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**Standard Dress Code for Healthcare
Professionals and Support Staff, 2026**



**Department of Health Services
Ministry of Health**

FOREWORD

As Bhutan's healthcare system evolves, standard practices remain vital. Implementing consistent dress codes for healthcare professionals and support staff working in the hospital enhances patient safety, builds trust, and promotes uniformity across the healthcare system. Proper attire not only reflects professionalism but also prevents infections, improves patient confidence, and operational efficiency. The evidence shows that patients trust staff more when uniforms are clean and well-maintained. Considering the standards as practical as possible and adaptable to the nature of work, accommodating cultural and institutional differences while prioritizing the patient care.

This document was drafted by the Technical Working Group after extensive consultation with stakeholders and it was formally presented to the High-Level Committee (HLC) of the Ministry of Health for further recommendations. The HLC directed to constitute a Sub-Committee for further deliberation and review. The HLC approved the standard based on the recommendation of the Sub-Committee on 20th February, 2026. This standard now provides a unified framework for safe and effective healthcare environments.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	i
1. Introduction	1
2. Purpose	1
3. Scope	2
4. Normative Reference	2
5. Abbreviations	2
6. Operational Definitions	3
7. General Requirements	4
8. Technical Requirements	5
9. Standard dress codes for healthcare professionals and support staff	6
11. Roles and Responsibilities	11
12. Bibliography	13
13. Annexure	14

1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, the standard dress code for healthcare professionals differs widely, shaped by factors such as comfort, relevance to the work environment, and healthcare priorities. These standards are essential in reducing hospital acquired infections (HAI), improving patient safety, ensuring professional identification and reinforcing trust and competencies. Study shows that there is a positive perception of professionalism when healthcare professionals and hospital staff are seen in standard dress code compared to non-standard, while standard uniforms positively influence how patients view the service. Even small details, such as the color of scrubs, can impact a patient's perception of approachability and confidence. Additionally, the Bhutan Medical and Health Council (BMHC) regulation mandates healthcare professionals to be in standard dress or national dress while on duty.

To address these needs, the MoH issued a circular in 2015 mandating a standard dress code for healthcare professionals which was later reinforced by an executive order in 2017 emphasizing strict compliance. Despite these measures, the dress code of healthcare professionals and support staff still varies across the Healthcare Centre (HCC).

To bring consistency in dress code and address non-compliance among diverse groups of healthcare professionals the QARD, DHS and NMS established a Technical Working Group (TWG) comprising healthcare professionals of different backgrounds. The TWG was responsible for developing and drafting the standard for the dress code of healthcare professionals and support staff. This initiative aims to ensure professional appearance, hygiene, and uniformity across healthcare settings. The dress code provides structured options based on roles and includes formal wear, scrubs, and designated uniforms, thereby maintaining professionalism.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to ensure all healthcare professionals and support staff of the hospitals and health care centres across the country are dressed as per the standard.

3. SCOPE

This standard applies to all healthcare professionals and support staff working in hospitals and healthcare centres across the country. This standard does not apply to the hospital staff with administrative responsibility.

4. NORMATIVE REFERENCE

The following documents are fully or partly referenced while developing the dress code for medical and health professionals.

- 4.1. Health Service Rules and Regulations (2025)
- 4.2. Nursing Administrative Manual (2018)
- 4.3. Bhutan Medical and Health Council Regulations 2005
- 4.4. Bhutan Medicines Rules and Regulations (2025)
- 4.5. Bhutan Civil Service Rules and Regulations (2023)

5. ABBREVIATIONS

ACO	: Assistant Clinical Officer
BCSR	: Bhutan Civil Service Rules and Regulations
BEAR	: Bhutan Emergency Aeromedical Retrieval
BFDA	: Bhutan Food Drug Authority
BMHC	: Bhutan Medical and Health Council
CMO	: Chief Medical Officer
CSSD	: Central Sterile Services Department
DCS	: Department of Clinical Services
DHO	: Dzongkhag Health Officer
EMR	: Emergency Medical Responders
EMS	: Emergency Medical Service
HA	: Health Assistant
HAI	: Hospital-Acquired Infection
HCC	: Healthcare Centre
HLC	: High Level Committee
HSRR	: Health Services Rules and Regulations

