

## 10. Bathing and Personal Care Guidelines

- (a) Guidelines or protocols will be developed for individuals requiring assistance with bathing and personal care, acknowledging personal preferences, clearly addressing any identified risks and the measures that will be undertaken to minimize those risks, and promoting safe bathing and personal care practices. Issues to be considered include, but are not limited to:

- Any current physical, sensory, motor or behavioral concern that might affect bathing practices, or pre-existing health conditions such as epilepsy, high blood pressure and osteoporosis;
- Level and independence of mobility;
- Communication skills;
- Use of adaptive devices and equipment – grab bars, lifts, shower chairs, etc.;
- Appropriate use of jet tubs and use of only those bath products identified by the jet tub manufacturer as safe for use in a jet tub

- (b) In the absence of a specific personal care protocol, staff can assist the individual to do a basic “head to toe check” and offer assistance as needed.

### Head-to-toe check:

- (i) Hair - in need of cutting or washing?
  - (ii) Eyes - are they red / running?
  - (iii) Ears - in need of cleaning? (clean only the exterior, not the ear canal)
  - (iv) Facial complexion - blemishes, dry or oily skin?
  - (v) Nose - running?
  - (vi) Mouth - bleeding gums, dry lips, teeth in need of cleaning?
  - (vii) Body creases (groin, elbows, knees) - any red areas or rashes?
  - (viii) Toenails / fingernails - in need of trimming?
  - (ix) Feet - shoes fit ok? Any rashes or calouses?
  - (x) Record any observations or concerns, or discuss with the supervisor to determine whether further assistance or assessment is warranted.
- (c) Individuals should be given choice over who assists them with bathing and personal care, wherever possible. Always ask permission before providing assistance with personal care, and follow the individual’s lead as much as possible.
- (d) Staff will exercise discretion when assisting with bathing and personal care. Least intrusive approaches should be used, respecting the person’s privacy and encouraging maximum independence.