

# HOW TO PUT YOUR CARE HOME A CUT ABOVE THE REST



## INTRODUCTION

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As we continue to adjust to the demands of an ageing population, the services and care provided by the UK's care homes are under a growing spotlight. With the challenges of a care home population who may be coping with dementia, and the threat of antibiotic-resistant infections to an already vulnerable community, ensuring a safe and secure environment is paramount.

However, we know that for many care home owners, just providing the minimum standards isn't enough, and many want to go beyond this to ensure the best possible living conditions for their existing customers – and to attract new ones.

## ABOUT THIS GUIDE

*This guide offers advice for home management teams about the regulations affecting laundry facilities; how energy efficiency can create a better environment for residents as well as saving on costs; and how the wider care home environment can actively benefit those living in it and provide them with more comfort.*

## COVERING THE BASICS – WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT INFECTION CONTROL IN THE LAUNDRY

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People involved in running care homes have to manage a huge number of issues and priorities, and keeping up with the knowledge of the latest regulation on laundry adds to the list. These regulations apply directly to hospital and care home environments, and are in place to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

The main regulation all care home managers need to be aware of is from the Department of Health. The Choice Framework for Policy and Procedures 01-04 (CFPP 01-04) covers the decontamination of linen for health and social care.

The person or people with responsibility for the care home's laundry should be fully aware of the rules, with the main components being:



A system being followed which ensures clean and dirty items are fully separated in the laundry room (or that entirely separate areas are used for clean and dirty items)



Washing machines being capable of reaching the disinfection requirements:

- Reaching 71°C for at least three minutes or 65°C for at least ten minutes
- If the material being washed is unable to withstand such high temperatures, then a chemical disinfection process may be adopted (this also needs to comply with CFPP 01-04)



A designated laundry area being provided for disinfection washes, and a process being in place to ensure soiled/fouled linen is kept physically separate throughout the procedure



Control of human movement through the laundry area being in place, and only trained staff having access to the laundry area in order to prevent any unnecessary risk of infection spreading

In addition to this, having the right equipment is particularly important in order to meet the requirements for dealing with waste water that could be infectious. When installing a product which will carry or receive water from the public mains water supply in the UK, it is important that it complies with the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations or Scottish Byelaws (WRAS).

This means that a water fitting should not cause waste, misuse, undue consumption or contamination of the water supply and must be 'of an appropriate quality and standard'.

WRAS Approval is the best way to demonstrate compliance as it is granted directly by representatives of the water suppliers and is therefore accepted by every water supplier in the UK. There are different categories of WRAS approval depending on the business type. In care homes, all machines have to be compliant with WRAS category 5 due to the nature of the materials being washed.

Care homes are high-risk environments and it's hugely important to have a robust and secure process in place to manage laundry. It's not just for residents; having a clear and well-followed process is safer and simpler for staff too.

“ *Making sure our laundry is efficiently done is a top priority because of the infection control and health and safety requirements in care homes. There is a high risk of infection being spread in a care home where there are many people so we need to make sure everything is done reliably and efficiently.* ”

