

# **GUIDELINES FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH FACILITIES**

**By**  
**David M. Sine, CSP, OHST**  
**and**  
**James M. Hunt, AIA**

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**National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems**  
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**ELEMENTS OF PERFORMANCE:**

“The organization conducts proactive risk assessments that evaluate the potential adverse impact of buildings, grounds, equipment, occupants, and internal physical systems on the safety and health of patients, staff, and other people coming to the organization’s facilities.”

“The organization uses the risks identified to select and implement procedures and controls to achieve the lowest potential for adverse impact on the safety and health of patients, staff, and other people coming to the organization’s facilities.”

**-- Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations**

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# **GUIDELINES FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH FACILITIES**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This document is intended to address the built environment of the general adult inpatient behavioral healthcare unit. Additional considerations that are *not* addressed here are required for child and adolescent patients, patients with medical care needs, geriatric patients, and some diagnoses such as substance abuse and eating disorders.

**This document is not a replacement for regulatory requirements, but rather augments them to detail practical means of protecting patients and staff.**

### ***NOTE:***

Product information included in this document is intended for illustration of one specific item that is deemed appropriate for use in this type of facility. Comparable products by other manufacturers meeting the same design criteria may be substituted after careful comparison.

## **A WORD FROM THE AUTHORS**

Having spent our careers working to improve patient safety, we welcome the opportunity to share our experiences with you.

What we have learned is that, while a safe environment is critical, no environment of care can be totally safe and free of risk. No built environment – no matter how well designed and constructed – can be relied upon as an absolute preventative measure. Staff awareness of their environment, the latent risks of that environment, and the behavioral characteristics and needs of the patients served in that environment are absolute necessities. We also know that different organizations and different patient populations will require greater or lesser tolerance for risk; an environment for one patient population will not be appropriate for another. Each organization should continually visit and revisit their tolerance for risk and changes in the dynamics of the patient population served.

The resources and vendors included here are based exclusively on our personal experiences in building, surveying, and operating behavioral health facilities. We have highlighted products that we have found to be both safe and to be readily maintained in the behavioral healthcare environment. However, inclusion or exclusion of a product does not indicate endorsement or disapproval. There may be equivalent products available, and all facilities should continuously look to the marketplace to find products that are safer or more cost-effective.

We hope that this document will provide a starting point in your search for resources that can enhance the safety of behavioral healthcare patients.

**David M. Sine, CSP, OHST**  
Vice President  
Occupational Health and Safety  
Tenet HealthSystem, Western Division  
3 Imperial Promenade, Suite 600  
Santa Ana, CA 92707

**James M. Hunt, AIA**  
President  
Facility Services, Inc.  
221 SW 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite A  
Topeka, KS 66611  
jim@facilityserv.net  
www.facilityserv.net

Fall 2003.

# **A WORD FROM NAPHS**

## **THE VALUE OF FOCUSING ON THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ENVIRONMENT**

The National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems (NAPHS) is proud to partner with authors David Sine and Jim Hunt to bring you this unique and valuable resource.

Whether you are involved in designing a new building, renovating space, or maintaining an existing behavioral healthcare program, this document is designed to help you think through the many aspects of the environment that can have a significant impact on patient safety.

In behavioral health care, this is particularly important as many patients are admitted because they are at risk of harming themselves or others. In every aspect of building design and maintenance, it is essential to make determinations about the built environment based on the potential risk to the specific patient populations you serve. This requires a continuous process of review and evaluation. This document is unique in that it gives you a concrete starting point for your internal discussions.

There are no hard and fast answers, and there may on occasion be conflicting state or federal requirements that you will need to discuss with your own attorneys. Some questions to consider:

- Could a patient be hurt by this aspect of the environment? Could he/she use it to harm someone else?
- Can staff easily navigate the environment to get to patients in need of assistance?
- Is it possible to maintain patient privacy in this environment?
- Does the environment convey a hopeful, helpful atmosphere that will contribute to recovery?

NAPHS does not endorse or recommend any specific product, nor does exclusion of a product indicate disapproval. However, we believe that it is important to share ideas that can help you in the process of continuously enhancing patient safety and improving patient care.

### **National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems**

325 Seventh Street, NW, Suite 625

Washington, DC 20004-2802

Phone: 202/393-6700

Web: [www.naphs.org](http://www.naphs.org)

Mark Covall, Executive Director

Kathleen McCann, R.N., D.N.Sc., Director of Clinical Services

# GENERAL COMMENTS

## 1. Space Planning Considerations:

- A. **Behavioral health units and facilities should be designed to appear comfortable, attractive, and as residential in character as possible.** Every effort should be made to avoid an institutional look while still meeting the vast array of applicable codes and regulations and meeting the needs for patient and staff safety.
- B. **Nurse stations should provide the least possible barrier between staff and patients.** HIPPA information privacy regulations make an “open” design increasingly challenging. Patient records must be protected from view of other patients, visitors, and unauthorized staff. Care must also be taken to shield computer monitors and to provide areas for clinical staff to discuss patients without being overheard by other patients or visitors. Provision should be made to accommodate storage of charts and patients’ valuables in appropriately secure areas.
- C. **Gathering areas for patients near the nurse station are encouraged because patients often congregate near there to socialize.** It is far better to plan for this in the original design and to accommodate this behavior. This area should encourage comfortable seating and places for conversation, card or board games and other quiet activities that will not be distractions for staff working in the nursing station. Television sets, CD players, etc. should not be included at these locations.
- D. **Chart rooms and other staff areas should be located so that staff members may have conversations regarding patients and other clinical matters without being overheard by patients or visitors.**
- E. **Medication rooms should be sized to accommodate the number of staff that will be necessary at peak times as well as planned for future (if not current) computer systems.** HVAC systems should have sufficient capacity to accommodate the cooling load of the refrigerator, computer, and the number of people who may be in the room at peak times. The medication room should also have a hand-washing sink. The room should be sized to accommodate storage of the medication cart when not in use without restricting use of the space by staff. (See “*Guidelines for Design and Construction of Hospital and Health Care Facilities; 7.2.B13*)
- F. **When possible, locate service areas such as trash rooms and clean and soiled utility rooms so that they are accessible both from the unit and from a service corridor.** This eliminates the need for environmental staff servicing these rooms to enter the treatment areas of the unit and possibly disturb patient activities. All doors to these rooms must be kept locked at all times.
- G. **Nurse call systems are not required** in behavioral health units.

