

Global Brand Lindström Is Now Diversifying Into The Healthcare Sector To Combat HCAs

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The importance of an effective, efficient commercial laundry service in the healthcare sector cannot be overlooked when it comes to managing productivity and infection control.

The UK Healthcare System

The UK is lucky enough to have a free publicly funded healthcare system the National Health System (NHS). This is funded by general taxation and around 18% of a citizen's income tax goes towards healthcare. According to the World Health Organization, government funding covers 85% of healthcare expenditure in the UK. The remaining 15% is covered by the private sector.

In 2020, the total healthcare expenditure was £257.6 billion, equating to £3,840 per person. This equates to 12% of the overall gross domestic product (GDP). This makes the UK one of the largest spenders on healthcare in the EU/EEA/Switzerland in terms of GDP percentage. As of 1st May 2022, there have been 61,654,788 patients registered at GP practices in England. Furthermore, the UK also has a growing private healthcare sector that is still much smaller than the public sector.

The UK's health care system is one of the most efficient in the world, according to a study of seven industrialised countries. The Commonwealth Fund report looked at five areas of performance - quality, efficiency, access to care, equity, and healthy lives. The Netherlands ranked first overall, closely followed by the UK and Australia. The UK performed well when it came to the quality of care and access to care. The UK also ranked first in efficiency, which was measured by examining total national spending on healthcare as a percentage, as well as the amount spent on healthcare administration and insurance.

Standard Industrial Classifications (SIC)

SIC was first introduced into the UK in 1948, to provide uniformity and a standard framework. These classifications are used to categorise business establishments and other statistical units by their type of activity. Used to easily analyse data and offers a convenient way of classifying industrial activities into a common structure.

- 86101 - Hospital activities including Private and NHS Hospitals
- 86102 - Medical nursing home activities
- 86210 - General medical practice activities
- 86220 - Specialist medical practice activities
- 86230 - Dental practice activities
- 87100 - Residential nursing care activities
- 87200 - Residential care activities for learning disabilities, mental health, and substance abuse
- 87300 - Residential care activities for the elderly and disabled

Laundry Compliance

As advancements continue within healthcare, legislation and compliance rules change and develop. The Health Technical Memorandum (HTM) 01-04 gives guidance for those who process linen used in health and adult social care settings. In every care setting there needs to be evidence that your business complies

with HTM0104 as well as the Care Quality Commissions (CQC) standards. The guidance is designed to ensure patient safety and enhanced outcomes at a controlled cost using risk control.

Healthcare Laundry Services

These services are responsible for providing a safe, clean adequate, and timely supply of linen. It is vital all linen including uniforms are at the right place, right time in the correct quantities. These services are critical for healthcare professionals, patients, and visitors' health and safety. Laundry within a healthcare setting handles items contaminated by bio-fluids such as blood, urine, and excrement. All of which can spread infection, therefore, having an effective laundry service is of utmost importance to manage productivity and infection control.

Linen is the general term for all textiles used within a healthcare setting. According to the HTM0104 linen refers to "all reusable textile items requiring cleaning/disinfection via laundry processing including bedding, towels, blankets, hoist slings, patient clothing and staff clothing such as nursing tunics, medical trousers, and scrubs". Cotton is often the preferred material and is frequently used due to it being comfortable and cheaper.

The phrase "hygienically clean" acts as a level and guide to refer to the reduction of pathogens. This term is used across various textile products at which the level of existing pathogens poses no threat to human illness. Hygienically clean linen means both: Hygienic (pathogen elimination); and Clean (inorganic removal, attractive appearance).

Healthcare-Associated Infections (HCAIs)

Research has found that 1 in 31 hospital patients has at least one HCAI. These pose a serious risk to patients, staff, and visitors and can incur high costs for the NHS. Reports show that treating a patient who has a HCAI costs around three times more to manage than someone who hasn't.

The most common HCAIs are Escherichia coli (E. coli), Staphylococcus aureus (S. aureus) and Clostridium difficile (C. difficile). With C. difficile infections accounting for 5.6% of all infections within NHS England. According to the NHS, the percentages for HCAIs within hospitals are as follows: 22.8% are respiratory tract infections such as pneumonia, 17.2% from urinary tract infections, 15.7% from surgical site infections (SSI), 10.5% due to sepsis, 8.8% from gastrointestinal infections and 7.3% of bloodstream infections. It has been reported that on average 3.5% of patients who acquire a HCAI die from the infection.

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) monitor the number of infections within healthcare settings. This is done through routine surveillance at establishments such as hospitals, schools, and care homes. The research provides information on what and where the problems lie as well as how to control them.

Surveillance covers:

- Bacteraemia
- Gram-negative bacteria
- Clostridioides difficile infection
- Escherichia coli
- Pseudomonas aeruginosa
- Klebsiella species

- Staphylococcus aureus
- Surgical site infection

There are several efforts and processes in place to reduce the prevalence of healthcare-associated infections (HAIs). Infection prevention and control is a key priorities for all healthcare settings.

Lindström Offers New Healthcare Service

Lindström has identified that many medical and dental practices, despite guidance from CQC do not use a rental service or commercial laundry. Commercial washing guarantees hygienically clean garments through both heat disinfection and chemical disinfection. The linen goes through stringent testing that has to be regularly completed to check this is happening. All garments are washed at least 65c for at least 10 minutes and dried at 150c reducing the risk of infection.

Lindström has worked with professionals from various healthcare sectors, both private and NHS and has created a new product offering and service. Meeting all the required criteria, HTM 01-04, HTM 01-05, and EN14065. All whilst ensuring garments are designed for a long life but still look stylish for the modern marketplace.

Their service ensures the establishment always has the correct number of hygienically clean items at its disposal. Furthermore, Lindström is highly sustainably aware and takes the impact on the environment very seriously. They ensure they do everything they can to reduce their carbon footprints such as reducing energy consumption and recycling end-of-life textiles. Contact Lindström today on 01234866210 or email info.uk@lindstromgroup.com