Sample Hospital Bed Bug Policy and Procedure

Subject: Cleaning of a room that has bed bugs

Purpose
To outline basic guidelines for cleaning of room that has patients with bed bugs.

Policy
This policy will describe step by step actions that need to be taken when a room is identified with bed bugs

Procedure

1. Upon realization that a patient has bed bugs, attending hospital personnel will immediately notify the Nursing Supervisor for the patient area.

2. Nursing Supervisor will immediately coordinate patient transfer to a different room. To help to prevent the infestation from expanding to different rooms, it is imperative to carefully follow these exact steps, in this order (if room/unit has more than one patient, these steps must be followed for each patient potentially exposed to the infestation):

   A. Before relocating patient (Remember, during this time of patient transfer, it is vital that nothing be removed from the room.)

      i. All hospital personnel assisting with the patient transfer should tape or rubberband the bottom of their pant legs and put on rubber gloves with top of glove placed around shirt cuffs. This can help to prevent bed bugs from crawling up pants or sleeves.

      ii. Disrobe patient and have them shower immediately in their current room.

      iii. While patient is showering, hospital personnel should stand in the middle of the room. Do not lean up against the walls, doors, or sit on any furniture.
iv. All patient care items (towel, hospital gown, robe, slippers, etc.) must be obtained from a different non-adjoining room. Also, while waiting for the patient to shower, all new/clean items cannot be placed on the floor, back of door, or on any furniture. The items must be held by the hospital personnel until they are used by the patient.

v. After showering and before getting dressed, the patient must be visually inspected to be sure that there are no bed bugs on their body.

vi. Dress the patient and escort patient to a new non-adjoining room. **DO NOT** allow them to take ANY of their personal belongings with them.

B. After relocating patient *(Remember, during this time of room clean up, it is vital that nothing be removed from the room unless it is properly sealed as noted below. This will help prevent relocating bed bugs to other areas of the unit or hospital.)*

i. Upon patient relocation, the room is to be shut down and environmental services should be called immediately.

3. Removal of Contents of Room

A. Remember, all hospital personnel assisting with bed bug clean up must tape or rubberband the bottom of their pant legs and put on rubber gloves with top of glove placed around shirt cuffs. This can help to prevent bed bugs from crawling up pants or sleeves.

B. Before removing items from the room, careful consideration should be made as to what will be incinerated or discarded and what will be kept. Since the cost of removing the bed bugs is great, most items in the room should be incinerated or discarded, even the mattress or furniture. **Also, whether an item will be kept or discarded, you must still follow all instructions below when it comes to sealing the items before they are removed from the room.** This will help prevent relocating bed bugs to other areas of the unit or hospital.

C. All smaller items located in the infested room must be bagged in an airtight, completely sealed clear plastic bag. Items to be discarded or kept should be bagged and sealed separately. The items include the following...

   i. Patient personal items such as clothing, coats, shoes, totes, magazines, books, luggage, stuffed animals, and any other personal belongings

   ii. All bedding and hospital linens (even items that are stored in the closet or night stand) such as pillows, pillowcases, sheets, blankets, towels, hospital gowns, mattress pads, etc.

   iii. Any hospital equipment in that room that could fit into a sealed clear plastic bag such as blood pressure cuffs, bed pans, smoke detectors, emesis basins, wall hangings, lamps, phones, call buttons, TV remotes, etc.
iv. All other items that are stored in the night stand or closet such as phone books, magazines, Bibles, pens, pads of paper, etc.

D. Environmental services personnel should remove the bags from the room. When removing the items, do not bring a utility cart into the infested room. Rather, bring the sealed airtight bags out to a cart waiting in the center of the hall outside the infected room.