- H. When possible, **locate breakers to disable patient room electrical outlets** so the breakers can be controlled without entering the patient areas.
- I. **All electrical circuits having receptacles near sources of water** (such as sinks, lavatories, and toilets) **must be protected by Ground Fault Interrupters (GFI).**
- J. When possible, **locate serviceable parts of patient room HVAC systems where they can be serviced without entering the patient rooms.**
- K. **Housekeeping rooms should be large enough to store carts when not in use.** Carts should be lockable. All cleaning materials must be locked inside at all times when the carts are in patient areas or corridors and not attended by staff.
- L. **Smoking areas should be outdoors whenever possible.** These can be in the form of screened-in porches using heavy stainless steel screen fabric similar to that specified in Section 3.H.i. below. If they must be indoors, smoking rooms should have their own heating and air conditioning system sized to exhaust a high ratio of air changes per hour, and the room should always be at negative pressure relative to the rest of the unit. Furniture should be without upholstery. Provision should be made for staff observation without entering the room, and no waste baskets are allowed in these areas.
- M. **At the time of this writing, the applicable standards** [*Guideline for Design and Construction of Hospital and Health Care Facilities*, published by the American Institute of Architects, 2001 edition] **require 100 net usable square feet per private patient room and 80 net usable square feet per patient in semi-private rooms.** All requirements of the *Guidelines...*, *NFPA 101 Life Safety Code (2000 edition)*, Joint Commission for Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations Standards, as well as state and local regulations and building codes must be incorporated into the planning.

## **2. Safety:**

Concern for the safety of patients and staff due to the design of the built environment are not the same in all parts of a behavioral health unit or facility. The level of precautions necessary depends on the staff's knowledge of the patient and the amount of supervision the patient will have while using that part of the facility. The level of concern falls roughly into five categories (with 5 being the highest level of concern):

Level 1. Staff and service areas where patients are not allowed.

Level 2. Corridors, counseling rooms, interview rooms and smoking rooms– where patients are highly supervised and not left alone for periods of time.

Level 3. Lounges and activity rooms – where patients may spend time with minimal supervision.

Level 4. Patient rooms (semi-private and private) and patient toilets– where patients spend a great deal of time alone with minimal or no supervision.

Level 5. Admissions rooms, examination rooms, and seclusion rooms-- where staff interact with newly admitted patients that present potential unknown risks and/or where patients may be in a highly agitated condition. (See Section 6)

## **3. Outdoor Areas:**

Outdoor areas (weather-enclosed courtyards, fenced areas adjacent to the treatment unit, or simply an open campus) are considered to be of great therapeutic benefit. In all cases, careful consideration should be given to exterior landscaping and furniture in the vicinity of patient use buildings. Trees should be located away from buildings to prevent access to building roofs. Fences can also permit, if not encourage, unauthorized access to windows, to roofs, or over walls. Shrubbery should be non-toxic and low-growing. Avoid planting shrubbery close together as it can create visual barriers that patients or unauthorized visitors may hide behind. Landscape or decorative rocks that can be thrown and injure staff or other patients should not be used.

All site furniture should be anchored firmly in place to prevent its being moved to create barricades or stacked to allow climbing over fences, into windows, or onto buildings.

Buildings, walls, or fences that will establish clear boundaries and impede elopement to a degree appropriate to the patient population being served should enclose outdoor recreation areas for patients requiring close observation.

All areas surrounding patient use buildings and areas where staff will be walking or escorting patients at night should be well lighted. Care should be taken that exterior lights do not shine directly into patient room windows. Parking areas for staff and visitors should

be well lighted and reviewed regularly for design features that encourage personal and property security.

All manhole covers, access panels, and area drain grates should be anchored firmly in place to prevent them being removed and used as weapons or allowing patients to enter the underground piping.

**NOTE:** Product information included in this document is intended for illustration of one specific item that is deemed appropriate for use in this type of facility. Comparable products by other manufacturers meeting the same design criteria may be substituted after careful comparison.

# CONSTRUCTION AND MATERIALS CONSIDERATIONS

Each of these levels of concern require increasing attention to the built environment to reduce the potential of the patients being afforded a means of doing harm to themselves or others. These levels are cumulative, and all steps taken for lower levels are also required for a higher level. For example: all steps recommended for Levels 1, 2, and 3 are also recommended for Level 4.

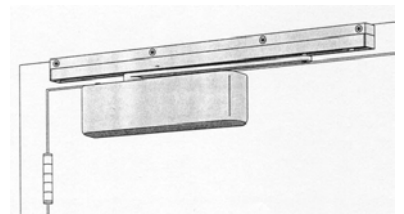
**Level 1. Staff and Service Areas** – Compliance with all applicable codes and regulations.

**Level 2. Corridors, Counseling, and Interview Rooms** - Minimize blind spots in corridors where patients can not be observed from nurse’s station.

