

## **Draft Cloth theatre cap policy as addendum to Trust uniform policy**

Date:.....

Ratified by:.....

Cloth Theatre caps that are personalised and reusable are welcome in NHS Trusts, to help maintain the individuality of team-workers and to help identify them by name and role. This improves communication and reduces uncertainty, bias, embarrassment and errors. Large studies have shown that cloth Theatre caps reduce bacterial shedding and reduce patients' surgical site infections.

### **For those staff members intending to use a cloth Theatre Cap, the following apply:**

1. It is advisable to purchase at least 3 cloth hats, to allow for laundry rotation.
2. If writing is on the hat, it should be clear, including name and role. The name may be first name or surname or both. The role should be stated.
3. The Theatre hat is covered by a standard NHS Dress Code or Uniform policy
4. Staff should not wear the item out of work.
5. Staff should not be seen smoking in uniform.
6. The Theatre hat should cover all hair.
7. A clean Theatre cap should be worn for every shift. It should be changed during the shift if contaminated.
8. Clean hats should be transported to work in a clean container. Used caps should be transported home in a container separate from the clean hats. Sufficient clean hats should be brought so spares are available for any contamination episodes.
9. Offensive designs are not permitted.
10. The Theatre hat should be washed at 60° Centigrade or at 40° Centigrade and tumble-dried or dried on a washing line in sunlight and ironed.
11. For those wearing a head-covering for religious purposes, a theatre cap that covers the neck is permitted.

### **For the Trust:**

12. The Trust welcomes the improvement in communication that individualised hats bring, especially those that have the staff member's name and role written on them.
13. It is noted that charity funds pay for theatre caps in some Trusts and this option may be worth considering.
14. A leaflet about how to obtain cloth theatre caps should be given to all new staff starting in these areas.
15. Consideration should be given to creating a store of cloth theatre hats marked "medical student" "visitor" and "student" to lend to students or visitors. This needs a laundry schedule to ensure these items are available, cleaned and returned.
16. Some hospitals use colour-coded Theatre Caps to signify role, but there is no standardisation of this. A local policy may cover this.
17. It is recommended that the Theatre hap should not contain "Natural Rubber Latex". This item does not create aerosols and is not in contact with a patient. It could be regarded as similar to staff-member's other garments (bras, socks and underpants) for which there is no requirement to be manufactured without latex. This is an advisory recommendation.
18. If the theatre cap is intended by the manufacturer to be a Class 1 medical device, it should be stamped with a CE mark. If it is not, it should be clean and well-constructed. Trusts and staff are permitted to purchase and use theatre hats that have not been marketed as medical devices and to consider the risks and benefits.