SUBJECT: Professional Dress Code

I. Purpose:
This policy and procedure is designed to establish guidelines for the professional appearance of University Hospital and Clinics (UHC) Respiratory Care employees and non-UHC personnel who interact with and/or provide services to customers of UHC.

II. Policy:
These boundaries will help promote a positive professional image to internal and external customers of UHC. This policy is based upon professional standards, general safety, and infection control guidelines. This policy and procedure will address occupation-specific and/or profession-specific requirements related to professional appearance and dress codes.

III. Rationale:
Appearance counts, not only in first impressions, but also in ongoing interactions. In the healthcare setting, uniforms and professional clothing provide a means of identification of an individual's role as a member of the health care team. Professional clothing and accessories should be chosen with consideration given the importance of appearance as non-verbal method of communicating roles and attitudes to others. Personal grooming and cleanliness, which is extremely important to all professions, is essential in presenting a professional image.

Each individual will assume the responsibility of his or her professional appearance and personal grooming while on duty at UHC; however, the supervisor of the individual will make the final decision regarding what is acceptable compliance with the guidelines established in this department policy and procedure.

IV. Definition of terms: For definition of terms used herein, see Appendix A.

V. General Guidelines:

A. Identification Badges:
This badge is issued for identification and must be worn at all times while on University of Mississippi Medical Center property, while on duty for University Hospital and Clinics, and when attending UHC functions. The badge, with the photo and name visible, will be clearly displayed on the front upper torso. The badge will not be worn at or below the waist. The badge may be affixed to the collar, pocket, lapel, or displayed close to the face on a short breakaway neck strap. Only professional pins, department logo pins, and service pins may be placed on the badge. Name pins, with name and title, may be worn in addition to the official identification badge.
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1. An individual who does not have an identification badge when appearing for duty will be relieved of duty to get it. The employee will not be paid while off duty and personal leave will not be granted.
2. A replacement fee will be charged for lost badges.

B. Hair:
Hair is to be kept clean and well groomed. Hair will be styled so that the employee's face is visible and extremes in hairstyles and color will be avoided. Hairstyles, including length or height, will not interfere with work or performance or duty. In general, medium-to-long hair that would pose a safety or infection hazard is to be styled so that hair does not come in contact with customers, patients, food, medications, or equipment.

C. Head wear:
Scarves, caps, hats, sweatbands and other head wear, other than uniform head wear, are not to be worn with the facility. Conservative hair accessories that do not distract from a professional appearance are acceptable.

D. Facial hair:
Employees who shave their facial hair must maintain a clean-shaven appearance. Facial hair, such as mustache, beard, and sideburns, must be kept trimmed in a neat and orderly fashion.

E. Torso Hair:
Excessive hair on the back and/or chest must be clean-shaven or completely covered up with an acceptable tee shirt.

F. Make-up:
Make-up is to be minimal and natural to an individual's skin tone. Make-up will be kept within professional limits. Dramatic, eccentric, or flashy colors, sequins, glitter, and theatrical applications of make-up are not worn while on duty.

G. Fingernails:
Fingernails will be clean and neatly trimmed. No wraps, overlays, or artificial nails are permitted.

H. Length:
The maximum length of fingernails will not exceed 1/4 inch beyond the end of the finger.

I. Nail polish:
Clear, translucent, or pale nail polish may be worn. Polish will be neat, smooth, unchipped and of a single color without theatrical applications.

J. Personal Grooming:
Cleanliness and personal hygiene are extremely important to all professions, but especially for personnel in a health care setting.

K. Body Odor:
Daily bathing and use of an effective deodorant or antiperspirant are expected. The smell of tobacco smoke on clothes is not acceptable.

L. Teeth:
Basis brushing, cleaning, repair is essential.
M. Fragrances:
The use of scented cosmetics, perfume, cologne, lotions, and other heavily-scented products for
the hair and body are to be used in moderation in all work areas.

VI. Professional Behaviors:

A. Eating and Drinking:
Eating and drinking while on duty in the presence of UHC customers is unacceptable. Employees
will eat and drink in designated areas only.

B. Gum chewing:
Gum chewing is not acceptable while on duty.

C. Smokeless Tobacco:
Smokeless products, such as chewing tobacco or snuff, will not be used while on duty.

D. Smoking:
Smoking is prohibited in all areas of the Medical Center. Those who smoke must do so in areas
designated for employee smoking.

E. Eye Glasses:
Clear or lightly tinted prescription eyeglasses are acceptable. Dark sunglasses are not to be worn
within the facility while on duty.

F. Jewelry and Accessories:
Jewelry and accessories are to be conservative and in keeping with a professional appearance.
Body or facial jewelry is not acceptable. Comments, slogans, symbols, advertising logos or
unprofessional designs are not acceptable. Any tattoos, whether permanent or temporary, must
not be visible.