- A. **Floors** – Carpet or vinyl tile meeting class A rating. Avoid patterns and color combinations that may appear to “animate” into objects that could contribute to visual misperception by patients.
- B. **Walls** – Lightweight concrete block or abrasion resistant gypsum board<sup>1</sup> [*Georgia Pacific DensArmor Plus Gypsum* or *National Gypsum Hi-Abuse Brand Wallboard*] on metal studs – painted finish is preferred because of easy reparability and relative low cost of renewing or changing colors to keep up with current trends. This helps with minimizing the institutional qualities of the space and aids in providing as residential or home-like ambiance as possible while meeting the institutional requirements.
- C. **Ceiling** – May be lay-in acoustic tile if needed for accessibility to equipment.
- D. **Glass** –All glass should be tempered including exterior windows. If wire glass is required by code, install ¼” polycarbonate type glazing<sup>2</sup> [*GE brand “Lexan” MR10 Sheet with Margard II UV and Abrasion-Resistant Coating*] on side(s) to which patient has access if allowed by authority having jurisdiction. If replacing existing glass is cost prohibitive, application of a security laminate<sup>37</sup> [*ACE Security Laminates; 200 Series*] to existing glass may be an alternative. All mirrors and fire cabinet windows should be made of ¼” polycarbonate<sup>2</sup>.

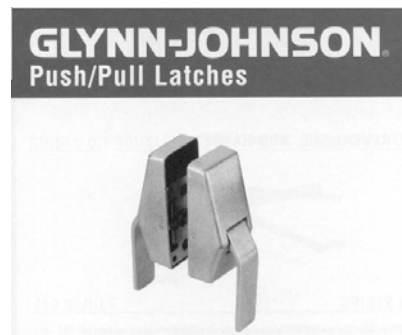
E. **Hardware**

- i. **Hinges** – non-rising-pin type with “hospital tip”<sup>3</sup> [*Stanley brand five Knuckle Full Mortise Hinges FBB179 or FBB191 with Hospital Tips*]
- ii. **Closers** – use parallel arm security rated units<sup>4</sup> [*LCN 4510T Series Security Track Closer*] mount on corridor side of door away from rooms where patients will be alone or in groups.

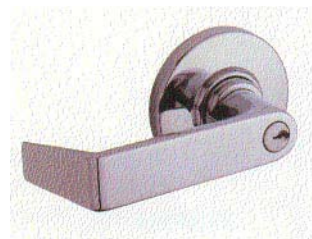


iii. **Arm pulls**– mount upside down to reduce opportunities for hanging

iv. **Push/pull latches**<sup>5</sup> – [Glynn-Johnson; HL6 Push/Pull Latch] may be used for patient room/corridor doors and other locations. When installed with handles pointing down as shown, these may provide less risk than standard knobs or levers. To accomplish locking of doors, a separate dead-latch<sup>6</sup> [Schlage; B250PD Nightlatch] with key operation on corridor side and a thumb-turn on room side. This thumb-turn must be modified so that it will unlock the door, but not lock the door. This is to prevent patients from going into a room and locking themselves in the room.



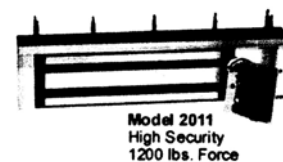
v. **Knobs and levers** –This type of hardware should be very carefully evaluated for risk to the the specific patient population(s) to be served. All doors from corridors must have a lockset or deadbolt of type appropriate to space being served (see following sections). Counseling rooms and interview rooms should have a D70PD “classroom” type lockset<sup>7</sup> [Schlage; D Series Commercial Locksets] which requires a key to lock or unlock the outer lever, but the inside lever is always free.



vi. **Entrance doors** – Provide intercom (or telephone) and/or pushbutton type lock<sup>8</sup> [ILCO Unican Corp. Mechanical Pushbutton Locks, 1000 Series] at all doors that allow access to the unit by staff and/or visitors. The integrity of the pushbutton code must be carefully protected.

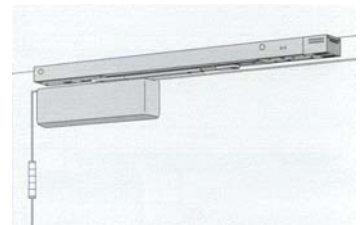
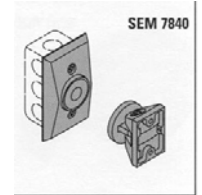


vii. **All exit doors** (including stairway doors) may be locked at all times. Exit doors may be locked with magnetic locks<sup>9</sup> [Dynamalock Corp. series 2011 Full Size Series] that are connected to fire alarm system to release (may be time delayed) when alarm is activated where deemed appropriate for patient population. This requirement should be verified with authority



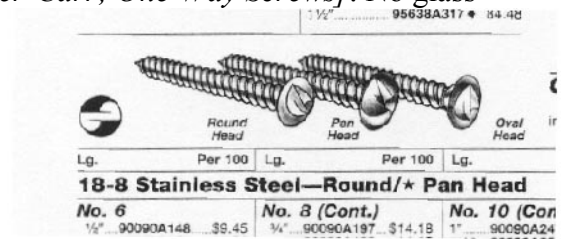
having jurisdiction at location of unit. When extraordinary circumstances exist, a vertical magnetic-jam strip with at least two magnetic-hold devices (1100 lb holding force) should be installed. To provide additional strength, the door may also be equipped with a continuous heavy-duty door hinge (i.e. roton hinge).

- viii. **All doors** on the unit that are required by applicable codes and regulations to have a closer, but need to be open to provide observation of patients by staff shall be provided with approved device. If the door has a standard closer, provide an accessory magnetic hold-open device<sup>10</sup> [LCN SEM7800 Series]. If a new closer is being provided, it is recommended to use a closer with a built-in closing device<sup>11</sup> [LCN Fire/Life Safety Series Sentronic closer] that will allow the door to close automatically when fire alarm is activated.



- ix. **All fire alarm pull stations and all fire extinguisher cabinets should be locked.** All staff on duty must carry keys for these at all times. Key should be provided with a red plastic ring or other means of providing quick identification.

