

Laundering of patient clothing

Patient clothing bags

The hospital has supplied you with a patient clothing bag for use in a domestic washing machine. This will enable you to safely transport soiled or infected clothing home to wash.

Staff will place the dirty/soiled clothing into the patient clothing bag for you and will seal it with a pink tie.

Do not open the bag – it is designed to go into the washing machine unopened, stopping the release of any unpleasant odours and preventing cross infection.



The following instructions relate to the white patient bags with the red vertical stripe (pictured above) which are designed to be placed in the washing machine. All other hospital carrier bags cannot be used in this manner.

Washing soiled clothing in the bag

- Do not put any other items in the washing machine with the bag.
- Wash clothing in the patient clothing bag at the highest temperature the clothes can safely tolerate (we suggest a minimum of 60 degrees). This will ensure any germs on the clothing are killed. If you are a relative we suggest you bring in clothes that can tolerate a hot wash in case of soiling.
- Use a biological powder/liquid/tablet if possible.
- Fabric conditioner may be used as normal.
- The seam and tie of the patient clothing bag are water-soluble and biodegradable so will dissolve during the wash, leaving just the plastic front and back.
- These plastic pieces can be disposed of in your normal household waste as they are now clean.

Hand hygiene

Always wash hands with soap and water thoroughly after handling the patient clothing bag. This prevents germs contaminating your hands.

Drying clothing

Warm tumble drying helps with the infection control process by helping to kill bugs and germs. Ensure the fabric can tolerate tumble drying and do not tumble dry the plastic that has not dissolved.

If you have a combined washer/dryer we recommend that you do not set the dryer function. Instead, after the wash cycle has finished, remove the plastic and then tumble dry the clothes as necessary.

Ironing

Hot ironing helps with the infection control process by helping to kill germs. Ensure the fabric can tolerate hot ironing.

For more information about the Trust visit our website on www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Where can I get more information?

Contact the Infection Control Team on 0118 322 7114

email: infection.control@royalberkshire.nhs.uk

This document can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.

Enhanced Recovery Facilitator/Infection Control, September 2018

Review due: September 2020