




Newcastle Specialist Continence Service

WaSP

Washables and Sustainability Project

Better for people. Better for our planet. Better for the NHS. ♥



Our choice ♥

WASHABLE CONTINENCE WEAR

- ✓ Reusable
- ✓ Cost effective
- ✓ Comfortable
- ✓ Dignified
- ✓ Better for the environment

Small changes, big impact ♥



Moving away from disposables ♥

DISPOSABLE PRODUCTS

- ✗ Single use
- ✗ Higher cost
- ✗ More waste
- ✗ Environmental impact

Our goals

- Reduce environmental impact
- Reduce waste & costs
- Improve patient experience

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Quality Improvement Project: WaSP Washables & Sustainability Project

Aims: To offer our patients who fit the prescribing criteria a washable continence product in replacement of their disposable products.

Disposal pads take 500 years to breakdown, and all the plastic elements never breakdown in landfill.

Patient Specific criteria:

- Adults where it is known or anticipated there may be difficulties with maintaining bladder and /or bowel health e.g., learning disabilities, dementia, frailty
- Assessment for containment has been made by a competent health care professional and containment is clinically indicated.
- Patients who score 11-15 on the Patient Pad Requirement Scoring Tool
- Patients who have urinary incontinence only
- Patients or carers who can launder washable products as per manufacturer's instructions.

Tools we developed:
Continence assessment scoring tool.
Assessor prescribing criteria.
Patient information leaflets.

Outcomes:

November 2023:

395 patients requiring disposable products

(18 absorbency level Tena Mini Super)

1683 pads per day =

£92,461.45 product cost plus £18,575.00 delivery cost to the Trust per year. Total cost per patient £281.14

June 2025:

333 Patients now receiving products **84%**

180 using washable underwear **46% Cost to the Trust**

£19,274.76 - £25,699.68 (dependent on 12 – 16 pairs per year)

Total cost per patient £107 - £142.77 per year

62 patients deceased or reassessed **15%**

153 patients using disposable products **39% Cost to the Trust** £42,888.96

Total cost per patient £280.32

If we had not made this change the cost to the Trust would be now
£93,346.56

Savings we have made :
£24,757.92 - £31,182.84

CHALLENGES

PATIENT SAID: *WE DID*

- Patients unwilling to carry wet underwear when not at home
Mix and match use disposables when away from home
- Patients who have limited access to wash facilities or are reliant on others to carry out washing.

Remain on disposables

- Patients who pray 5 x per day and wash before prayers.

Extra washables provided to enable 5 x day changes.

- Patients who feel its "disgusting" or who wash underwear separate
Discussed how they wash there normal underwear and that the pants can go into the laundry with other clothes or separately as they do now

- Patients who have significant nocturnal enuresis or take diuretics.
We offer a disposable for heavy times of urinary loss and washables for the rest of the time.

- Patients who expect the pants to last all day rather than realising they need to change the pants as they would the disposables.

We have a conversation when they order now about washing and usage even though they get written instructions

- Care Homes automatic dispensers for washing machines that use fabric softener.

Negotiate with the care home to see if a wash per week can be done without FS, and then we provide more washables to cover a whole week

But.....

720 pads per day /
262 thousand per
year NOT going to landfill

