

The SleepKnit™ Bedding System

Summary of Benefits to Healthcare Providers



SleepKnit™ is a high-quality, cost-effective healthcare bed linen system, already widely used across the health and care sectors in the UK, Europe and North America.

SleepKnit™ was developed and is produced by MIP, a global manufacturer, supplier and distributor of reusable healthcare textiles and associated products.

Using a specially constructed, knitted four-way stretch fabric, SleepKnit™ is already used on more than 100,000 hospital and care home beds across the UK.

SleepKnit™ is more comfortable than traditional woven bed linen. It is easier to handle, launder and store as well as being more economic to manage.

Central to the system is the patented SleepKnit™ Smart Sheet, a unique fitted bottom sheet which fits all commonly used mattresses, including dynamic systems.

Advantages for healthcare organisations using SleepKnit™ rather than traditional woven bed linen include:

- Enhanced comfort and improved experience for bed occupants and residents
- Quicker, easier bed making and changing for staff
- Cost savings on laundry
- Reduced environmental impact

This report explains the advantages of using the SleepKnit™ system and the support available to help healthcare organisations maximise the benefits that SleepKnit™ offers.

Benefits for Bed Occupants



Feedback from some 2,000 surveys shows more than 90% of bed occupants prefer Sleep-Knit to traditional woven bed linen.

SleepKnit™ is softer than traditional woven bed linen. The fitted Smart Sheet is far less likely to work loose or crease up under the bed occupant compared to standard sheets.

Positive feedback from bed occupants includes:

“More comfy and better presented compared to the old hospital bedding. Easier to sleep in, pillows are better too.”

“The new style bedding is far, far better.”

“A welcome improvement to patient care.”

“Found the bed extremely comfortable and had a good night’s sleep.”

“ A warm welcome. The old sheets were always full of starch and marked your skin.”

Benefits for Staff



SleepKnit™ is more than 25% lighter than standard linen, making it easier to handle.

Bed-making is quicker, with a specially designed trolley and bag system significantly reducing the amount of time needed to work through a ward. (see Storage and Transportation)

Bedding also stays neater for longer, enhancing the appearance of the ward and freeing up staff time.

Comments from staff on wards where SleepKnit™ is in use include:

“Great system. Job gets done in one third of the time. Bed making much easier. One patient commented that the new system was wonderful.”

“Very enthusiastic about the system. Moving and handling safer and easier. Great patient feedback. Really happy with system.”

“The fitted sheets are good for lateral transfers.”

“The fitted sheets are better for making beds on your own. Also they don't crinkle as much under the patient so less marking is caused.”

“Bed making is done in half the time with these new sheets. Please don't go back to the old ones.”

Environmental Benefits



Reduced weight means more sheets per load of laundry, reducing consumption of energy, water and detergent.

SleepKnit™ is tumble dry, no iron, which significantly reduces the amount of power consumed by laundries - reducing an organisation's environmental impact and driving down costs.

Less than 20% of the cost of running a laundry is replacing linen, with the rest being utility bills, staff wages, etc. SleepKnit™ enables a major reduction in these other costs.

Did you have a saving in your utility costs when you switched to SleepKnit™?

“Yes, we previously operated with two (3 roller) oil heated ironers and after switching to SleepKnit™. We now we have a single (1 roller) steam heated ironer. That, combined with the shorter operating hours, led to a significant drop in our utility bills.”

Laundry Manager (2) - NHS Scotland

Safety and Quality



Hygienically packed at the laundry in colour coded, closed bags, each element of the SleepKnit™ system stays in its bag until it is ready to put onto the bed.

This helps to protect the bed linen from airborne contaminants. The bags also make storage in linen closets easier and reduce the risk of linen becoming soiled if it is dropped or falls onto the floor.

SleepKnit™ Smart Sheets and the rest of the SleepKnit™ bedding system are suitable for use on all mattress types in common use in UK healthcare (with a specially designed sheet for bariatric mattresses) including alternating pressure therapeutic mattresses often used as part of a wider programme of activity aimed at protecting bed occupants from the risk of pressure ulcers.

Laboratory research carried out by Dr Michael Clark at Cardiff University's Wound Healing Research Unit¹ supports the suitability of SleepKnit™ fitted base sheets on standard and alternating pressure mattresses. With manual handling another concern, Smart Sheets allow repositioning of bed occupants without dragging the sheets they are lying on out of position.

Smart Sheets also facilitate the use of pat-slides and slide sheets for lateral transfers of bed occupants from bed to bed or bed to trolley ensuring best practice guidelines are adhered to.

¹Comparison of contact pressures measured upon pressure-redistributing support surfaces with and without sheets (Clark, 2008)

Storage and Transportation

The SleepKnit™ bed range comprises:

- The Smart Sheet;
- Semi fitted top sheet (giving options for beds to be made up as either open or closed);
- Pillowcase; and
- Thermal blanket or Quilt Cover.

All components offer the key advantages of light weight and non-iron. Easy to store and easy to identify in bags which remain closed and protected until the point of bed making. The linen is easily transported on a purpose-built trolley which also includes shelving for transit of folded linen.

SleepKnit™ produces less lint than woven linen, helping to keep the ward environment cleaner and with fewer airborne dust particles in the atmosphere.



Support Offered to Healthcare Organisations



A comprehensive package of support from MIP is available to healthcare organisations before, during and after transition to the SleepKnit™ system, including:

- Bedside demonstrations (pre and post-installation)
- Bed occupant and staff evaluation
- Visits to existing users
- On-site support before, during and after go-live
- Cost benefit analysis
- Site laundry advice/planning
- Financial saving analysis

Frequently Asked Questions



How can MIP be sure bed occupants and residents find SleepKnit™ bedding more comfortable?

More than 2,000 bed occupants in wards where SleepKnit™ bedding is in use have been surveyed by or on behalf of MIP, with more than 90% of those asked expressing a strong preference for SleepKnit™ over traditional woven sheets.

Will the use of SleepKnit™ add to the workload of ward staff?

Feedback received from areas where SleepKnit™ is in use confirms that staff prefer it because it is quicker and easier to make beds, the bed linen stays in place and is tidy for longer. The reduced weight of the products makes linen easier to handle.

If the sheets aren't ironed, won't they be wrinkled when we get them out of the bag and either feel uncomfortable or look untidy?

This is an issue raised on a number of occasions by nursing staff. However, once they see the bedding fitted, they are reassured that it is as neat, if not neater, than conventional bedding.

Is SleepKnit™ linen more expensive than traditional woven sheets?

Because of the reduced laundry and energy costs and other savings (including time spent making and remaking beds), laundry service suppliers will be able to make efficiency savings that should make it easier for them to keep prices stable (cost containment).

Will different sizes of sheet be required for different beds?

The design and four-way stretch of SleepKnit™ means the standard size linen will fit all beds commonly in use throughout UK healthcare, including profiling and active pressure beds plus a specially designed sheet for bariatric mattresses.

For More Information

This report was produced by MIP UK Ltd.

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