

Version: 3 FOI Status: Public	DSG Safety Guidance Note – Jewellery, Clothing, Footwear, Fingernails and Personal Belongings	Issued: October 2016 Review Due: October 2019
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Departmental Safety Guidance – Jewellery, Clothing, Footwear, Fingernails and Personal Belongings

Review/Issue Date	Any Changes Required	By Whom
October 09		Bob Thompson
July 13	Review and update	Trevor Thacker
October 16	Review and update	Trevor Thacker

Introduction

Many Adult Care staff work in environments and situations that cannot easily be controlled or foreseen. Examples of these are Care Workers (Community) and care staff in establishments, working in client’s homes and staff who work with people that have behaviour that challenges. The hazards associated with these types of activities include moving and handling, violence and aggression, physical assault and close contact with clients during personal care tasks.

Because of these risks thought needs to be given to the style of clothing, shoes and the type of any jewellery etc. that is worn. The security of personal belongings also needs to be taken into account in all work situations.

This document gives advice to managers and staff on how to reduce these risks.

Clothing and Footwear

Staff and managers are expected to wear clothing appropriate to their work. Clothing has to take into account the nature of the work, the environment and the possibility of any damage or soiling which may result from the working activities. Clothing needs to allow freedom of movement to ensure safe moving and handling techniques can be used. Large areas of exposed flesh are to be avoided and where overalls or protective clothing are provided, these **must** be worn, because they will have been provided to protect the worker from the hazards of the work. Tabards **must** be worn for food preparation only.

In establishments, where work wear is provided including overalls, staff **must** change into and out of the work wear at the beginning and end of each shift. The work wear **must** be left on site to be washed.

In home care settings, where it is not possible to change at each client’s home, a clean overall/work wear **must** be worn every day. It **must not** be worn outside of working times e.g. in the period of free time between split shifts.

Do not wear name badges which could get caught when moving and handling or during restraint situations.

Where work involves moving and handling or there is a risk of injury from falling objects or contact with hoists or wheelchairs for example, flat fully covered supportive shoes must be worn. **No open toed sandals, platform shoes with heels (higher than 1 inch) or clogs.**

Catering clogs may be worn by catering staff only.

Long hair is to be tied back where there is a risk from moving and handling tasks or the hair being pulled by a client displaying behaviour that challenges.

Finger Nails

If you provide personal care or work closely with clients, or if there is a possibility you may have to provide personal care or work closely with clients, fingernails **must** be kept short, no longer than the end of the fingers. They **must** be clean and free from polish. False nails of any kind **must not** be worn.

Jewellery

In situations where physical contact is needed or there is a possibility of violence, staff must not wear sharp, dangling or exposed pierced jewellery. There is a high risk that they can become entangled during a moving and handling procedure, providing personal care or when close contact with clients is required. These can cause serious injury to staff or clients. Close fitting wedding bands are acceptable. Studs can be worn at the manager’s discretion, dependant on the work being carried out. The back of the studs must be secure to prevent them falling out and becoming caught up in personal care paraphernalia or falling into food.

Where there is a **clearly stated requirement** for articles of faith to be carried or worn, such as the Kara (an iron bracelet worn by Sikhs), the member of staff must inform their manager. If such articles are obligatory, they must be placed discreetly under clothing or covered so that they do not affect the safety of clients or other staff. Whilst every effort will be made to accommodate the requirements of all religions, the carrying or wearing of these articles will be at the discretion of the manager and based on risk assessment. Safety will be the overriding priority.

Personal Belongings

Staff should avoid bringing into work large quantities of cash, valuables or personal belongings which are not needed whilst at work. Where this is unavoidable these must be stored in a secure locker, drawer, cupboard or a safe where available.

Homecare staff - should lock personal belongings in the car out of site where possible. If they need to be taken into the house, they should be placed in a location where they can be kept in view at all times and not where they may create a tripping hazard.

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Practical Advice for Staff

- **Wear sensible clothes suitable for the type of work and the environment.**
- Carry wallets in inside pockets, preferably one which can be fastened.
- Carry cheque books and cheque cards separately. Avoid bringing them to work where possible.
- Keep bags close to the body with the clips or zips fastened.
- In the office keep bags in a drawer or in a corner near to you and out of general line of sight.
- Lock valuable items out of sight in the boot of the car.
- Where possible park your car in secure, well lit and well-populated car parks. Remember it may be dark when you return to your car.

Do not carry large amounts of cash.

Do not carry obvious desirable items e.g. expensive watches, designer bags etc.

Do not leave valuables unattended on desks or in jackets.

Do not carry your PIN number with cash/credit cards.

Do not park your car in remote areas. Where possible avoid parking near to bushes or other structures which can provide cover for anyone wishing to break in.

Do not leave items of mail with your name and address on show.

Managers must lead by example. Ensure that their clothing including footwear and any jewellery worn is appropriate for the nature of the work undertaken in the establishment and does not create unnecessary risks to staff or clients. Ensure that fingernails meet the rules stated above. Remember, as Managers you may be called on to provide personal care when the situation requires it.

For more information please contact Adult Care, Health and Safety Section.