NMS	: National Medical Services
MoH	: Ministry of Health
MD	: Medical Director
MS	: Medical Superintendent
QARD	: Quality Assurance and Regulation Division
TWG	: Technical Working Group

6. OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Scrub dress: A scrub dress is a durable, easy-to-clean medical uniform worn by healthcare professionals that ensures comfort, supports hygiene and infection control, allows ease of movement, and maintains a professional appearance.

Designated Uniform: A set of standard clothing worn by members of an organization or group to show unity and identity.

White coat: It is a knee-length white overcoat worn by professionals in the medical field as a simple uniform.

Standard dress code: An established set of guidelines that define appropriate attire for a specific profession, organization, or setting.

Medical professionals: For the standard, medical professionals are referred to physician/dentists/HA/ACO practising modern medicine and traditional medicine (Drungtsho).

Allied health professionals: For the standard, allied health professionals are referred to as a group of healthcare professionals that provide a range of diagnostic, preventive, therapeutic, and rehabilitative services (Peterson et al., 2024) in a setting of modern medicine service provider includes dietary and nutrition, laboratory and diagnostic, Physiotherapy, Pharmacy, and sMenpa (in traditional medicine).

Nursing professionals: For the standard, nursing professionals are referred to the healthcare professional that provides nursing service and includes nurse and midwifery.

Healthcare professional: For the standard, healthcare professionals are referred to the medical, nursing and allied healthcare professional other than support staff.

Support staff: For the standard, support staff are referred to the hospital staff who provides non-clinical services.

Formal dress: Clothing that is worn in official, professional, or ceremonial settings and adheres to established standards of appearance, decorum, and etiquette.

7. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- 7.1. A dress code must be suitable for the work environment, comfortable and comply with the safety manual and infection control guidelines (e.g., bare below the elbow for clinical duties)
- 7.2. All dress codes must be worn neatly and appropriately at all times in the hospital premises.
- 7.3. A disposable plastic apron may be worn over a dress code to prevent an anticipated splash.
- 7.4. While wearing the scrub dress, medical and allied health professionals must not wear Jumpers or jackets over the scrub dress; a white coat must be worn by medical or allied health professionals.
- 7.5. If a white coat is to be worn without a scrub dress, it must be worn over formal pants and a collared shirt with a name tag and hospital logo. Wearing a white coat with the logo from the hospital outside must not be permitted.
- 7.6. A name tag with a standard front size, with full name and a designation, should be worn with a white coat or scrub dress at all times while on duty.
- 7.7. Wearing a dress code by the healthcare professional beyond hospital premises, during administrative meetings outside hospital premises and social function must be avoided unless authorised by the hospital administration or head of department during an emergency.
- 7.8. Support staff may wear dress code wherever their job demands, except outside the hospital premises.
- 7.9. Healthcare professionals working in the OT must not move within the hospital area and beyond wearing an OT scrub.

- 7.10. Shoes shall be plain, flat-heeled leather/leather-type with quiet soles. They shall be supportive shoes, either in lace-up or slip-on design and must enclose the toes, side and heel of the foot.
- 7.11. Shoes shall be clean, polished and in good repair and must meet health and safety requirements.
- 7.12. It is recommended that medical and health professionals keep specific footwear designated solely for use where required.
- 7.13. Shoes in materials that cannot be adequately cleaned following blood or body fluid contamination are not to be worn.
- 7.14. No boots, sandals, flip flops or open-toe shoes are allowed.
- 7.15. Clothing/uniforms shall cover chest, abdomen, thighs and back.
- 7.16. The relevant uniform should be worn only within the hospital premises.