- F. **Light fixtures** – If located at a height or location that is not easily accessible to patients, these may be normal fixtures and lamps as long as staff observation from nursing station is good. Where they are within easy reach of patients, they must be tamper-resistant type or have lenses and covers firmly secured with tamper-resistant screws<sup>12</sup> [McMaster-Carr; One-Way Screws]. No glass components should be used in any fixture. Use of table or desk lamps is strongly discouraged, but if used must be firmly attached to the surface on which they sit. Incandescent light bulbs accessible to patients must always be “shatter-resistant” type<sup>13</sup> [GE Cov-R-Guard; Shatter Resistant; Teflon Coated]. Fluorescent tubes should never be accessible to patients.

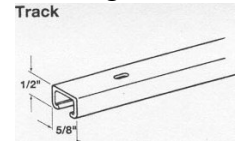


- G. **Fire sprinklers – institutional heads<sup>14</sup>** [Reliable Automatic Sprinkler Company, Inc.; Model ZX-QR-INST] which will break-away under 50-pound load dropped from one inch.



H. **Window covering hardware** – All curtain tracks<sup>15</sup> [*Kirsch Series 9046 track w/92122 Slides and 92111 sew on pleats*] must be flush mounted tight to the ceiling or soffit and must have no cords or chains.

Velcro can also be used in lieu of curtain tracks. Mini-blinds should never be used.



I. **Miscellaneous** –

- i. No plastic trash can liners should be allowed in any space accessible to the patient. Breathable paper liners<sup>44</sup> [*Wisconsin Converting; Sani Liner*] should be provided.
- ii. Telephones located in corridors or common spaces should be wall mounted, have a shielded cord of minimal length, and be equipped with an on/off switch that can be controlled by staff.

J. **Furniture** –

- i. Should be easily cleaned, and should be very sturdy and as heavy as possible to minimize likelihood of patients throwing chairs, tables, etc.
- ii. Provide lockable storage cabinets and drawers and the means to lock phones and computers away from patients.
- iii. All upholstery and foam used in furniture should have flame spread ratings that comply with the requirements of NFPA 101 Section 10.3.

K. **All pictures and art work** mounted on walls should have polycarbonate<sup>2</sup> type glazing and the frames should be screwed to the walls with tamper-resistant screws<sup>12</sup>.

### **Level 3. Lounges and Activity Rooms**

A. **Floors** - Use tile where wet or potentially messy activities will be conducted. Carpet should have solution-dyed yarn with non-moisture absorbing backing<sup>16</sup> [*Lees Tenure Broadloom; Product Number L3106*].

B. **Walls** - Same as for corridors in #2 above.

C. **Ceiling** – Prefer non-accessible solid gypsum board ceiling. If more sound attenuation is desired, apply 1'x1' acoustic tile to the gypsum board with adhesive.

D. **Glass** - Same as for corridors in #2 above.

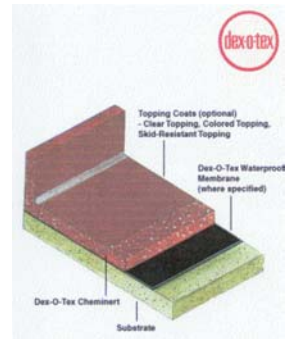
- E. **Hardware** - Same as for counseling and interview rooms in #2 above.
- F. **Light fixtures** - Same as for corridors in #2 above.
- G. **Fire sprinklers** – Institutional type – Same as for corridors in #2 above.
- H. **HVAC grilles and equipment** – Only grilles with small perforations<sup>17</sup> [*Carnes; Stamped, Perforated Diffuser; see catalog D-22*] shall be used in new construction.
  - i. If other types exist and must remain, cover with heavy gauge stainless steel screen fabric<sup>18</sup> [*McMaster-Carr; Type 304 Stainless Steel, Standard Grade Woven Wire Cloth*]
  - ii. If individual fan/coil type units exist and must remain, secure all access panels, grilles and controls with tamper-resistant screws<sup>12</sup>.
- I. **Window covering hardware** – Same as for counseling and interview rooms in #2 above.
- J. **Furniture** – All furniture requirements listed for counseling and interview rooms in Level #2 above apply to this level also.
- K. **Kitchen appliances**
  - i. All cooking appliances (ranges, microwaves, coffee makers, etc.) should have key operated lock-out switches<sup>19</sup> [*Hubbell Locking Type Switch #5Z724*] to disable the appliance.
  - ii. All garbage disposal units should have a key operated lock-out switch<sup>19</sup> to disable the device.
  - iii. GFI-protected receptacles must be provided near all sources of water including sinks.
- L. **Miscellaneous**
  - i. All electrical device (switches, outlets, etc.) cover plates must be attached with tamper-resistant screws<sup>12</sup>. Electrical cover plates for switches and receptacles should be made of polycarbonate materials and secured with tamper-resistant screws.
  - ii. All Miscellaneous requirements listed for counseling and interview rooms in Level #2 above apply to this level also.
  - iii. **Television** – TV sets should *not* be mounted on walls using brackets because of the risk presented to patients. All cords and



cables should be as short as possible. Consider built-in TV or media centers. Consider installing an isolation switch that staff can control that will secure the power to the TV set.

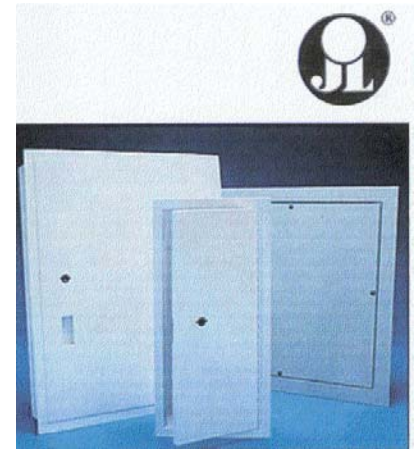
## Level 4a. Patient Rooms

- A. **Floors** – Same as lounges and activity rooms in #3 above. If some of patient population have problem with urinating on the floor, provide some rooms with seamless epoxy flooring<sup>20</sup> [*Dex-O-Tex Cheminert “K” Flooring*] with integral cove base or sheet vinyl flooring with integral cove base.



