



# One SingHealth Nursing, One Uniform



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## Background

Nurses' uniforms have changed significantly in the last 30 years. White uniforms and nursing caps have been replaced by coloured uniforms and scrubs. The current SingHealth nurses' uniform has been in use since September 2007. As the last review of SingHealth nursing uniform designs was conducted 10 years ago, it was appropriate and timely to refresh the designs.

## Why wear uniforms?

First impressions count as they are formed in an instant and how a nurse appears can have a significant impact on how a patient perceive a nurse. A uniform serves as a reflection of how the public identifies the role of the wearer (Bates, 2010). Fogle & Reams (2014) stated that consistency in nursing attire communicates professionalism and allows patients to identify nurses easily.

## Problem – why change?

In 2016, Cluster nursing had concerns that our patients may be confused with the wide variety of uniforms worn by our nurses who move across SingHealth institutions while serving the patients. (e.g. Patient navigators / Advanced Practice Nurses ). Hence, a consensus was reached to have a 'single' uniform to be used by all nurses in the cluster to reflect our identify as One SingHealth Nursing family.

## Methodology

- In Mar 2016, the SingHealth Nursing Uniform Review Committee was formed to design a 'single' uniform to be used by all SingHealth nurses that is easily identifiable by the public, patients and the healthcare family
- Survey was conducted to gather nurses' perception of their uniform, as well as from hospital staff and patients/public – response rate was 4,804

Nurses	Hospital Staff	Patients/Public
2,010 (41.8%)	1,230 (25.6%)	1,564 (32.6%)

### Key Summary

- ✓ **74%** of our Nurses agree to wear the same uniform as One Nursing Family within SingHealth Cluster.
- ✓ **Majority** of the Non-Nursing staff and Public preferred Nurses in White Uniform.
- ✓ More than **75%** of the total survey felt that it is important to differentiate between ranks.

- Feedback from the survey was taken into consideration
- Committee proceeded with the following activities

Jun – ITQ was called to design new uniform

Mar – Approved by SingHealth Senior Management  
 Jul – Launched @ SH Nurses' Day with media coverage  
 Oct – Conducted RFP

Mar 18 – Selected vendor was awarded

2016

2017

2018

## Results

- From current 30 designs to 8 designs of standardized uniform – Working Suit and Formal Wear
- The uniform will be all white, with color trimmings to differentiate ranks and name badge to indicate the institution of the nurses.
  - Maroon for Enrolled Nurses
  - Blue for Staff Nurses
  - Blue/Orange for Nurse Managers & Clinicians
  - Orange for Assistant Directors and above
- The uniforms were designed to meet existing infection prevention guidelines and retain a professional nursing image.
- Both male and female nurses can opt to don the more practical working suit with matching warm jacket for work instead of dress.

### Current



### New



## Conclusion

Effective Jan 2019, the transition will happen. We strongly feel that the standardization of nurses uniform will have a positive impact on the patient experience by promoting a consistent professional image and helping patients to identify the nurses clearly.

### Cost Savings

Reduced number of designs and colours translated to savings of approximately **\$300,000** per year

### References

Bates, C. (2010). Looking closely: Material and visual approaches to the nurse's uniform. *Nursing History Review*, 18, 167-188  
 Fogle, C. & Reams, P. (2014). Taking a uniform approach to nursing attire. *Nursing*, 44(6), 50-54. doi: 10.1097/01.NURSE.0000444535.96822.3b.