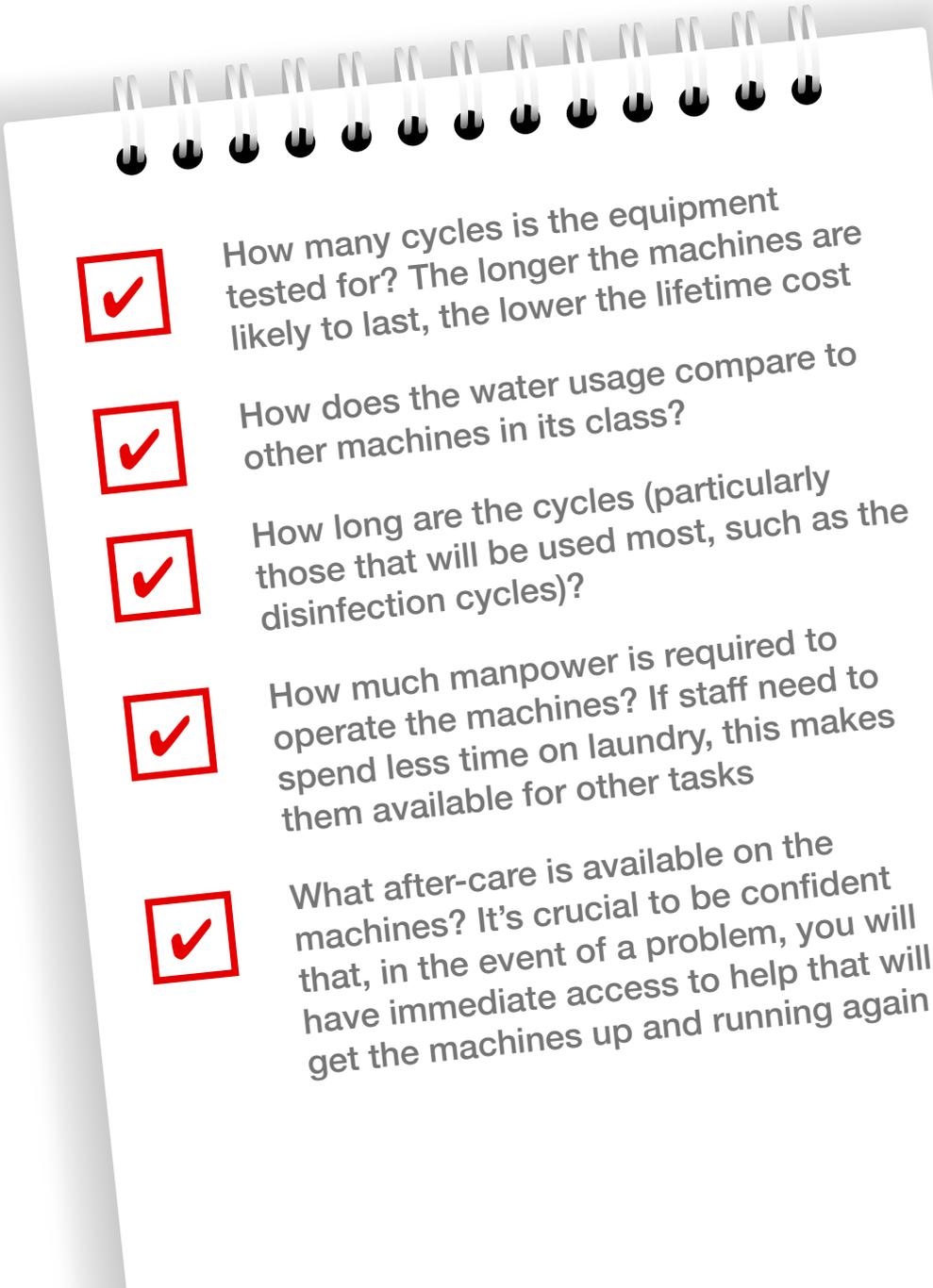
Denise Scott, Manager of the Muir of Ord Care Home

## HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF FOLLOWING REGULATIONS

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While the rules are there for everyone's benefit, in a cost-pressured environment it's understandable to be apprehensive about potentially having to outlay higher costs in order to meet regulations. Fortunately, there are ways to offset these costs; and choosing equipment that is more energy efficient can deliver financial savings as well as having a lower impact on the environment.