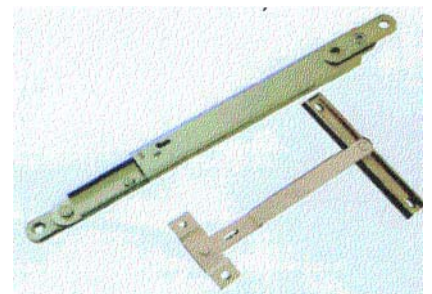
- B. **Walls** – Impact resistant gypsum board<sup>21</sup> [*National Gypsum Hi-Impact Brand Fire Shield Wallboard*] on metal studs – paint finish preferred.

- C. **Ceiling** - Non-accessible solid gypsum board ceiling - paint. Provide key lockable access panels<sup>22</sup> [*J. L. Industries, Inc. Standard SP Security Panel with mortise prep.*] at all locations where access is required.



### D. Glass

- i. **Exterior windows** – 1” insulated glass panels with both layers ¼” tempered glass. Comply with all applicable codes and regulations for operable sash. Fixed windows or units equipped with sash control devices<sup>23</sup> [*Truth Hardware; Limit Device*] that limit amount of opening and can be released using a key to full opening for evacuation purposes are preferred. If replacing the windows presents a prohibitive cost in remodeling work, provision of a security screen with a very sturdy steel frame designed to resist deflection with multiple key locks and equipped with heavy gage stainless steel screen fabric may be acceptable.



- ii. **Mirrors** – **polycarbonate**<sup>2</sup> or polished metal type only. Both of these provide some distortion but provide a higher level of safety than any form of glass. If polished metal mirrors are used, great care must be taken with their attachment so the patient cannot remove them and have a weapon to use on themselves or others.

- iii. View windows to corridors in doors or sidelights – Use polycarbonate<sup>2</sup> (if possible) if wire glass is required by codes, request permission from the authority having jurisdiction to install a layer of polycarbonate<sup>2</sup> on each side of the wire glass. (Wire glass can be broken and yield shards of glass that can be used as weapons.)

E. **Hardware** – Same as for counseling and interview rooms in #2 above.

F. **Light fixtures** – Same as in #2 above except that all light fixture lenses should be secured with tamper-resistant screws<sup>12</sup> to prevent lens from being removed and fixture being opened to prevent the patient from having access to the bulb. No glass components should be used in any fixture, and lamps are discouraged (or should be anchored in place).

G. **Fire sprinklers** – Institutional type – Same as for corridors in #2 above.

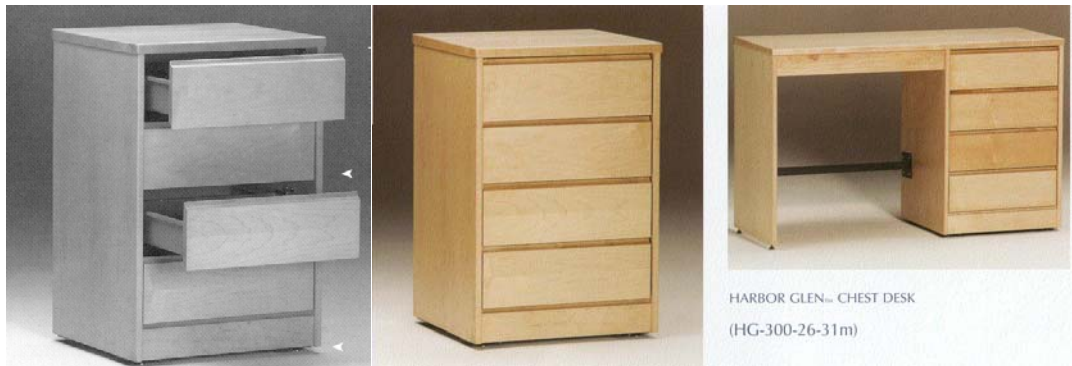
H. **HVAC grilles and equipment** –

- i. Same as for lounges and activity rooms in #3 above.
- ii. In new construction or major remodeling, locate individual room HVAC equipment (such as fan/coil units) adjacent to corridor or in other location (such as an interstitial space) where they can be serviced without entering the patient’s room.

I. **Window covering hardware** – Same as for counseling and interview rooms in #2 above.

J. **Furniture** -

- i. **Furniture** – Sturdy wood furniture<sup>24</sup> [*Hill-Rom, Harbor Glen*

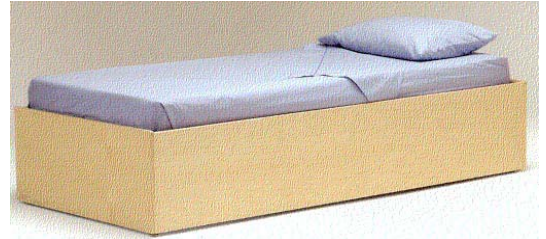


*Series*] should be bolted to the floor or walls whenever possible. Care must be taken to assure that the furniture will withstand abuse, will not provide opportunities for hiding contraband, and will resist being dissembled to provide the patients with weapons. Cube-style storage may be appropriate for some patient

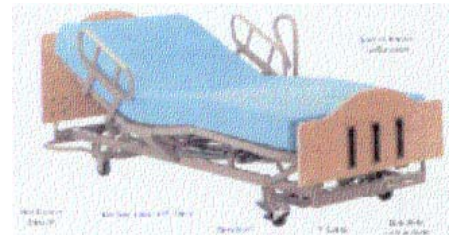
populations. Ideally only the desk chair shall be moveable. Doors and drawers should be lockable, as appropriate, with a key lock. All upholstery and foam used in furniture and mattresses should have flame spread ratings that comply with the requirements of NFPA 101 Life Safety Code, Section 10.3.

ii. **Bed –**

- a. Non-adjustable beds without wire springs are preferred. The necessity and frequency of the use of restraints should be considered when selecting beds.



