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**"CRITICAL REVIEW ON LAUNDRY MANAGEMENT AN
IMPORTANT FACTOR IN HOSPITALS OPERATIONS"**

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ABSTRACT

In today's scenario, a patient is aware and careful about hygiene, care and a healthy environment, they can hope clean linen, and it's changed on a daily basis. Laundry service in a hospital is one of the major components which directly affects the patient and hospital staff's health and hygiene. It is accountable for supplying clean and adequate linen to the hospital. It includes collecting, sorting, storage and transportation of dirty linen from hospital and washing, disinfection, extracting, drying, ironing, folding, transportation of clean linen from laundry back to the hospital and storage of clean linen in the hospital. Hospitals should provide sufficient and suitable washed linen which produces and generates satisfaction. If linen used in the hospital is unclean, then it creates dissatisfaction and spreads the infection to patients as well as the hospital staff. If the laundry department is not managed and maintained properly, then it may lead to various problems like an unhealthy environment, spreading of germs, infections, and viruses with the incurrence of expenses and increase in the dissatisfaction level in patients and staff.

INTRODUCTION

Laundry services in hospital sought to provide an effective and adequate contribution of washed, clean linen for consolation and security of hospital staff and patients. The main objective of laundry services is to supply regularly and prompts services that pleasure the staff, patients and visitors. Laundry services should be managed to ensure excellent quality and adequate, quality linen to the doctor and staff for operation theatres- surgical gown, aprons, pyjamas, Kurtas, coats, shirt, cap, mask, operation theatre towel, trolley covers and for patients- patient gown, coats, shirt and pyjamas, hospital linen- curtains, table clothier, bed clothing, bed sheet, pillows covers, blanket etc. Hospital laundry is different from other laundry

services. It handles dirty linen which is created by bio-fluids like blood, urine, excrement etc. this kind of linen can spread infection and therefore it is of utmost importance that care be taken before washing such cloth. It requires to be aware, cautious and alert while being elegant and graceful in holding and controlling. It needs to be in a separate area in the hospital as well as in the laundry by discrimination of clean and dirty clothes and linen. Hospital laundry should be an obligation and need for a wide range of washing, ironing, and drying machines because hospitals are bound to handle huge linen per day.

THE OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- 1.To study the importance of laundry service in hospitals.
- 2.To study laundry management in hospital operations.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE-

Anapaula Massinatori Peres, Luzmarina Aparecida Doretto Braccialli, Sueli Moreira Pirolo, Elza de Fátima Ribeiro Higa, Márcio Mielo (2018), finds out the importance of laundry management in hospitals and its impact on the patient and staff's health, they use case study method. It uses two categories, i.e. hospital linen and care of linen. This study finds out the importance of linen management within the hospital. Hospital laundry is an important support service and is directly connected with health care.

Dr K Srikar, Dr Shashikant Sharma, Dr S S Ghosh (2015), discovered that the hospital laundry is an important element guaranteeing success to the hospital, it involves large activities to make clean and dirt free linen. It is different from other laundry services. It is necessary to understand the difference when it comes to hospital laundry. Proper management of hospital laundry creates a healthy and hygienic environment to the patients and staff ensuring their satisfaction. This paper covered functions of hospital laundry, classification of hospital linen; it provides a physical layout of laundry services. It provides risk management techniques to minimize risk.

Dara Singh, GJ Qadri, Monica Kotwal, AT Syed, and Farooq Jan(2009), stated that effective laundry management is directly connected with the patient's satisfaction, it discovers the relationship between laundry management and the quality of laundry service. The service provided by the hospital is judged by the satisfaction level of patients and staff of the hospital.

IMPORTANCE OF LAUNDRY SERVICES-

In regard to the objective of the study, it is necessary that the quality of laundry services is interconnected with the customer satisfaction and success of the hospital. Management should provide guidelines for handling the linen, which is used in hospitals. Inappropriate laundry services prove to be the main factor that affected patients health and hygiene. This type of cleaning process is directly connected to spread infection, bacteria and virus while creating high risk to the staff and patients. Hospitals should provide training and knowledge about the proper handling of linen to make it aware to all the staff and patients about the linen process. Laundry services prove to be an important element in the service provided by hospitals.

