

# Questions & Answers

## Professional Image – First Impressions Count Guidelines for VCH Employees and Leaders

### What's happening?

**Professional Image—First Impressions Count** is a set of guidelines to help employees and managers understand and communicate the expectations for a professional image at work. The guidelines were developed using feedback from patients, staff and physicians throughout VCH and are designed to ensure that our image is consistent with the level of trust we ask of our patients, our high level of expertise and the quality of care we provide.

### When is this happening?

- The guidelines are effective **June 1, 2016**.
- Name tag distribution **May-July 2016**.
- Online store for VCH-branded workwear: **Fall 2016**.

### Why do we need these guidelines?

First impressions count and a professional image demonstrates our commitment to providing quality, patient-centred care. These guidelines will help us to be easily identified by patients and to maintain infection control and Work Safe BC standards.

### What's covered?

- The guidelines for **clothing, accessories, nails, hair and footwear** apply to all employees but the application of the guidelines will vary depending on location and role of the employee.
- **Larger more legible name tags** for employees who have in-person contact with patients and families will be provided without charge and are to be worn in addition to (not in place of) photo ID cards.
- Optional **VCH-branded workwear** will be available for purchase by employees at a discount bulk price. The workwear is colour-specific according to discipline and will be of interest to staff who already purchase work wear. Sales to begin Fall 2016.

### Does this mean we all have to dress the same?

Not at all. For example those who currently wear hospital-provided scrubs would continue to do so. Those working in certain community settings would continue to wear clothing appropriate for their client population, within the guidelines. The guidelines are designed to be flexible so that all staff and physicians can maintain a professional image that's appropriate to their role.

### Will our manager order VCH workwear for us?

No. Managers are not involved in the purchase of VCH workwear. Purchase is optional and employees can place orders online themselves (online store available Fall 2016).

# Questions & Answers

## Professional Image – First Impressions Count Guidelines for VCH Employees and Leaders

### What if I work in an office area, does this still apply?

Yes. For those in an office or corporate environment, guidelines for clothing, accessories, and personal hygiene may be most relevant, whereas a magnetic name tag or VCH workwear may not apply.

### What about staff who wear daily scrubs?

Employees who work in areas requiring daily scrubs will continue to wear scrubs for infection control purposes. **For infection control reasons, scrubs are never to be worn off-site.**

### Will everyone need to wear a name tag?

No. Only staff and physicians who have in-person contact with patients, clients or family will be provided name tags. For most staff the tag will include first name and role (e.g. Barbara, Registered Nurse). Physicians and leaders may request tags including last name for improved identification by clients and families.

### Do the name tags replace photo identification (ID) badges?

No. Name tags help patients, staff and visitors to know who is caring for them. Photo ID badges are for security purposes. Name tags are not a substitute for introducing yourself and explaining your role.

### What happens if I don't follow the guidelines?

Current processes for non-performance would apply. Managers are responsible for follow up with individuals in order to achieve compliance. Managers may ask staff to change their clothing or accessories.

### Where can I get the guidelines?

On [VCH Connect](#). Employee Engagement, Professional Image.

### Who do I contact with questions or concerns?

Discuss any concerns with your manager or leader.

Questions can be directed to any member of the Professional Image Working Group: Jody Sydor Jones, Lorraine Blackburn, Jo Clark, Joan Chocholik, Jessie Rodrigue, Wayne Balshin, Lilibeth Ocampo or Leighanne MacKenzie.

Or you can e-mail: [professionalimage@vch.ca](mailto:professionalimage@vch.ca)