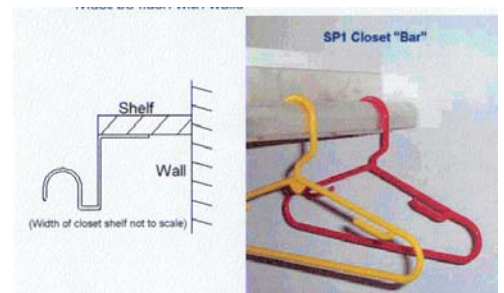
- b. If medical necessity is present, manual hospital beds<sup>25</sup> [*Hill-Rom, Resident Upgradeable LTC Bed*] are preferred.



If existing electric beds are to be used because of budget constraints, provide key lockout switches on beds so that only staff can operate the beds. All electrical cords should be secured and shortened.

- c. If electrically operable beds are needed to reduce risk of staff injuries (especially on geriatric units), use only beds that require a constant pressure on a switch located on the bed rail (not a remote control device or paddle that can be placed on the floor). Key lock-out switch preferred<sup>17</sup>.

- iii. **Wardrobe/closet -** The “clothes pole” must not allow something to be tied around it. This is accomplished by using a “J” shaped configuration<sup>26</sup> [*Odd Ball Industries; SP1 Closet “Bar”*].



**K. Miscellaneous –**

- i. Strongly recommend that **door to corridor** swing into corridor to prevent patients from barricading themselves in room.
- ii. **Pull cords** on nurse call and/or emergency call switches (where required or provided) shall be no longer than 12” and as lightweight as possible.
- iii. All Miscellaneous requirements listed for lounges and activity rooms in Level #4 above apply to this level also.
- iv. In new construction, or major remodeling, provide **dedicated circuit for all electrical outlets in each patient room and bath**. This will allow power to the outlets in a specific room to be turned off if necessary for patient’s safety.
- v. **Coat hangers** – Wire coat hangers should be prohibited. Plastic hangers generally present less risk.
- vi. **Curtain cubicle tracks** that include runners should be prohibited because of the risk to patients.
- vii. **Telephone** – If desired, cordless phones may be provided to allow the patient to check out a phone for private conversations when appropriate. Phones should not be left in patient rooms permanently because they can be used as weapons.
- viii. **Television sets** - Should not be provided in patient rooms to encourage patients to use activity areas with other patients and provide easier supervision. If they are provided, limit the length of cord and cable to the absolute minimum. TV sets should not be mounted on wall brackets because of the risk to patients. Same as lounges and activity rooms in #3 above.
- ix. **Medical gas outlets** – These are not normally required for behavioral health units. If there is medical necessity or the outlets are a pre-existing condition in remodeling projects, they should be covered with panels attached with tamper-resistant screws<sup>12</sup>. These should be removed only for medical necessity of the current patient and replaced when that patient is discharged or moved. Special care must be taken in semi-private rooms to assure that access to the medical gasses does not present a safety risk to the other patient.
- x. **Trash cans and liners** – Trash cans and liners requirements listed for counseling and interview rooms in Level #2 above apply to this

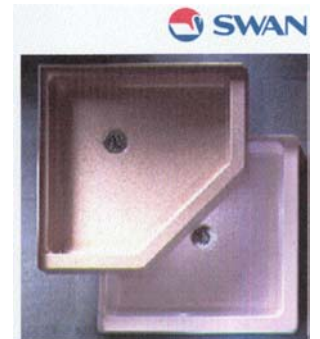
level also. In choosing trash cans and liners, the potential for patient risk should always be assessed. Plastic liners should be prohibited because of their potential risk. A substitute liner made of paper<sup>44</sup> may be used.

- xi. “**Baseboards**” of any kind that are applied to the surface of the wall (vinyl, rubber, wood, etc.) intended to cover the joint between the wall and floor are strongly discouraged. They become prime targets for patient tampering and can be used to conceal contraband. Seamless epoxy flooring with an integral cove base is an exception to this, as long as there is no metal edge strip on the top of the base.

## Level 4b. Patient Toilets

A. **Floors** – Use one of the following depending on the acuity of patient population:

- i. Seamless epoxy flooring<sup>20</sup> with integral cove base including shower. Do not use metal strip at top of base as this can be removed by patients and used as a weapon.
- ii. Sheet vinyl flooring<sup>27</sup> [*Armstrong World Industries, Inc. Commercial Flooring, vinyl, homogeneous*] with integral cove base in room and ceramic tile floor in shower.
- iii. Vinyl tile (12”x12”) floor<sup>28</sup> [*Armstrong World Industries, Inc. Commercial Flooring, vinyl composition tile*] with top-set base and pre-cast artificial stone shower floor<sup>29</sup> [*The Swan Corporation, Swanstone Solid Surface Shower Floors*] (Fiberglass shower stalls and floors are generally not durable enough.)

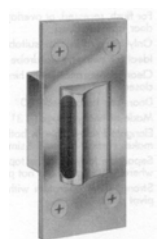


B. **Walls** - Use one of the following depending on acuity of patient population and budget.

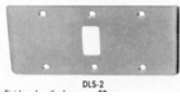
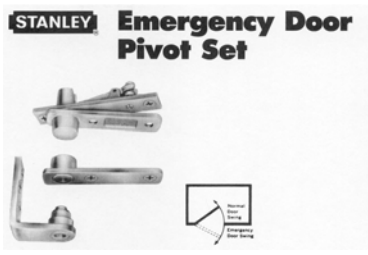
- i. Avonite<sup>30</sup> [*Avonite Solid Surface Wall Panels*]
- ii. Ceramic tile
- iii. Gypsum board with epoxy paint and ceramic tile in shower

C. **Ceiling** – Gypsum board with epoxy paint

D. **Glass** – Mirrors, same as patient rooms in #4 above.



E. **Hardware -**


- i. Same as for counseling and interview rooms in #2 above. If using the Schlage D series locksets<sup>7</sup>, use D44S Hospital privacy set as well as the Schlage Nightlatch<sup>6</sup> so patient can be locked out of room.
- ii. Door frame should have no stop.
- iii. Provide emergency door stop<sup>31</sup> [Stanley; *ES-1 Emergency door Stop*] to allow door to be opened out in the event that a patient collapses or barricades himself or herself in the room (only necessary if door normally swings into toilet room). 
- iv. Double Lipped Strike<sup>32</sup> [Stanley; *DLS-2*] in conjunction with iii above. 
- v. Hinges shall be double-acting pivot hinges<sup>33</sup> [Stanley; *DAP-3 Center Hung Door Pivot Set*] in conjunction with iii above.

