

LINEN AND LAUNDRY MANAGEMENT

10.25.22 English

Soiled linens are a potential source of bacteria and viruses and should be handled in a manner to prevent contamination of healthcare workers and the environment. Where laundry facilities are shared, the risk of infection transmission during linen handling can be accomplished through the following:

Laundry Room

Consider ensuring the following general principles:

1. Establish a work flow that separates clean linen handling from soiled linen processing. Maintain clean items on the clean side (dryer) and soiled items on the dirty side (washer).
2. Soiled linens should be handled with minimum agitation and be placed directly into the washer when brought to the laundry room.
3. Where hoppers or sprayers are used, consider installation of a splash guard at the working rim of the hopper. Some examples of splash guards include:



4. Ideally, resident's soiled laundry baskets or bins should either be lined with a washable or disposable bag. Transport soiled linens to the laundry room in a closed bag wherever possible.
5. Staff handling heavily soiled resident linens should wear a gown, gloves, and mask.
6. If hampers or baskets are used, they should be wiped with a healthcare grade germicide prior to placing cleaned linens into it.
7. Minimize storage in the laundry area wherever possible.
8. Items stored in laundry areas should be placed in enclosed bins and cabinets.
9. Provide high-visibility signs in the laundry room providing instructions for linen handling and environmental disinfection.
10. Cleaned linens should be contained in cleaned bins and covered to protect from contamination until they are placed in the resident's room.
11. Washer/Dryer Disinfection cleaning and disinfection instructions should be posted in the laundry areas. Instructions should include wiping the inside lid and rim surfaces of the machine and the dryer lint trap with a germicide after each load.

During an Active Outbreak

When an outbreak is active (such as COVID-19, Norovirus, C. difficile, or other GI illnesses) in the building, consider implementing additional measures such as:

1. Cluster laundry processing for infected or symptomatic individuals.
2. Linen processing for infected or symptomatic resident during low activity hours such as evening or night shift.
3. Ensure staff handling contaminated items wear appropriate PPE such as gowns (covering arms and wrists), gloves, well-fitting masks, and eye protection. PPE should be discarded or disinfected, as appropriate, after use. Ensure effective hand hygiene is performed when gloves are removed.
4. Wash and dry linens on the hottest water/heat setting allowed for the items being processed.

