

From the Chief Medical Officer, Professor Dame Sally C Davies



Our reference: **CMOP000750216 (PO05/2013)**

23 January 2013

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Mr Malcolm Alexander  
Chair  
NALM

Sent by email: [nalm2008@aol.com](mailto:nalm2008@aol.com)

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads 'Malcolm Alexander'.

Thank you for your email of 11 January 2013 about infection risk and multiple uses of blankets by ambulance services.

By way of background, the Department's extant ambulance infection control guidance states "Under no circumstances should linen (pillowcases, sheets or blankets) be used for more than one patient." This guidance can be found at:

[http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120118164404/hcai.dh.gov.uk/files/2011/03/Document\\_Ambulance-Guidelines\\_Reducing\\_Infection\\_in\\_Prehospital\\_FINAL\\_271%E2%80%A6.pdf](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120118164404/hcai.dh.gov.uk/files/2011/03/Document_Ambulance-Guidelines_Reducing_Infection_in_Prehospital_FINAL_271%E2%80%A6.pdf)

A national reminder on this issue is not planned, as our understanding is that this guidance, including the recommendation on linen, has been implemented successfully. However, from the information you provide, the problem appears to be about variation in practice. It may therefore be helpful and productive if your members could perhaps consider asking for an explanation of local practice, in order to reassure themselves.

You may also wish to know that there is also a range of disposable single use blankets for use in ambulances.

I hope this is helpful.

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads 'Yours ever'.

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads 'Sally C Davies'.

**PROFESSOR DAME SALLY C DAVIES  
CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER  
CHIEF SCIENTIFIC ADVISER**