When looking at upgrading or replacing laundry equipment, ask the following questions:

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- How many cycles is the equipment tested for? The longer the machines are likely to last, the lower the lifetime cost
  - How does the water usage compare to other machines in its class?
  - How long are the cycles (particularly those that will be used most, such as the disinfection cycles)?
  - How much manpower is required to operate the machines? If staff need to spend less time on laundry, this makes them available for other tasks
  - What after-care is available on the machines? It's crucial to be confident that, in the event of a problem, you will have immediate access to help that will get the machines up and running again

## MAKING ENERGY EFFICIENCY INTO A WAY OF LIFE FOR YOUR CARE HOME

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Being smart with energy usage can, of course, go much further than just laundry. Running an energy-efficient business can reduce the need for investment in larger-scale energy infrastructure, reduce costs and improve the environment for residents.

Large communal buildings are particularly vulnerable to energy price rises, and rigorous building regulations mean that care homes will have to become more energy efficient – increasingly, energy efficiency isn't just a 'nice to have'. However, there are also incentives in place for those who put these measures in place. Here are a few ways that care homes can put themselves ahead of the curve:



**Solar panels:** in care homes with a significant surface area, the installation of solar panels can significantly bring down the cost of energy bills over the long-term – and may attract tax relief too



**Low-energy lighting:** bringing in energy-saving light bulbs and LED lights across the site are a simple way of reducing energy usage on lighting



**Co-generation plants:** co-generation is the simultaneous production of electricity and heat, both of which are used. The central principle of cogeneration is that, in order to maximise the many benefits that arise from it, systems should be based on the heat demand of the building it's being used for. Through the utilisation of the heat, the efficiency of a co-generation plant can reach 90% or more

■ Co-generation therefore offers energy savings ranging between 15-40% when compared against the supply of electricity and heat from conventional power stations and boilers.



**Biomass technology:** this uses plant matter (e.g. recycled wood such as tree stumps and off-cuts) to generate electricity or heat through direct incineration; plant or animal matter can also be converted into bio fuels to save money and energy

## CREATING THE BEST POSSIBLE ENVIRONMENT FOR YOUR RESIDENTS

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Improving the overall quality of life for care home residents can extend into everything from lighting and a comfortable bed to a decorating scheme that reminds them of home. One idea that has shown positive results is ‘retro-decorating’ – providing people suffering from dementia with objects from their past to trigger their memory, and using colours and light to make daily tasks simpler. Providing emotional cues has been proven to make people with dementia feel calmer, thus reducing dependency on anti-psychotic drugs. The reduction of stress and anger within residents frees up time for care home staff.

Home comforts go a long way, and soft, clean linen and clothes can make a real difference to the way that a resident feels.

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*Ensuring the best quality of care is so important to us. It's great that when the residents' sons and daughters come to visit they can see and smell the lovely clean clothes in their parents' wardrobes. Through this our care service and reputation remains strong and our rooms are always in demand.*

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Salim Rhentulla, owner of Seymour House  
in Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire

## FINDING OUT MORE ABOUT MIELE PROFESSIONAL

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Miele Professional is a market leader in the care sector, with a wide range of machines that meet the relevant regulations while delivering high-quality results and cost efficiency. Miele's network of Partners also ensures the best in after-care for a market that so heavily relies on laundry equipment.



Miele Professional's **washer extractors** have thermal disinfection cycles which meet Department of Health CfPP 01-04 guidelines and prevent the spread of infection.

These washers are also tested and approved to WRAS category 5, ensuring that the washing machine is able to prevent backfilling of soiled or contaminated water from the washer into the water mains supply, making them a great choice for care homes.



The **Little Giants** models are a good choice for smaller care homes, due to their small size, ability to manage 6.5kg loads and dump valve drainage systems.



Miele Professional can cater for all sizes of facility, and manufactures washing machines up to 32kg capacity, including a range of **barrier washers** to separate clean and unclean laundry through different rooms.

To find out more, visit  
[www.miele-professional.co.uk/care](http://www.miele-professional.co.uk/care)  
or call 0845 365 6636.

“ *The (Miele Professional) products are energy efficient, and we are confident that we have the support of a fully rounded after sales service. I really can't recommend it enough.* ”

Mark Holmes, Head of Property and Housing  
of the Order of St John's Trust

