

University of Prince Edward Island	Policy Number: 0010
Policy Title: Professional Dress	Page - 3
Authority: School of Nursing	Creation Date: June 30, 2006
Reference: Baresh B. & Gordon, S. (2000). <i>From silence to voice: What nurses know and must communicate to the public.</i> Ottawa, ON: Canadian Nurses Association.	Version Date: January 2015
	Review Date: January 2020

A dress code policy is necessary for the purposes of infection control and the conveyance of a professional appearance. Professional dress can reflect caring and ultimately work toward maintaining the caring image of the professional nurse. Buresh and Gordon (2000) contend that through their appearance, language and behaviour, nurses can convey professionalism and a sense of identity, establish clinical credibility, and ensure that they obtain the respect and collegial treatment they deserve. Furthermore, they argue that in today's contemporary society it is critical that nurses adopt a style of dress that furthers their efforts to affirm their professional identity, and subsequently, to be treated professionally.

1. **Purpose**
To communicate clear and consistent expectations with regard to dress code in the four years of the nursing program and in all clinical sites.
2. **Scope**
All students enrolled in the nursing program (2 year and 4 year programs)
3. **Responsibility**
Faculty of the School of Nursing
4. **Policy**
Dress codes vary between institutions and the specific policies of the institution and/or clinical setting must be followed when working in a particular institution. In these instances the particular policy of the setting will be reviewed with students prior to starting clinical practice.

4.1 Acute and continuing care settings such as hospitals, and long-term care, etc. Mental health settings may have the option for uniform or street clothing.

Professional Appearance:

- A professional appearance will be conveyed by ensuring that hair is clean and tied back if it interferes with performance of nursing interventions. Long hair must be worn off the collar and pulled away from the face. If hair accessories are required, they must be secure and professionally appropriate.
- Male students with beards should have them neatly trimmed.
- For client safety (protection from scratching and the transmission of organisms) a minimum amount of jewellery is permitted. Appropriate jewellery includes one pair of stud earrings and a plain wedding band.
- A minimal amount of scent free make-up is acceptable.
- To prevent harm to those people who suffer from chemical sensitivities, scented products are not to be worn.
- All visible body piercing must be removed, tongue rings should be replaced with a clear

- spacer.
- Tattoos must be covered at all times.
- Nails must be clean, groomed, short, and non polished. Acrylic nails are not permitted.
- Gum chewing is not permitted.

Infection Control:

- While in the hospital settings, change areas and lockers are provided by the institution. Uncovered uniforms and nursing shoes are to be worn on the premises only. Students must bring a change of clothing and change prior to leaving the clinical setting. Uniforms and shoes are not to be worn outside of the institution.

Identification:

- A student name bar must be worn during all nurse client encounters.

Lab Coat/Scrub Jacket:

- Students who may need to spend time in the acute or continuing care setting outside of regularly scheduled clinical practice (e.g. to visit clients or to obtain data for professional purposes) must be appropriately identified. A lab coat, kept for this purpose only, is worn over semi-casual street or dress clothes (not jeans or sweatshirts). Name bars are to be worn on lab coats.

Equipment:

- A watch which records time in seconds is essential.
- A stethoscope.

Hose:

- White socks and white enclosed shoes are to be worn with the uniform. Either white “professional duty” shoes or all white leather running shoes (with a minimum of colour detail) are permitted. It is important that adequate support and “breathability” be provided.
- Shoes and laces must be kept clean.

For all students entering the nursing program (2 year and 4 year) in Fall 2013 and thereafter, a standardized uniform will be required. Details regarding the standardized uniform will be made available by the course co-ordinator.

For all students who entered the program prior to 2013, the following dress requirements apply.

Dress & Hose:

- Uniforms may be dress or pant in style.
- Uniform length must be professionally appropriate. Uniform dresses must be at or below the knee and blouses or tops must not reveal the abdomen.
- White stockings are to be worn with dress style uniforms.

4.2 Community Based Settings such as Client’s Homes, Schools, Daycare, Community Mental Health Settings, Public Health Offices, etc.

In the event that uniforms are not required for clinical practice, students are to be appropriately dressed for the clinical experience. Dress is a professional responsibility and can affect the type of relationship that develops with clients and the professional identity conveyed to other

community partners.

Professional Appearance:

- A professional appearance will be conveyed by ensuring that hair is clean, and tied back if it interferes with performance of nursing interventions. Long hair must be worn off the collar and pulled away from the face. If hair accessories are required, they must be secure and professionally appropriate.
- Male students with beards should have them neatly trimmed.
- For client safety (protection from scratching and the transmission of organisms) a minimum amount of jewellery is permitted. Acceptable jewellery includes small studs, non dangling earrings, wedding band and flat rings.
- A minimal amount of scent free make-up is acceptable.
- To prevent harm to those people who suffer from chemical sensitivities, scented products are not to be worn.
- All visible body piercing rings must be removed, tongue rings should be replaced with a clear spacer.
- Tattoos must be covered at all times.
- Nails must be clean, groomed, short and non polished. Acrylic nails are not permitted.
- Gum chewing is not permitted.

Identification:

- A student name bar must be worn during all nurse client encounters.

Dress:

- Semi-casual street or dress clothes that are clean, neat and permit the student to fulfill the nursing process with ease (e.g. it is difficult to sit on the floor with a toddler for assessment or assist in play activities while wearing a skirt). Likewise, clothing with low necklines, short mid-riffs and low-rise waist bands become even more revealing when bending over to perform nursing interventions (e.g. home care activities such as dressing changes) and are not acceptable for professional dress. Clothing that is extremely tight-fitting detracts from a professional appearance. Casual clothes such as jeans, sneakers, sweatshirts, etc are also not appropriate. Exceptions to wearing casual clothing may be **Lab Coats (see next section).**

Lab Coats/Scrub Jackets:

- Some community based settings, such as group homes, Club House settings or other informal settings, encourage lab coats. In these situations, a lab coat kept for this purpose only, is worn over semi-casual street or dress clothes (not jeans or sweatshirts). Name bars are to be worn on lab coats.

Shoes:

- Shoes should be clean and supportive with closed toe and heel. No high heels permitted. If it is culturally unacceptable to wear shoes in a particular home, soled slippers may be worn.

*Name bars are provided by the School of Nursing.