F. **Light fixtures** – Same as patient rooms in #4 above except that fixtures inside showers shall be water resistant type. No glass components should be used in any fixture.

G. **Fire sprinklers – institutional type** – Same as for corridors in #2 above.

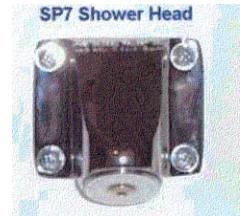
H. **HVAC grilles and equipment** – Same as activity rooms and lounges in #3 above.

I. **Miscellaneous**

- i. **Medicine cabinets** – should not be provided because of difficulty in observing potentially dangerous items that may be placed in them.
- ii. Evaluate the risk of using **robe hooks**. If you require them, they should be the break-away type<sup>34</sup> [Odd Ball Industries; *SP6 Clothes/Towel Hook*] 
- iii. **Towel bars** should not be used. Provide break-away hooks<sup>34</sup> for towels.
- iv. **Grab bars** for toilets and showers should be

removable and installed only when patient has medical necessity. Grab bars should be removed when the patient with medical necessity is discharged or moved to another room. Special care should be taken in semi-private rooms to assure that access to the grab bars does not present a safety risk to the other patient.

- v. **Shower curtain rods** should be same as curtain rods.<sup>15</sup>
- vi. **Shower curtain material** should be made of cloth treated with waterproofing. No plastic shower curtains should be allowed due to risk to patients.
- vii. **Pull cords** on nurse call switches (where required or provided) should be no longer than 12” and as lightweight as possible.
- viii. All **lavatory waste and supply piping** must be enclosed and should not accessible to patients.
- ix. **Soap dishes** should not have handles.
- x. **Flush valves** should be mounted no more than 6” above top of fixture.
- xi. Single lever mixing valves for **shower controls** are preferred.
- xii. Provide **thermostatically limited hot water**.
- xiii. **Shower heads** should be institutional type <sup>35</sup> [Odd Ball Industries; SP7 Shower Head with Quick Disconnect Hand Held Shower].
- xiv. Provide ground fault interrupter (GFI) type electrical circuit breakers for all receptacles near sources of water such as lavatories, toilets, and showers.
- xv. “**Baseboards**” same as patient rooms in #4 above, except that coved ceramic tile base is acceptable.



**Level 5a. Admissions** (especially emergency admissions which frequently occur at night and on weekends). A separate room that has direct access from both outside and inside the unit should be considered for this purpose. This allows for the patient to be brought directly into the admissions area without entering the unit directly. At admission, unit staff members know very little about the new patient and his or her trigger points. A separate room avoids disrupting either the unit or the patient, due to the agitation of either. This room should be pleasant and welcoming, but should be minimally furnished with a

minimum of loose pieces of furniture and large enough to allow for several staff to physically manage the patient if necessary. If possible, the admitting staff member should not be in the room alone with the patient. After the admitting process is complete the patient can be taken directly onto the unit through the door provided.

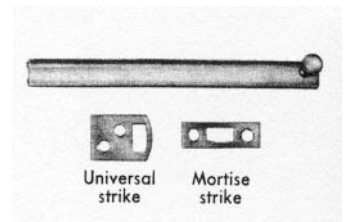
- A. **Floors** - Same as activity rooms and lounges in #3 above.
- B. **Walls** - Same as patient rooms in #4 above.
- C. **Ceiling** - Same as patient rooms in #4 above.
- D. **Glass** –
  - i. Same as corridors in #2 above.
  - ii. Provide small (12”x12” or 4”x24”) view window in door to patient unit.
- E. **Hardware** - Same as corridor in #2 above. Use a D66PD “storeroom” type lockset<sup>7</sup> which requires a key to lock or unlock both levers.
- F. **Light fixtures** - Same as corridor in #2 above.
- G. **Fire sprinklers – institutional type** – Same as corridor in #2 above.
- H. **Window covering hardware** – Same as corridor in #2 above.
- I. **Furniture** –
  - i. This room should have a built-in desk or table that is firmly attached to the floor or walls and contain a lockable file drawer for forms and a lockable box drawer for pens, pencils, staplers, etc. All loose items should be kept in drawers and out of sight.
  - ii. The computer, printer, and telephone should be located so they are not easily reached by the patient.
- J. **Miscellaneous** -
  - i. All Miscellaneous requirements listed for corridors in Level #2 above apply to this level also.
  - ii. An emergency call button should be provided so the staff may summon additional staff if necessary.
  - iii. “Baseboards” same as patient rooms in #4 above.

**Level 5b. Seclusion Rooms** – should be no less than 7 feet wide and no greater than 11 feet long and designed to minimize blind spots where patients cannot be observed by staff without entering the room. The distance of the seclusion room from the nurses

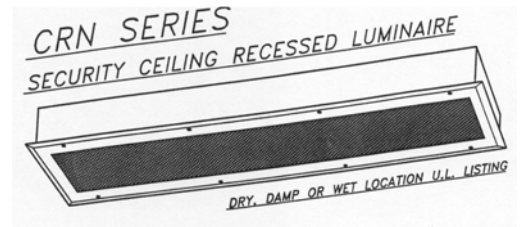
station needs to be considered. The goal is to avoid excessive distance so that staff can be readily available as needed. The door should open directly into a vestibule to separate these activities from the other patients as well as provide access to a patient toilet to be used by these patients.