E. Once removed, the sealed items should be divided into the following groups…

i. Items to be discarded – Take these items immediately to the incinerator or dispose of in an outside dumpster. If there is a possibility that any items will be taken from the dumpster by others (for instance, homeless people taking blankets or mattresses), the item must be rendered useless in order to prevent the spread of the infestation off site.

ii. Items that can be laundered that must be kept (Caution: Most of these items should be discarded unless absolutely necessary since the steps to kill any bed bugs within these items can be costly and may damage the item anyway which would cause it to be discard in the end.) -- Carefully remove items from the plastic bag and place items in a dryer on medium heat or higher for a minimum of 15 minutes. Please make sure that washer/dryer is filled ONLY to ⅔ capacity. DO NOT OVERLOAD. If desired, items can be washed beforehand, but this is not necessary to obtain control. After transferring items to the washer or dryer, the cart should be inspected for bed bugs and the bags that held the items must be immediately disposed of according to step E. i. above.

iii. Items that cannot be laundered that must be kept (Caution: Most of these items should be discarded unless absolutely necessary since the steps to kill any bed bugs within these items can be costly and may damage the item anyway which would cause it to be discard in the end.) -- These items must be heated or frozen to kill any bed bugs harboring inside the items.

1. Freezing – Furniture, small equipment, and belongings may be frozen to kill eggs and bugs. Beware of bundled or stacked bedding and clothing, as the interior may be sufficiently insulated to prevent effective freezing of all bed bugs and their eggs. Caution, the freezing of some sensitive electronic devices can damage the equipment. Be sure to have any equipment quality testing before putting back into use. Conditions for obtaining control must be either 23°F (-5°C) maintained for at least 5 days or flash frozen for a few minutes -15°F (-26°C). This temperature must be reached at the core of the product for the time listed in order to be effective. The lethal temperature must be reached rapidly in order to be effective – do not overload the freezing system.

2. Heating. Possible methods of heating include: Dryers (for clothes and bedding): see E. ii. above, and steam cleaning (for mattresses, baseboards, etc.)—Refer to step 4. A. below, or building a small
“heat chamber” in which to heat up items within. As with freezing, beware of insulating bugs in bundled bedding or clothing. Conditions for obtaining control must be 120°F (45°C) for a minimum of 2 hours. This temperature must be reached at the core of the product for the time listed in order to be effective. The lethal temperature must be reached rapidly in order to be effective – do not overload the heating system.

F. All larger items that can be removed and will be disposed of, such as mattresses, nightstands, chairs, etc., should be completely enclosed and sealed airtight in clear plastic. After completely sealed, they should be taken immediately to the incinerator or outside dumpster.

4. Cleaning and sanitizing the room

A. Steam clean and sanitize all surfaces, cracks, crevices, and void areas in affected areas with a steamer producing a dry steam at a minimum of 190°F (88°C). This includes all baseboards, hard surfaces, drapes, curtains, bed frames, and any other items still in the room. Focus cleaning in and around the bed frame and headboard, but don’t overlook anything: Bed bugs can be found anywhere and everywhere. Generally, bed bugs tend to seek out dark and hidden places like cracks, crevices and holes, and they tend to prefer textured surfaces like wood, fabric, and paper over smooth surfaces like metal, glass and plastic. They have also been found in light switches and outlets, behind pictures on the wall, smoke detectors, and many more hidden places.

B. Any mopheads used in the clean up must be removed from the mop in the affected room, sealed in an airtight clear plastic bag, and discarded in a dumpster outside after cleaning the affected room.

C. Discard any cleaning materials, sealing them in an airtight clear plastic bag and thrown away in a dumpster outside.

5. Upon completion of cleaning the room, the room must be sealed and left unused until it is inspected by a bed bug scenting canine. A minimum of 2 hours (but less than 3 days) must pass between completion of the sanitation of the room and a bed bug scenting canine inspection. Any items that have been taken out of the room for treatment must be returned to the room to ensure that they do not harbor an infestation. Following an all clear inspection, the room may be re-equipped.

6. Once environmental services has completed the cleaning and inspection process, they will contact the nursing department to let them know the room is ready for new admissions.

7. Please note that failure to follow this policy and procedure guidelines WILL result in less effective treatment of bed bugs.