
* **ADDENDUM** *

HACKETTSTOWN COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

Division of Nursing

Index: 6080.000
Addendum: #3
Issue Date: June 20, 1996
Review Date: May, 2002

TITLE: **LINEN USAGE POLICY - MED/SURG.**

Linen changes will occur when needed rather than on a daily basis. An assessment will be performed by the care giver to determine what linen items need to be changed.

PURPOSE: To insure the proper use of linen items for both patient comfort and safety.

- PROCEDURE:
1. Soiled linen is to be changed immediately. Linens should always be changed at the request of a patient or family member.
 2. Basic linen for a bed consists of: one fitted sheet, one flat sheet and one pillow case. Patient gowns and blankets should be provided when needed.
 3. A bath towel and wash cloth will be supplied to every patient on a daily basis. Additional ones may be provided if needed.
 4. Thermal blankets are to be change only when soiled.
 5. All reject clean, torn or stained linen found on the linen cart will be placed in a reject bag designated for that purpose on each unit.
 6. An effort should be made to use blankets in the patient's room when they are transported from one department to another via wheelchair or stretcher.
 7. To provide increased warmth for the patient, a thermal blanket should be placed **between two flat sheets**. Simply adding more thermal blankets on top of the covers will not provide adequate warmth.
 8. A bath blanket should continue to be used when bathing a patient. However, the bath blanket should be retained with the wash basin or placed at the bottom of the bed for daily re-use. Bath blankets should not be routinely used as bottom sheets or as lift sheets.
 9. Pillows should be used to position patients instead of thermal blankets. These pillowcases should be changed only when soiled. Storage areas for pillows will be determined by each Head Nurse.
 10. Pillows should be cleaned with a disinfectant between patient by the Housekeeping Department.
 11. Routine h.s. (at bedtime) care does not include linen change unless soiled.

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12. Clean linen should not be taken into the rooms of patients who are anticipating discharge. Also, effort should be made to limit excess linen taken into patient rooms.
13. Same day OR admissions should have bed linen straightened rather than changed prior to their return from the operating room.
14. Bath blankets, rather than thermal blankets, should be used for warmth for all pre-op patients during transport to the operating room.
15. Disposable washcloths will be used for cleaning patients when blood and fecal material are on the body.
16. Reusable underpads are to be used for incontinent patients only and are to be changed PRN.
17. If patient restraints are required, linen should not be used for this purpose.
18. One reusable pillow should be used per bed. Additional pillows should be provided as needed for patient comfort.
19. Care should be taken when pulling linen off the linen carts so that clean linen does not fall to the floor.
20. Clean linen should not be stored in bed stands or closets. Clean items stored in the room **just in case** are frequently not required and discarded at discharge.
21. Precaution gowns and blankets should not be worn as a warm-up.
22. If it is necessary to use a bath blanket as a mattress pad, it should be changed only when soiled.
23. Any unit specific changes to these linen policies must be approved by the Head Nurse and the Vice President for Nursing.
24. Patient robes, pajama bottoms, extra large gowns and impervious gowns are available when needed in the closet above the linen cart.