G. Ear jewelry:
A matched set, with one earring per lobe, of the stud or flat style that fit close to the earlobe is
preferred. However, the following parameters are acceptable practice: stud and hoop earrings no,
larger than one and one-half inches, and two earrings per ear at the bottom of the earlobe.

H. Rings:
Finger rings of the size or shape that would restrict use of equipment or pose a safety and
infection control hazards are not to be worn. Rings may be worn on no more than two fingers per
hand.

I. Bracelets:
Bracelets must not make noise, interfere with tasks, or pose a safety and infection control hazard.
No more than three bracelets per wrist should be worn at a time.

J. Necklace:
Neck jewelry that is conservative and kept to a minimum is acceptable. Necklaces that interfere
with tasks or pose a safety and infection control hazard will not be worn. Only one necklace may
be worn at a time. No large medallions or charms may be worn.

K. Special Pins or Holiday Jewelry:
Conservative styles and amounts of special occasion and holiday jewelry appropriate to the
season may be worn for two weeks prior to the holiday.
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L. Foot Attire and Hosiery:
Foot attire must provide safe, secure footing and offer reasonable protection from hazards. Foot attire is to be clean, conservation, and kept in good repair. Shoelace will be of the same color as the shoes and tied for safety. Bare feet are not acceptable. Persons who wear walking shoes with socks or anklets for commuting to and from work or who are engaging in exercise programs in UHC facilities will change into professional footwear while on duty.

M. Fabric of Footwear:
Footwear will be constructed of materials that are impervious to liquids and contaminated materials and that will provide reasonable protection against heavy or sharp objects. Woven materials such as fabric, mesh, or other, loosely woven fibers that do not prevent or inhibit penetration are not acceptable.

N. Hosiery:
Hose socks, or anklets are to be worn while on duty. Hosiery will be clean, in good repair, and coordinated with footwear and clothing. The top edges of socks, anklets and hose should not be visible.

VII. Clothing Guidelines:
Professional clothing and accessories are chosen with consideration given to the sense of security and safety provided to external and internal customers, mobility in accomplishing tasks, and role of appearance in inspiring confidence in oneself and the health care workforce. For non-uniformed personnel, conservative and coordinated colors are preferred. All clothing will be neat, clean, and pressed.

A. The following items are not acceptable while on duty:
1. Tattered, frayed, or wrinkled clothing.
2. Jean-style pants of any denim color.
3. Sweat suits, jogging suits, military and camouflage garments, or any pants and tops worn for sport wear.
4. Coveralls or bib overalls, unless specified as part of professional uniform leggings, spandex pants. Opaque hosiery or tights worn under skirts or slacks are acceptable when coordinated with garments.
5. Stirrup pants.
6. Dress shorts, casual shorts, pedal pushers, biking shorts, running, or other sport shorts. An acceptable length for pants will be no shorter than ankle-length.
7. Ultra-short skirts. An acceptable skirt length will be no shorter that two inches above top of knee to any longer than ankle, approximately five inches above floor.
8. Combination skirt/shorts, called skorts. An acceptable split skirt will look like a skirt, from the front and back, when the wearer is standing. Split skirts will have a loose-fitting appearance.
9. Sport team jackets and sweaters.
10. Anything with a printed slogan, logo, comments, advertisement, symbol, or picture. The exception is apparel for special days or occasions that has prior approval by UHC administrator or department manager.
11. Tank tops, tee shirts, camisoles; halter tops, or backless and sleeveless garments that expose the shoulders, underarms, and back.
12. Cropped tops above the waist.
13. Tuckable styled shirts not tucked in.
14. Visible undergarments and undergarments visible through clothing.
15. See-through garments made of chiffon. Lined garments or garments worn as accessories are acceptable.
16. Leather slacks and skirts.
17. Garments and accessories designed for social occasions and formal wear.
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B. Costumes:
Costumes for special occasion may be worn for UHC-approval events with prior approval form UHC administrative and department manager. All other costume-like clothing and make-up is unacceptable while on duty.

C. Scrubs Provided and Laundered by UHC:
See Administrative Policy and Procedure Code S-2 (Subject: Scrub Clothing). The compliance and monitoring of Policy and Procedure Code S-2 will be the same as written therein.

