Frequently asked questions

Is the water soluble film bio degradable or environmentally friendly?
- Yes, when the solution is exposed to normal water treatment bacteria will break down into harmless components.

What if I use a washer/dryer?
- If you use a combined washer dryer it is advised not to set the dryer function. After the wash cycle has finished, remove the laundry sack and then tumble dry as necessary.

Where can I find more information?
Please contact the Infection Prevention and Control Team at the Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust on 01202 704842.
Introduction
This leaflet provides information for patients and their relatives on the use of patient clothing bags.

During your admission you may have clothing and/or nightwear which requires laundering at home. The patient clothing bag enables you to safely transport any soiled or infected linen for washing at your home. You do not have to handle any of the laundry prior to washing, as you place the entire sack in the machine, therefore eliminating any risk of cross infection and reducing any unpleasant odours.

Why are NHS hospitals unable to wash personal clothing?
The Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust are unable to wash personal clothing for a number of reasons:
- The hospital linen sent to the laundry is washed at high temperatures that are unsuitable for personal clothing as it may cause damage
- Due to the number of patients it is extremely difficult to trace individual items of clothing
- Industrial detergents used for hospital linen may not be compatible with materials used for personal clothing

How do I use the patient clothing bag?
The hospital has supplied a patient clothing bag that is compatible with domestic washing machines. This enables you to take the soiled clothing home and put the unopened bag into your washing machine.

Do not open the patient clothing bag. It has been designed to go straight into the washing machine on its own. Do not add other articles of linen or clothing to the machine.

It is extremely important that you wash your hands with soap and water after handling the patient clothing bag in order to avoid any contamination.

The seam and tie on the bag itself will dissolve at any temperature; however it is advisable to wash at the highest temperature the clothing will allow. Use a biological powder/liquid/tablet if possible.

When the cycle is complete, simply remove the plastic bag and dispose of it in your normal household waste as it is now clean. Tumble dry or thoroughly air-dry the clothing and then iron. Please do not tumble dry the patient clothing bag.