should be worn when handling linen.
- Soiled laundry should be removed from care areas promptly.
- The Laundry room should have a clear 'dirty to clean' flow.
- Linen should be washed on hot cycle.
- Soiled clothing should not be rinsed by hand, a sluice or pre wash cycle should be used.
- Clean linen should be stored in a dedicated linen cupboard. This should have doors on that are able to close so that contamination risk is reduced.
- Staff work wear should be washed separately from other clothing on the hottest temperature that the manufacturer recommends. It should also be dried thoroughly.

All laundry rooms must have:

- Access to hand washing facilities
- Access to PPE
- Separate 'dirty' and 'clean' area