LAUNDRY MANAGEMENT IN HOSPITAL

Hospital managers must follow the correct and appropriate linen handling process for protecting the patients and staff from various infections and viruses. He should take care of the health and hygiene of both staff and patients. Proper laundry management will increase the efficiency of laundry working as well as enhance patient satisfaction because patient spends more time on the bed; hence a clean bed and good linen is a must for hygienic and healthy patients. The transportation of dirty linen and clean linen should follow the following cycle.

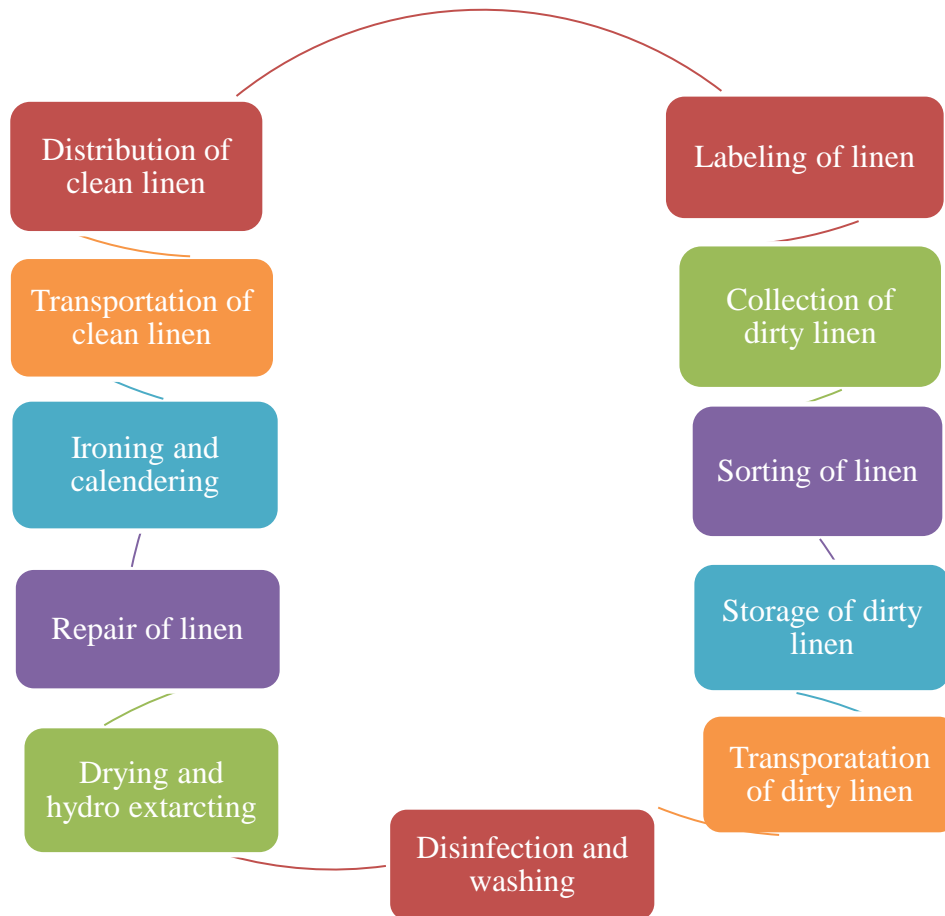


Figure no 1- Laundry management in hospital

1. Labelling of linen- for the purpose of inventory management, it is necessary to label all the linen properly. Labelling helps to trace and identify linen easily. Labelling of linen includes department name, ward no, type of linen with the number of linen, for example, patients gown(PG), Bedsheet(BS)etc., hospital staff and doctor's used linen are labelled with the staff and doctor name.

2.Collection of dirty linen- all the critical care linen and patient linen require and hold necessity in being changed every day. Hospitals should fix a schedule for the collection of dirty linen. Some linen can be changed after use and when it is dirty. Some linen can be changed on a weekly basis like staff linen. At the time of collecting linen, it is necessary to remove all the pieces of equipment like saline, injection syringe etc. The laundry staff takes some precaution at the time of collection of dirty and used linen. Staff should wear aprons, gloves and Masks.

Laundry staff must be wearing gloves and a mask at the time of collection of dirty linen, and be well- aware of sanitization. Staff collected linen should be in a separate trolley and bags.

3.Sorting of linen- laundry staff should separate all the linen collected from hospitals into infected and dirty linen. For the purpose of sorting linen, Laundry managers and staff use some colour code for the identification of linen as per the department and area of the hospital. Staff should collect and sort all linen as per the colour code and place it in the appropriately coloured trolley. The green colour is used for dirty linen, and yellow is used for soiled linen. Hospitals should provide all the basic knowledge and guidelines about sorting of dirty linen.