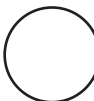
8. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

- 8.1. Uniforms and work clothing are not regarded as personal protective clothing, an appropriate protective gear must be worn to shield them from contamination during patient care or other activities where soiling is likely.
- 8.2. Hands shall be washed after removing uniforms or protective clothing in every case.
- 8.3. One has to always change the uniform if one has been working in an environment which could potentially pose a threat of cross contamination.
- 8.4. During clinical duties, arms must be bare below the elbows, with short or rolled-up sleeves to prevent cuff contamination and ensure good hand hygiene.
- 8.5. All staff exposed to hazardous substances must wear appropriate protective clothing that meets health and safety standards to minimize exposure risks.
- 8.6. It is important that staff maintain a high level of personal hygiene presenting a clean, neat and tidy appearance at work.
- 8.7. Uniforms for designated areas, e.g. operating theatres, shall not be worn out of these areas unless covered by a clean white coat/disposable gown.

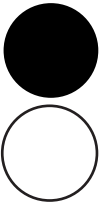
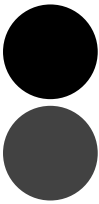
- 8.8. When transporting uniforms, carry them separately from other items in a clean disposable plastic bag, discarded at day's end and never transport clean and dirty uniforms together.

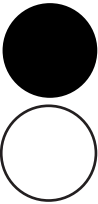
9. STANDARD DRESS CODES FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS AND SUPPORT STAFF

Besides the many advantages of having a dress code, the colour of the scrub dress signifies professionalism, showcasing the uniqueness and professional identity. A hospital is a complex institution that comprises clinical and nonclinical, administrative and support staff, and the scientific and spiritual community. Each plays an important role for one objective, the patient. Having a designated colour for a scrub dress recognises their importance and role in the hospital. Therefore, the technical working group representing each category was formed to select the colour code.

Standard dress codes for healthcare professionals and support staff					
Sl. No.	Health Staff Category	White Coat	Scrub Dress	Designated Uniform	Remarks
1	Doctor	Yes with Gho/Kira, scrub and formal pant & shirt	 Cornflower Blue		Includes residents, and interns
2	Nurse		 Dark Navy Blue	   Shall wear a white kira with black/dark blue blazer for female and formal white ankle-length pants with a white collared shirt (full/half sleeves) or black/dark blue blazer on white collared shirt for male with name tag	Includes trainee/students
3	Drungtsho	Yes with gho/Kira & scrub	 Cornflower Blue		1. Scrub shall be allowed only for those working in Jugpa, Chingdug, and Chulum units. 2. National formal dress + name tag with or without white coat
4	Menpa	Yes with gho/Kira & scrub	 Dark Maroon		

Standard dress codes for healthcare professionals and support staff					
Sl. No.	Health Staff Category	White Coat	Scrub Dress	Designated Uniform	Remarks
5	Allied Health Staff	Yes with gho/Kira and formal pant & shirt	 Dark Maroon		
6	HA/ACO	Yes with gho/Kira and formal pant & shirt			 White coat with formal pants & shirts during institutional delivery.
7	Doctor on EMR/ BEAR Duty		 Cornflower Blue		
8	EMR / BEAR Staff		 Dark Maroon		
9	Biomedical			Designated Uniforms to be worn while on duty + name tag	
10	Maintenance			Designated Uniforms to be worn while on duty + name tag	

Standard dress codes for healthcare professionals and support staff					
Sl. No.	Health Staff Category	White Coat	Scrub Dress	Designated Uniform	Remarks
11	Ambulance Driver			 White shirt (EMS logo), black pant and black jacket (EMS logo) + name tag	
12	Ward boy/ girl/ CSSD operator			 Blackish Gray pant & shirt with black jacket for both male and female + name tag	
13	Security Guard			 Khaki pants and a shirt with black jacket + name tag	Security guards deployed in the hospital by a private security firm will wear their designated attire provided by their firm
14	Laundry/ Gardener/ Cleaner			 Light purple Kira & Toego for female and light purple pant & shirt for male + name tag	

