

# ANSWERING TO A HIGHER CALLING



**Verifying Laundry Processes,  
Quantifying Cleanliness**

Quality Assurance

Best Management Practices

Continuous Improvement

Process and Outcome Measures



## ANSWERING TO A HIGHER CALLING

Laundries earn Hygienically Clean Healthcare certification by:

- Passing inspection that verifies laundry processes
- Passing microbial testing that quantifies textile product cleanliness
- Adopting new procedures to deliver better quality

TRSA's *Standard for Producing Hygienically Clean Reusable Textiles for Use in the Healthcare Industry* has earned the Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN) Seal of Recognition™. The seal communicates that the certification is a premier and recognized resource, dedicated to excellence in patient care.

## QUALITY ASSURANCE

**Extensive inspection process.** Hygienically Clean Healthcare certified laundries maintain a Quality Assurance (QA) manual that documents their complete range of processes. This gives inspectors a focal point upon arrival for evaluating compliance with these numerous procedures. Inspection produces essential evidence that:

- Employees are properly trained
- Managers understand legal requirements
- OSHA-compliant
- Physical plant operates effectively

Certified textile services providers' efforts to establish processes, continuously improve and prepare the QA manual extend across many functions in their organizations including:

- Administration
- Chemical Technical Service
- Customer Service
- Human Resources
- Maintenance
- Plant Operations

The QA manual represents the hub of control measures (Best Management Practices) that minimize the potential for error. Linen rarely plays a role in healthcare-associated infection (HAI). The Centers for Disease Control notes that "hygienically clean laundry carries negligible risk to health-care workers and patients, provided that the clean textiles, fabric, and clothing are not inadvertently contaminated before use."

## BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

**Detailed inspection checklist.** TRSA Hygienically Clean Healthcare inspectors ensure laundries deploy Best Management Practices (BMPs)—processes grounded in regulations and standards such as:

- OSHA 29 CFR 1910.1030—Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens
- OSHA 29 CFR 1910.1200—Hazard Communication Standard
- EPA—Selected EPA-Registered Disinfectants
- CDC—Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control in Healthcare Facilities
- CDC—Guideline for Hand Hygiene In Healthcare Settings
- ANSI/AAMI ST65:2013—Processing of Reusable Surgical Textiles for Use in Healthcare Facilities

Best Management Practices are key to consistent delivery of textiles that meet customers' expectations, serving as standards for systems, policies and procedures. Laundries' compliance with Best Management Practices may require capital investment (equipment upgrades) or procedural changes. The result is greater operational effectiveness in:

### PLANT FACILITIES

- Functional separation of soiled and clean areas
- Equipment operation, maintenance, calibration

### HOUSEKEEPING

- Use, cleaning and care of equipment
- Cleaning work surfaces, stations, carts
- Selection, measurement and proper use of cleaning supplies
- Cleaning schedule

### LAUNDRY PROCESS

- Soiled linen handling
- Washing Procedures
- Drying Procedures
- Transportation
- Delivery Trucks

“Hygienically Clean standards have a very large and positive impact on public health in general because they lower the overall community infectious disease risk burden. TRSA Certification offers a serious marketing advantage versus competitor laundries who have not adopted the Hygienically Clean process.”

— David F. Goldsmith, MSPH, Ph.D,  
Occupational and Environmental  
Epidemiologist, Milken Institute School of  
Public Health, George Washington University,  
Washington, D.C



**Most credible laundry science.** The foremost experts in laundry science drive the credibility and quality of TRSA Best Management Practices. No other organization matches TRSA’s knowledge of the complete textile processing cycle. TRSA created all major specialty procedures developed for U.S. healthcare laundry work, including accreditation. The association is the leading resource for professional development programs for textile services management, improving healthcare laundry practices through efforts such as these publications:

- *Guidelines for Healthcare Linen Service*
- *Healthcare Service Operations Manual*
- *Handling Soiled Linen in the Healthcare Environment* video

“In Healthcare we are inspected by outside agencies on a constant basis. There is a need for this and it keeps us up to date with ongoing changes in our industry. To do business with a group that follows that same standard just makes sense. We should not have to worry about our vendors. They should bring their best foot forward and working with a laundry that is certified Hygienically Clean Healthcare gives us one less thing to worry about. This allows us to spend our resources where we need to.”

– Robert Ayala, Director, Environmental Services Island Hospital, Anacortes, WA

## CERTIFICATION COMPARISON

### How TRSA Hygienically Clean and HLAC Evaluate Laundry Processes

TRSA founded the Healthcare Laundry Accreditation Council (HLAC) in 2005 to introduce laundry certification to the healthcare industry. To take this concept to a higher level, in 2012, TRSA preserved the core of HLAC certification and added components to further verify laundry performance as Hygienically Clean Healthcare.