4.Storage of dirty linen- hospital uses separate area or room for storage of dirty linen. Hospitals appoint an attendant in-charge for the storeroom. He or she keeps a proper record, updates the daily record and maintains a register for a daily transaction. It includes the name of linen, the number of linen collected from various departments. Attendants should keep a separate record of each department and area of the hospital.

5.Transportation of dirty linen- at the time of transportation, it is necessary to cover the trolley and uses separate trolleys for dirty and soiled linen. Staff should follow all the protocols of laundry management. At the laundry place, laundry in charge or attendant needs to receive the dirty and soiled linen and keep a record of received linen. All the necessary details must be mentioned in the record book like department name, date and time of receiving linen, type of linen, the quantity of linen etc.

6.Disinfection and washing -soiled linen needs to be disinfected first. Infected linen should be soaked in bleaching chemical for 30 minutes, and the soiled ones can be soaked in clean and plain water, after this process, it must be handed over to the washing department. Washing department should sort all the linen into heavily soiled, non-soiled and infected linen. Washing staff should use warm water, liquid soap for removing soil and dirt also use some bleach and soap to reduce and minimize bacteria and yellowness of linen. Infected linen should be washed with hot water having a temperature of more than 71° C for a minimum of 25 minutes.

7.Drying and hydro extracting- laundry staff should dry washed linen in sunlight for extraction, if the hospital has a hydro extracting machine, then the hospital should use machines for removal of water from washed linen. Staff should make sure that the linen isn't in contact with any dust and dirt.

8.Repair of linen- laundry staff checks all linen and checks the damage if they find linen the damaged, it's needed to be sent for repair, be it any minor damage like a hole or tear. But if major damage occurs which is irreparable, then it can be discarded as per guidelines, protocol and policies.

9.Ironing and calendaring- heavy linen like bed sheets and other linen need to be calendared. Laundry staff uses the calendaring machine for it. If the calendaring machine is not available at the hospital, then the staff should use a flat iron for ironing linen. After ironing the staff should fold linen properly.

10. Transportation of clean linen from laundry area to hospital- clean and processed linen is delivered in a clean and covered trolley. Hospital storage department should store clean linen in a separate area, and staff should ensure that they store dirty and clean linen in separate areas, shelves and trolleys.

11. Distribution of clean linen from the hospital store to particular departments- clean and washed linen is distributed to respective departments. Hospital central store department records for issuing, maintain a register, records all the transactions, and ensures updation of records.

CONCLUSION

The laundry service in a hospital is one of the key factors which protects the health cares for the hygiene of the hospital staff and patients. Good quality laundry service provides satisfaction to the patient. It can help protect the health concerning both the staff and patients. Proper and adequate laundry services can upgrade the patient's satisfaction and minimize the risk of infections and aids in the prevention of cross-contamination. Laundry service providers must understand the impact of laundry services on patient health, well-being and satisfaction. It should take the necessary measures to improve service quality, ensuring the protection of the patient's health and hygiene of the hospital.

RECOMMENDATIONS-

Recommendation for a laundry service provider

- 1.Clean linen properly to keep away dirt and infection.
- 2.The laundry service provider should use adequate and efficient washing chemicals, soda and bleach powder. Using huge amounts of chemicals can harm the cloth.
- 3.After washing and laundry linen should be kept in a dry storage place.
- 4.Linen should be dried perfectly to reduce odour in linen.
- 5.Dirty linen should be cleaned with stain removers immediately.
- 6.There should be separate storage places for linen according to infected linen and regular linen.
- 7.Overloading of linen in the washing machine and other machines must be avoided.
- 8.A proper record of dirty and clean linen and record of expenses must be maintained.

Recommendation for hospital

- 1.Hospitals should store dirty linen in a separate place and clean linen in a proper way.
- 2.They should not mix dirty linen and washed linen.
- 3.They should maintain a proper record of dirty and clean linen.
- 4.They should prepare a budget for the cleaning and laundry services and implement it properly.
- 5.It should properly supervise the quality of clean linen and take feedback from patients, visitors and staff about the laundry services.
- 6.It should regularly and continuously keep a check on the service quality and patient's satisfaction with laundry services.

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