VIII. Uniforms:
A. Direct Patient Care Personnel:
1. Lab coats: Lab coats should coordinate with the worn scrub color. Short sleeved lab coats may be worn if under-sleeves are not longer than lab coat sleeves. Lab coat should be worn when outside of designated work area. All styles must adhere to the general Clothing Guideline of Section 7.
2. Scrub tops: Approved scrub colors are pink, black, brown, gray, green, and blue. Front lap-pocket styles may be worn without lab coats. All styles must adhere to the general Clothing Guidelines of Section 7.
3. Scrub bottoms: Approved scrub colors are pink, black, brown, gray, green, and blue. White or Pink Print with white Background may not be worn. All styles must adhere to the general Clothing Guidelines of Section 7.
4. Tee Shirts: A solid tee shirt that is white or matches the color of the scrub top may be worn under scrubs tops if desired. The sleeves and bottoms of the tee shirts must not show. Imprinting on the tee shirts must not show.
5. Scrub dress: Dresses in approved scrub colors may be worn. All styles must adhere to the general Clothing Guideline of Section 7.
6. Professional Accessories: All direct care providers should equip themselves daily with a watch with second timing capability, a red ink pen, a black ink pen, a stethoscope, a pair of scissors, and a calculator. A waist pouch can be used. All styles must adhere to the general Clothing Guidelines of Section 7.

B. Indirect Patient Care Personnel:
1. Splash Protectors: Disposable impervious clothing protectors will be provided.
2. Uniforms: Specified styles and colors of uniforms must be worn while on duty. All styles must adhere to the general Clothing Guidelines of Section 7.

C. Direct and Indirect Patient Care Personnel:
1. All disposable hair, shoe, gown, apron, etc. coverings will be removed before entering public areas.
2. Attire for personnel who change into professional apparel after coming to work will adhere to the general Clothing guidelines of Section 7.
3. White or predominantly white all-leather or leather-like shoes will be worn. Navy or white clogs may be worn.
4. Isolation and patient gowns may not be worn outside of patient care areas. They will not substitute as lab coats.
5. Protective eyewear must be worn during procedures that could result in splashing of blood or body fluid.

D. Non-patient Care Personnel:
These individuals will adhere to the policies as outlined in Clothing Guidelines of section 7.
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IX. Procedures:
   A. Dissemination of Professional Appearance Policies and Procedures:
      1. During department orientation, each new employee will read and receive instruction on the Administrative Policy and Procedure, in addition to the departmental policy and procedure pertaining to professional appearance.
      2. The signed Acknowledgement Form will be placed in the department file of the employee.
   B. Monitoring and Enforcement:
      1. Administrative Level:
         Two months after the standards established in the Administrative Professional Appearance Policy and Procedure are communicated to those persons who are affected by the standards, periodic monitoring will be conducted throughout UHC. Notification will be presented to the supervisor of the non-compliant employee.
      2. Department Level:
         Department heads and managers will insure that persons providing service within or through their department are informed of the administrative and departmental standards for professional appearance and are in compliance with the standards effective August 1, 1998.
      3. Supervisory Level:
         Supervisors will insure that all employees under their direct supervision maintain a suitable appearance that conforms with administrative and departmental standards for professional appearance policies and procedures. Supervisory enforcement is essential to maintaining a professional image in the work environment. Enforcement for non-compliance will be:
   C. Exceptions:
      An employee requesting a special consideration for health reasons will provide documentation to his or her supervisor and will be subject to verification through Employee Health services. Employees who are approved for special consideration will meet the standards herein as closely as possible.
   D. Notification:
      Violations will be privately called to the attention of the employee by the supervisor to dispel any misunderstanding. Follow-up measures may include corrective feedback, instruction, coaching or training.
      1. First violation:
         The employee will receive verbal counseling with documentation and will be relieved of duty to make the needed changes. The time away from work is not paid and personal leave will not be granted.
      2. Second violation:
         The employee will receive an official reprimand in writing and will be relieved of duty without pay for the entire scheduled shift. Personal leave will not be granted.
      3. Third violation:
         Discipline may include probation or termination.

X. Appendix: Definition of Terms

A. "Professional appearance" is inclusive of dress codes, attire, and behaviors related to one's professional appearance.
B. “Internal customers” are persons who are employed or contracted by the University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMC) and provide the services offered by departments of our institution. Persons who volunteer their time and services are internal customers.

C. “External customers” are patients, families of patients, visitors, vendors, and other persons who benefit from the services provided by departments and personnel of UMC.

D. “UHC employees” are those persons who are employed by UHC and provide services through UHC departments and units.

E. “Non-UHC personnel” refers to persons who provide services to UHC customers but who are not employed by UHC. Contract employees who provide service through UHC departments to UHC customers are non-UHC personnel.

F. “Direct patient care” describes personnel whose tasks place them in physical contact with the patient.

G. “Indirect patient care” describes personnel who provide patient-care services but whose tasks do not place them in physical contact with the patients.

H. “Non-patient care” describes personnel whose tasks support the three-fold mission of UMC patient care, education, research, but these tasks are not administered to patients and/or their families and visitors in patient-care areas.