

A COMPREHENSIVE
STANDARD
FOR EXCHANGING **PRIVACY**
CURTAINS

OR Sustainability Expert

FIRST
CASE



KAREN GOELST
CEO & FOUNDER OF KLEENEDGE

First Case OR Sustainability Expert™:

A Comprehensive Standard for Exchanging Privacy Curtains

Karen Goelst | CEO & Founder of KleenEdge

To provide a safe environment for surgical patients that are at an increased risk of infection, the “Patient Zone” (the patient’s bed, bed rails, and everything within 36” of the bed), including privacy curtains, must be managed so they do not contribute to cross-transmission of pathogens.

A comprehensive program for curtain exchanges should consider the following questions:

- During outbreaks, should we exchange curtains more frequently?
- Are we changing curtains on Isolation (ISO) Discharge?
- How are we documenting ISO exchanges and are we able to analyze such data?
- Are we able to validate compliance in cases questioned by regulatory agencies?
- How do we ensure that privacy curtains are free of spots and stains and immediately exchanged when they become “visibly soiled”?

Any privacy curtain exchanged for these reasons should be considered contaminated by those responsible for removing them. Staff should be thoroughly trained on disease transmission and preventing cross-transmission of disease from the curtain to the patient, their uniform, or to other surfaces. Managers should document such training and perform periodic competency assessments whether staff are compliant with the established policies.

Staff should wear personal protective equipment protecting them from contact with the curtain and curtains should be bagged while in the room. If a ladder is necessary to exchange the curtains, the ladder must be disinfected prior to removing it from the patient’s room. EVS should always maintain accurate records of each curtain change, documenting that their curtain change policy is being adhered to.

Have more questions for this expert? Contact Karen at kgoelst@KleenEdge.com

OR Sustainability Expert Series™ Biography:

Karen Goelst

Founder & CEO



With a 20-year background in architectural specialties and textiles, Karen Goelst became passionate about solving the issues surrounding privacy curtains following her 15-year-old son's hospital stay with MRSA.

Staying at his bedside she noticed everybody touched the fabric privacy curtain, but the label showed that it hadn't been exchanged for 14 months. Thankfully her son recovered, but this realization started her journey in trying to understand why curtains weren't getting exchanged, when other touchpoints in the room were thoroughly disinfected. Karen founded KleenEdge to ensure this infection risk did not impact other families.

KleenEdge builds its privacy curtain solutions on 4 pillars:

- Protocol software that monitors curtain exchange compliance
- Sustainable cost-saving recyclable curtains
- No-ladder solutions to promote lean workflows and safety
- Patient and staff safety

Launched in 2018, the company received early accolades for its innovative Protocol Compliance Software, receiving AHE's Product Innovation Award, as well as getting patents for the QuickLoad and TeleTrack "no ladder" curtain exchange cubicle track solutions. KleenEdge's solutions have helped many healthcare facilities dramatically reduce operational costs, while having peace of mind knowing that their curtain exchanges are compliant and deliver the highest standard of care for their patient's safety.



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THE OPERATING ROOM PODCAST

