

General Linen Guidelines

PURPOSE

To provide effective utilization of linen while promoting patient safety and comfort

PROCEDURE

1. Standard bed composition

- 1 fitted sheet
- 1 flat sheet
- 1 pillow
- 1 pillowcase
- 1 thermal spread

2. Additional linen, available when needed

- Lift/slider sheet
- bath blanket
- reusable underpads
- additional pillows
- gowns
- washcloth
- bath towel

3. Bed linen changes will occur by item when soiled or a patient and/or family member requests an entire change. Bed linen will be straightened daily and as needed.

4. Limit excess linen taken into patient rooms.

- Clean linen is not to be stored in bed stands or closets.
- Clean items stored in the room “just in case” frequently are not required, and must be placed in the dirty laundry at discharge.
- Clean linen should not be taken into the rooms of patients who are anticipating discharge.

5. All unusable torn and stained clean linen is to be placed in a bag located in the soiled collection area on each unit specified for that purpose. Items with small holes, tears or stains outside the patient contact area are usually acceptable for use. Soiled linen is to be placed into an appropriate covered hamper. Maintain standard precautions.

7. Upon patient transfer to another room/unit:

- All blankets are to remain with patient
- Pillows are reusable and remain with the bed in original department

8. Upon patient transfer out of the facility:

- No hospital owned linen is to go with the patient
- Disposable gowns are available as needed

9. Upon patient transfer to morgue or funeral home patient should be placed in:

- Body bag/shroud & paper gown
- No hospital owned linen is to go with the patient

10. Upon patient transfer to an ancillary department:

- Linen from patient room should be used & remain with patient

11. To provide increased warmth for the patient, a sheet can be placed on top of the thermal blanket or bath blanket to create the needed insulation for extra warmth.

12. A bath blanket may be used when bathing a patient. Bath blankets should never be used as a mattress pad, bottom sheet or as a lift sheet. They should be folded and kept with the patient.

13. Pillows, not blankets, should be used to position patients. Storage areas for pillows will be determined by Unit Director. Additional pillows can be obtained by contacting the department responsible for linen at each facility. Pillows are not to be placed in the linen hampers: they are cleaned with a disinfectant in the same manner as the mattress so they should remain on the bed when a patient is discharged. Permanently stained pillows can be discarded in a designated trash container.

14. Reusable underpads are intended for use by incontinent patients or for containment of body fluids. They may be used as positioners.

15. Lift sheets/slider sheets are available for additional assistance in moving and positioning patients.

16. Linen is not for employee personal use.

17. Any hospital/facility's Vice President of Nursing or the Linen Committee.