Standard dress codes for healthcare professionals and support staff					
Sl. No.	Health Staff Category	White Coat	Scrub Dress	Designated Uniform	Remarks
15	Cook			 White Color shirt and black pant with Chef coat, Head gear & Apron + name tag	
16	Ward Assistant/ Caretaker			 Ash colour Kira & Toego for female and ash colour pant and shirt for male+name tag	
17	Receptionist			 Sethra gho/Kira + name tag	
- All medical and health professionals should wear decent attire in the work station. - The dress code shall be strictly followed by all the healthcare professionals and support staff while on duty within the HCC premises only. - Name tag with designation should be worn mandatorily. All standard name tags, badges, or embroidered logos must be approved and signed by the Dress Code Committee Chair or the Head of the Organization - HCCs should form a dress code committee to ensure strict implementation and monitoring. The dress code committee should ensure the right colour combination and design for procurement as per the standard.					

10. MONITORING AND SUPERVISION

- 10.1. Monitoring and supervision for compliance to this standard shall be conducted as a part of regulatory inspection by MoH.
- 10.2. Concerned head of HCC must ensure compliance to this standard through routine monitoring in their own setting
- 10.3. MD/MS/DHO/CMO/MOIC shall monitor compliance to this standard in the HCC under their jurisdiction.
- 10.4. Any case of non-compliance to this standard will result in regulatory actions as per the HSRR 2025.

11. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

11.1. Individual Responsibilities:

- 11.1.1. Be responsible for complying with this standard.
- 11.1.2. Familiarise themselves with and adhere fully to this standard.
- 11.1.3. Adhere to the dress code and scrub regulations at all times while on duty.
- 11.1.4. Maintain clean, tidy, and hygienic uniforms in line with infection prevention standards.
- 11.1.5. Always wear valid identification name tag/badges while on hospital premises.
- 11.1.6. Ensure compliance and promptly report any non-compliance to the appropriate authority.
- 11.1.7. Serve as a role model in upholding ethical behavior, personal grooming, and discipline during duty hours.
- 11.1.8. Support orientation and guidance for new staff regarding dress code protocols.

11.2. Heads of Departments/Divisions/Units

- 11.2.1. Develop and implement a feedback and reporting mechanism for addressing non-compliance with the dress code and professional appearance standards.

- 11.2.2. Conduct regular inspections to monitor dress code and hygiene compliance, document and report findings, and take appropriate corrective or administrative actions in cases of non-compliance.
- 11.2.3. Facilitate awareness sessions or briefings for staff on the importance of dress code, hygiene, and professional behavior.
- 11.2.4. Ensure that new staff are oriented to dress code expectations during induction.

11.3. Head of Institution/Agencies /Ministry

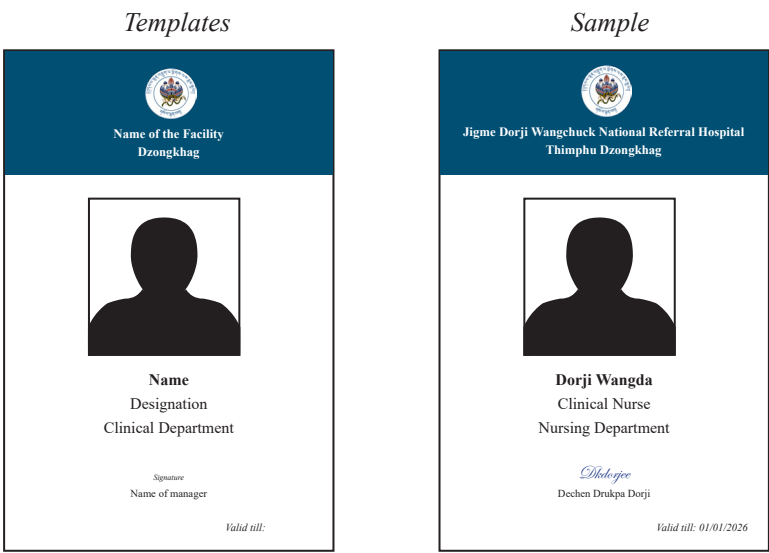
- 11.3.1. Develop institutional-level policies and feedback mechanisms to address non-compliance with dress code and professional standards across all HCC under their jurisdiction.
- 11.3.2. Ensure regular monitoring and inspection of dress code and professional conduct, review compliance reports and trends, take timely administrative or disciplinary actions in line with civil service rules, coordinate enforcement across departments, and foster a culture of accountability through effective communication.
- 11.3.3. Integrate dress code compliance indicators into performance monitoring frameworks or quality audits.
- 11.3.4. Provide oversight support to hospital administrators in implementing corrective measures for non-compliance

