

Professional Image Guideline

Site Applicability

All VCH Employees at all VCH Sites

Practice Level

All VCH Staff: Basic Skill

Need to Know

Staff appearance creates a powerful image (i.e., first impressions count), that affects how patients, residents, clients, families and visitors view the quality of care and services delivered by VCH.

VCH staff members are expected to:

- Wear work clothing and maintain grooming that reflect a professional appearance, maintain safe standards of care, and are suitable for the work they perform.
- Maintain infection prevention and control standards;
- Comply with WorkSafeBC standards on personal protective clothing and equipment.

Guideline

Work clothes

Examples of **appropriate** work clothing include the following:

- Clean, tidy clothing in good repair;
- Images on the clothing (if any) should be appropriate to the work environment/setting;
- Dress pants, blouses, sweaters, cardigans;
- Knee-length dresses, skirts, or dress shorts;
- Clinical uniforms in clinical areas.

Examples of **inappropriate** work clothing include the following:

- Sweat pants, sweat shirts, spandex, hoodies, or athletic wear;
- Clothing that does not cover cleavage, the back, buttocks, upper legs or stomach, is not sized appropriately, or clings tightly to the body;
- Soiled and/or badly wrinkled clothing;
- Flip flops.

Clothing worn to meet religious or cultural requirements (such as a kippah, headscarf, and turban) is acceptable.

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VCH-Endorsed Work Clothing Supplier

- VCH has arranged with a local clothing manufacturer for staff in designated clinical roles to be able to purchase standardized work clothing online via vchworkclothing.ca at reduced price. This clothing is intended to be worn at work only.

Scrubs

- Staff working in areas where scrubs are provided daily, are not to wear the scrubs off-site due to infection prevention & control.
- Daily hospital-provided scrubs are only to be worn by those staff authorized by their manager to wear scrubs.
- VCH is responsible and required to launder the daily hospital-provided scrubs.

Photo/Security Identification (ID)

- All staff must wear their photo identification cards when working so that patients, residents, clients, other staff, and physicians can easily see and read the identification for security purposes. New identification cards include a picture, first name and designation of position (e.g. Registered Nurse, Occupational Therapist, etc.). Photo identification may be worn on “break-away” lanyards or clips at waist level or on chest and must not be defaced.

Name Tag Identification

- Staff who work with patients, residents, clients, family members and visitors are to wear a name badge at upper chest level identifying their first name and designation (e.g. Registered Nurse, Occupation Therapist, etc.) Staff have the option to include their personal pronouns on their name badges. VCH will supply these badges to employees. Name badges must not be defaced. Staff escorting clients in the community need not wear identification when interacting with the general public.
- If standard work clothing is purchased by the employee from the VCH-endorsed supplier, and it includes the employee’s name, designation (e.g. Registered Nurse, Occupational Therapist, etc.) & VCH logo on the top, then the employee does not need to also wear a name tag.

Hair

- Hair is to be clean, neatly groomed and off the face. When giving direct care, hair longer than shoulder length should be tied back. Moustaches or beards should be neatly groomed.

Fingernails

- As per the hand hygiene policy, unit staff and other departments providing direct care who have physical contact with patients, clients, and/or residents are to maintain clean, short nails with no nail polish. (e.g. Clinical Units, Operation Room, Labour and Delivery, and Medical Device Reprocessing Department (MDRD), Physio & Occupational Therapy, etc.). Prosthetic nails and nail art are not acceptable. Absence of nail polish complies with BC Ministry Provincial Hand Hygiene document March 2018.

Accessories

- Staff should not wear accessories that could cause injury or affect patient care such as, but not limited to: dangling jewelry, loose bracelets and/or large rings. Rings with stone settings or etchings should not be worn in clinical settings as microorganisms become trapped which compromises hand hygiene, can pierce gloves and can scratch patients/clients/residents.

Footwear

- All footwear must comply with WorkSafeBC regulations and VCH's [Footwear Policy](#).
- Staff are required to wear appropriate clean shoes in a good state of repair that provide protection against injury from slipping, spills, sharps, or other hazards.

Scent-Free

- To accommodate individuals who are allergic to strong scents, all staff must avoid the use of scented products as outlined in the [Scented Products Policy](#).

Safety Equipment

- Eye protection (goggles or shields) and other safety equipment provided by VCH must be worn by staff per department procedures.

Other Guidelines

- Additional unit/area specific grooming and work clothing guidelines are acceptable provided they maintain professional and direct care standards, are consistently applied and the work clothing is suitable for the work being performed.

Related Documents

- [VCH Community Practice Guidelines: Routine Infection Control Practice in the Community](#)
- [VCH Footwear Policy](#)
- [VCH Hand Hygiene Policy](#)
- [VCH Professional Practice Professional Image](#)
- [VCH Scented Products Policy](#)
- [WorkSafeBC Occupational Health and Safety Regulation. Part 8: Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment](#)

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