



A STUDY ON LINEN SUPPLY IN ONE OF THE LEADING HOSPITALS IN COIMBATORE

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Abstract: An efficient linen supply marks supplying right linen to right ward at right time. As linens comes in direct contact with patients the supplied linens should be good in quality as well as should be adequate in quantity. There are standards for handling soiled and contaminated linens whereas supplying the linens differs from management to management based on the availability of resources. This study was carried out in three different areas such as laundry department where soiled and contaminated linen get processed, linen supply department where clean linen gets stored and in wards where linens are being used. This study also comprises of SCRS analysis to describe the management current state and solutions for the existing problems of linen supply.

Keywords: hospital linens, linen supply, linen adequacy, condemn linens, laundry department.

I. INTRODUCTION

Linens and laundry department plays a vital role in infection control. The laundry department is responsible for the hospital's proper linen supply. The laundry services include a series of activities which operates 24 hours all day. Every hospital should have a well-functioning laundry department in order to supply right number of linens at right time.

Classification of linens:

- **General purpose linens:** The linens such as doctor's towel, table cloths, curtains are known as general purpose linens. They don't aid in patient care.
- **Patient linens:** Linens such as patient gowns, pyjamas that patient wears are known as patient linens.
- **Ward linens:** This type of linens includes pillow covers, bedsheets, drawsheets and blankets.
- **Uniform linens:** These linens include the scrub suits and theatre suits of the doctors, nurses and all others.

Quantification of linens within hospital:

In order to maintain a proper linen, supply the hospital should at least have three sets of linens with them.

- 1 set of linen in ward (with patient and in ward stock)
- 1 set of linen in stock.
- 1 set of linen in laundry department.

Linen supply:

Linen supply is a cyclic process. It involves the linens move between wards and laundry department.

- From linen supply department
Linens are supplied to wards for bedmaking and supplied if demanded extra
- From wards
Soiled and infected linen supplied to laundry department for cleaning.

- From laundry department

The cleaned linens then supplied to separate clean area (linen supply department) to supply linens to wards

Things to be noted while supplying linens:

There are many things that should be done while making a linen supply,

- Documentation on number of linens supplied to wards should be maintained at linen supply department.
- Documentation on number of linens received should be maintained on ward.
- There should be a separate staff nurse to maintain linen note in all departments.
- Condemn linens should be taken care by noting essential details of the linens.
- After a period of time (for example 6 months one) all the condemn linens should be replaced for new one.

Transportation and handling of clean linens:

The person who discards the linen should make sure it is sorted.

- Laundry should not be sorted on the floor
- PPE should be worn at all times
- Dirty linens should not be made into contact with clean linens.
- There should be different trolleys for clean linens and dirty linens.
- Dirty linens should be collected properly

Aim of the laundry department:

The main aim of the hospital laundry department is to ensure the delivery right amount of the linens to the right wards at right time. They also deliver linens free of infection to make the hospital a safer place for patients.

Functions of laundry department:

The different types of functions carried out in laundry department includes,

- Collection of soiled and infected linens.
- Sorting linens based on infection.
- Washing, drying, ironing and folding.
- Repairing linens if damaged.
- Storing clean linens.
- Supplying for bedmaking (sometimes if asked for extra linens).

Apart from this laundry department is also responsible for,

- Issuing new uniforms to employees.

List of Equipment:

The most commonly used equipment in laundry department

- Washing machines
- Water extractors
- Ironing machines (or calendaring machine)
- Sewing machines

Washing standards

- The infected linens should be sorted based on infection.
- The lesser contaminated linen should be handwashed and sent to machine washing.
- The more contaminated linen should be soaked in for 45 minutes with bleaching agent and should be sent for machine washing.
- The machine washing should be carried out for 45 mins with a bleaching agent and detergent.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To study on linen supply and adequacy.
- To find out the reasons behind improper linen supply.
- To suggest some measures to improve linen supply.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Ajay Garg and Anil Dewan (2022) laundry service provide adequate and clean linens to all departments. Laundry department should be established in correct manner with adequate place for equipment and enough space for drying the linens. An efficient laundry department can make efficient linen supply.

According to M. Yamuna Rani, Sravana Kumar, haturvedi, J. N Roo (2022) laundry and linen services are important services in the hospital sector. Hospital cannot pursue its proper care without proper linen supply. This study was done to study and display detailed information to establish laundry department in cost efficient manner

According to Jitender Sodhi, Pankaj Arora, Sidhartha Satpathy (2021) this study concerned about the quality of the supplied linens and the satisfaction of linens among employees and patients who uses them.

II. METHODOLOGY

This is descriptive research that uses SCRS analysis to identify and describe current state of management's linen supply.

Data collection

Only primary data were used. All the qualitative data are collected through observation method, interviews and questionnaire from staffs of laundry department, staffs of linen supply department and from ward in charge.

III. ANALYSIS

All the qualitative analysis is analyzed through SCRS analysis. The SCRS is an analyzing technique that describes Strategy, Current state, Requirement, Solution of the business problem that is arranged accordingly to display them in an effective manner.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The below are some SCRS analysis that describes some aspects for proper linen supply,

4.1 SCRS analysis for maintaining proper linen supply for bed making

Strategy:

To maintain proper linen supply for wards/ICU/OP/OT and for bed making.

Current state:

- Number of linens being supplied is less in number.
- Currently, there are only one or two sets of linen available for supply.
- Constant complaints have risen from wards regarding delay in linen supply.
- It almost takes an hour to receive linens in wards before 9:30 am

Requirement:

For an ideal linen supply at least three sets of linens should be maintained.

Those three sets of linens include,

- 1 set of linen in ward
- 1 set of linen in stock
- 1 set of linen in laundry department

The ideal time to supply linens to ward is considered as before 7 am.

Solution:

Purchasing at least one more set of linens could considerably make the linens more available for wards and for bed making.

4.2 SCRS analysis for efficient tracking of linens

Strategy:

To efficiently track the linens.

Current state:

- There's no proper documentation maintained at wards. (Except OTs and ICUs)
- Most of the wards don't get linens allotted to their wards

Requirements:

Staff nurse should note down the number of linens received, number of linens discarded as soiled and contaminated and should pass over this information to next shift staffs.

Linens (Particularly bedsheets) should contain the following details written in corner

- Date of issue
- Company name
- Ward name
- Linen number

Solution:

- Proper training and education should be given to the staff nurses through proper channel.
- An assigned staff nurse to maintained the linen note daily.
- Staffs in linen supply should ensure this information before delivering new linens.
- Each floor could have different colors of bedsheets for easier tracking.

4.3 SCRS analysis for ensuring linen supply even with loss of linens

Strategy

To ensure proper linen supply even with loss of linens.

Current state:

- There is no proper documentation for condemn linens.
- The data maintained is count of linens condemned in a year.
- Number of Condemn linens are exchanged for new linens 6 months once.

Requirements:

- The information found at the corner of the linens (Date of issue, Company name, Ward name, Linen number) should be noted.
- For an efficient linen supply, Number of Condemn linens should be exchanged for new linens monthly once.

Solutions:

The laundry department should make sure new set of linens are replaced according to monthly requirement. This can be achieved only if the condemned linen list is properly maintained.

V. CONCLUSION

As far as patient care is concerned linens are also concerned. Therefore, it is compulsory to maintain a proper linen supply. A good linen supply marks good management skill and ultimately put froth the reputation of the hospital in the minds of the patients. The linen supply can be improved by easily comparing the current state with standards by SCRS analysis. Thus, this study comprises of current state of linen supply and ways to improve it.

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