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13. ANNEXURE

Annexure I: Sample Name Tag



Annexure II: Sample Images

A - Scrub

12.1. Doctor/Dungtsho with scrub dress (Cornflower Blue)



12.2. Nurse with scrub dress (Dark Navy blue)



12.5. Allied health staff/ sMenpa scrub dress (Dark Maroon)



B - National Formal Dress

1. Doctor with traditional dress & white coat + name tag



2. Drungtsho/sMenpa/ACO/HA with traditional dress + name tag



C - Uniform

1. Nurse with uniform (White kira with black/dark blue blazer for female and formal white ankle-length pants with a white collared shirt (full/half sleeves) or black/dark blue blazer on white collared shirt for male with name tag).



2. Ambulance driver with uniform (white shirt (EMS logo), black pant and black jacket (EMS logo) + name tag



3. Ward boy/ girl/ CSSD operator with uniform (Blackish Gray pant & shirt with black jacket for both male and female + name tag)



4. Security with uniform (Khaki pants and a shirt with black jacket + name tag).



5. Laundry/ gardener/ cleaner with uniform (Light purple Kira & Toego for female and light purple pant & shirt for male + name tag)



6. Cook with uniform (White Color shirt and black pants with Chef coat, Head gear & Apron + name tag).



7. Ward assistant/ caretaker uniform (Ash colour Kira & Toego for female and ash colour pant and shirt for male+name tag).



9. Receptionist with uniform (Sethra gho/Kira + name tag)



Annexure III: Technical working group members

1. Dr. Sona Pradhan, HoD, Emergency, JDWNRH - Chair
2. Mrs. Tshering Dema, Dy. NS, JDWNRH
3. Mr. Sonam Penjore, GN, JDWNRH
4. Mr. Kuenzang, Sr. Lecturer, KGUMSB
5. Mr. Bisman Rai, Dy. BME
6. Mr. Ugyen Dorji, Pharmacist, JDWNRH
7. Mrs. Kencho Zangmo, AE, JDWNRH
8. Mr. Tshering Dorji, Sr. X-ray Tech, JDWNRH
9. Mrs. Tashi Choden, CLO, JDWNRH
10. Mrs. Sonam Zangmo, Sr. HA, Babena THC
11. Mrs. Choki Wangmo, Drungtsho, NTMH
12. Mr. Nar Bdr Gurung, Driver, JDWNRH
13. Mr. Buddhi Mani Timisan, Wardboy, JDWNRH
14. Mr. Sonam Chophel, PO, DCS / NMS
15. Mr. Karma Galey, APO, QARD, DHS
16. Mr. Sonam Zangpo, Program Analyst, QARD, DHS
17. Mr. Sonam Tshewang, Sr. PO, QARD, DHS
18. Mr. Jigme Kelzang, CPO, QARD, DHS

Annexure IV: Sub-Committee Members (recommended by HLC)

1. Dr. Phub Tshering, Medical Director, JDWNRH
2. Dr. Sonam Dargay, HOD Surgery, JDWNRH
3. Ms. Kinley, CN, JDWNRH
4. Dr. Choki Dorji, HOD Pharmacy, JDWNRH
5. Mr. Karma Gaylek, MS, NTMH
6. Mr. Kencho Wangdi, Offtg. Director, NCTMS
7. Mr. Karma Jamtsho, Director, DoPH
8. Mr. Duba, DG, DMP
9. Ms. Gyem Bidha, Director, BFDA.
10. Mr. Kinga Jamphel, DG, DHS.

