

Linen Handling and Storage Within the Hospital

To the Editor:

I am in need of information pertaining to infection control guidelines for the handling and storage of linen within the hospital. I have found many publications concerning this subject, but all have been quite general. I specifically need literature on clean linen storage within the hospital: What measures should be taken to assure a more dust-free environment within linen storage areas—not just linen closets and carts, but also the linen distribution rooms and the shelves contained in them?

Also information on the recommended guidelines for clean soiled linen: delivery, wash cycle, recommended detergents and chemicals, (and the purpose of each in the wash cycle), and the processing of clean linen.

Alcarcilus Shelton Boodram
Shelton Laundry, Inc.
Urbana, Illinois

The preceding letter was referred to Karen Hadley, Infection Control Coordinator, for a reply.

The Director of our laundry department thought that this might represent a laundry company that is considering, for the first time, the operation of a hospital laundry. He generously gave me a copy of a 173 page handbook on hospital laundry procedures and management, and I have sent this to Mr. Boodram for his information.

As for the specific questions asked in the letter, ie, what measures should be taken to assure a more dust-free environment in linen storage areas, closets, carts and linen distribution rooms, the following might be helpful:

- Once the laundry is placed on carts, covers should be placed over the carts, and linen closets should be equipped with doors. The covers should be kept on and the doors kept closed except when laundry is being removed or restocked.
- In our hospital, the linen distribution room is in the same area as the washers, dryers and pressers. In addition to daily general house-keeping, on a bi-weekly basis, a worker comes in the evening when

everything is shut down, covers everything, and blows down the lint with an air hose, then vacuums with an industrial vacuum. This is necessary because of the high lint build-up.

Regarding the second request for guidelines for cleaning soiled linen, the handbook's chapters on *Detergency in the Institutional Laundry* (which is 28 pages long), and *Infection Control in the Laundry*, should be consulted. I don't know that the process for cleaning soiled linen can be described in a brief manner.

Karen Hadley, R.N.
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Ochsner Foundation Hospital
New Orleans, Louisiana

The Use of Germicidal Hand Rinse

To the Editor:

I am the Director of the Home Health Services of St. Francis Hospital, Litchfield, Illinois, Medicare approved and licensed facility.

We offer five services to patients