	Hygienically Clean Healthcare	HLAC
<b>Laundry plant inspection verifies:</b>		
Infrastructure/equipment	x	x
Housekeeping	x	x
Soiled linen handling	x	x
Washing and drying procedures	x	x
Transportation	x	x
Delivery	x	x
<b>Hygienically Clean adds requirements for:</b>		
Routine yeast/mold detection on clean linen	x	
Detection of overall microbial content	x	
Detection of bacteria (USP 62)	x	
Quality assurance	x	



## CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

**Independent thinking.** Objective experts in bacteriology, infection control, nursing and other healthcare professions work with TRSA launderers to ensure the Hygienically Clean Healthcare designation continues to enforce the highest standards for producing clean healthcare textiles. The Hygienically Clean Advisory Board implements improvements.

**High-level collaboration.** As the full-service business association and advocate for linen supply, TRSA is uniquely qualified to steadily improve standard operating procedures (SOPs) for sorting, handling, processing and finishing reusable linens and garments. TRSA monitors and reacts to emerging federal, state and professional standards related to healthcare laundry. To ensure the Hygienically Clean Advisory Board has current, reliable data, certified companies meet as the Hygienically Clean User Group to report updates. In addition, these TRSA committees conduct ongoing research and discussion affecting healthcare laundry BMPs:

- Healthcare
- Safety
- Plant Operations
- Government Relations
- Human Resources

**Quantified improvement.** Certified companies' laundered items' microbial content must fall below prescribed levels in routine testing, continuously quantifying processing success. As conditions change—such as water quality, textile fabric composition and wash chemistry content—laundered product quality must be maintained or improved. Microbial testing proves it.

## PROCESS AND OUTCOME MEASURES

**Observing processes.** TRSA inspectors viewing plants seeking Hygienically Clean certification verify that:

- QA manual is complete
- Separation between soiled and clean product is maintained
- Equipment and infrastructure are clean
- Finishing equipment layout enables clean laundry to avoid contamination
- Procedures comply with all regulatory and voluntary standards

Inspection reveals evidence of a laundry's extensive support for medical facilities' infection prevention initiatives: proof they are fundamentally sound in giving priority to bio-burden concerns in all processes. Inspectors look for clues that the facility and its work are well organized, signaling the QA manual's success:

- No excess water on the floor
- Consistent throughput with minimal delays
- Equipment performs properly (time, temperature, chemistry, agitation)

**Certifying the outcome.** Laundering processes products—the outcome (their finished quality) determines their infection control value. But the keys to producing that quality lie in the

“Patient safety is our facility’s greatest concern. By using a certified laundry service, we can assure the safety and cleanliness of the textiles—that they are free of microbial load and minimize risk of infection to our customers. Hygienically Clean laundry plays a key role in both our hospital’s and nursing home’s exceptionally low rates of healthcare-associated infections.”

– Maria Whitaker, Infection Preventionist  
Cortland (NY) Regional Medical Center

healthcare system, professionals are devising better ways to gauge quality by combining process and outcome measures. In healthcare laundry across the globe, routine microbial testing of clean textile quality has been a mainstay for 30 years. Hygienically Clean Healthcare has introduced this concept to North America.

processing. Thus, measures of both processing and outcomes are needed. ISO 9001:2008 and ISO 14001:2004 emphatically state that certifications of processes alone do not reflect product quality. Only if a product itself is subjected to a certification standard can the product be embellished with a certification conformity mark. Therefore, TRSA requires laundries to routinely test for microbial content to be certified Hygienically Clean Healthcare.

**Recognized national improvement trend.** The U.S. healthcare establishment is beginning to recognize applications of both process and outcome measures.

Throughout the vast range of disciplines that comprise the U.S.



## RIGHT CHOICE OF COMPETING PROVIDERS

**Maximizing your confidence.** Laundries certified Hygienically Clean Healthcare stand out from competitors that cannot achieve the rigorous combination of Quality Assurance, Best Management Practices, continuous improvement, and process and outcome measurement requirements of the certification. It should be a must-have for any laundry that you do business with, validating the facility's:

- Competence
- Consistency
- Credibility
- Strength
- Trustworthiness

Communicate through your textile services RFP or internally that any laundry you'll consider using must be Hygienically Clean Healthcare certified.

“Protecting our employees is essential to our EVS operation. It's a priority in running our department to provide a high quality workplace emphasizing safety and health. The Hygienically Clean standard ensures the management of our contract laundry has the right procedures to do this for their people. That's a good sign they're cleaning the linen properly.”

– Rhonda Caldwell, Manager, Environmental Services, Deaconess Hospital, Oklahoma City, OK



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