- A. **Floor** – Continuous sheet vinyl with foam backing and heat welded seams<sup>36</sup> [Lonseal, Inc. LonFloor plain, smooth].
- B. **Walls** – Impact resistant gypsum board on 20 gauge metal studs at 16” on center with painted finish.
- C. **Ceiling** – Gypsum board, painted – 9’-0” minimum height
- D. **Glass** – All glazing exposed to patients should be polycarbonate<sup>2</sup>. Care must be taken on the size of the individual pieces and the amount of recess in mounting frames that an impact to the center of the piece will not cause it to flex to the extent that it comes out of the frame. If exterior windows exist in seclusion rooms, the glazing should be replaced with polycarbonate whenever possible. If replacement is not feasible, either security laminate<sup>37</sup> or polycarbonate<sup>2</sup> may be applied to cover the glass and keep the patient from having access to broken glass.
- E. **Doors** – Commercial grade steel doors and frames hinged to open out of room with a polycarbonate<sup>2</sup> view window not to exceed 100 square inches.

- F. **Hardware** – No exposed hardware in the room except for a flush pull on door<sup>38</sup> [Stanley Hardware cast, flush door pulls]. Vestibule side shall have three Surface Bolts<sup>39</sup> [Stanley Hardware CD4060 solid brass 6-inch long surface bolts].

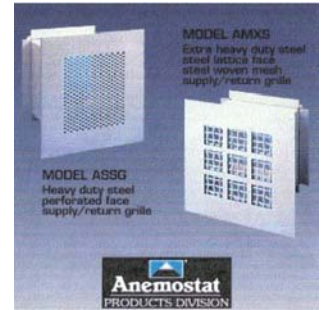


- G. **Light fixtures** – Fully recessed, moisture resistant, vandal resistant fixtures<sup>40</sup> [The L. C. Doane Company; CRN Series with polycarbonate external lens TP door fasteners] in ceiling.



- H. **Fire sprinklers – institutional type** – Same as for corridors in #2 above.

I. **HVAC grilles** – Fully recessed vandal resistant grilles with small perforations<sup>41</sup>  
*[Anemostat Products Model ASSG – Supply/Return Grille, Heavy Duty Steel Perforated Face]*



J. **Thermostats** should be digital type mounted on wall in vestibule with sensors in return air ducts serving the room.

K. **Miscellaneous** –

i. No electrical outlets, switches, thermostats, or similar devices are permitted inside these rooms.

ii. Toilets used by these patients in new construction should be floor mounted, back outlet<sup>42</sup>  
*[Eljer; Signature Series 111-2163 Back Outlet Bowls]* and should have full recessed flush valves<sup>43</sup> *[Sloan Valve Company Regal 153]*.



iii. “Baseboards” same as patient rooms in #4 above.

iv. Install a 90-degree parabolic mirror made of polycarbonate (Lexan) in the upper corner of the room and opposite the seclusion room door. Make sure the mirror can be seen when viewing it from the window in the door. By installing this mirror, you are now providing staff with a 360-degree view of the room prior to opening the door. Care shall be taken to assure that the attachment is secure so the patient will not be able to remove it and have a weapon.

L. **Window covering hardware** – No window covering material or hardware should be accessible to the patient. An option would be electronically controlled blinds or shades behind polycarbonate<sup>2</sup>. If chosen, controls should be by electric switches located outside the room.

## SUMMARY

Thoughtful consideration of these design elements and materials by design professionals and healthcare professionals can result in a very aesthetically pleasing environment, which will enhance the treatment process and help maximize safety for all patients, staff, and visitors.

## Appendix

1. Abrasion resistant wallboard  
***Georgia-Pacific DensArmor™ Abuse Guard Gypsum Panels***  
Georgia-Pacific Corporation  
133 Peachtree Street, N.E.  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
1-800-225-6119  
<http://www.gp.com/gypsum/abuseguard/index.html>  
  
***National Gypsum Hi-Abuse Brand Wallboard***  
National Gypsum Company  
2001 Rexford Road  
Charlotte, NC 28211  
1-800-628-4662  
<http://www.nationalgypsum.com>
2. Polycarbonate sheet glazing  
***GE brand “Lexan” MR10 Sheet with Margard II UV and Abrasion-Resistant Coating***  
GE Structured Products, GE Plastics  
One Plastics Avenue  
Pittsfield, MA 01201  
1-800-451-3147  
<http://www.structuredproducts.ge.com>
3. Hospital tip hinges  
***Stanley brand five Knuckle Full Mortise Hinges FBB179 or FBB191 with Hospital Tips***  
Stanley Hardware  
480 Myrtle Street  
New Britain, CT 06053  
1-800-337-4393  
<http://www.stanleyworks.com>
4. Security arm door closers  
***LCN 4510T Series Security Track Closer***  
Ingersoll-Rand  
Architectural Hardware  
LCN Division  
P.O. Box 100  
121 West Railroad Avenue  
Princeton, IL. 61356-0100  
1-815-875-3111  
<http://www.lcnclosers.com>

5. Push/pull latches  
***Glynn-Johnson; HL6 Push/Pull Latches***  
Glynn-Johnson  
2720 Toby Drive  
Indianapolis, IN 46219  
1-800-525-0336  
<http://www.glynn-johnson.com>
  
6. Dead-latch  
***Schlage; B250PD Nightlatch***  
Schlage Lock Co.  
2315 Briargate Parkway  
Colorado Springs, CO. 80920  
1-800-847-1864  
<http://www.schlage.com>
  
7. Locksets  
***Schlage D Series Commercial Locksets***  
Schlage Lock Co.  
2315 Briargate Parkway  
Colorado Springs, CO. 80920  
1-800-847-1864  
<http://www.schlage.com>
  
8. Pushbutton door lock  
***ILCO Unican Corp. Mechanical Pushbutton Locks, 1000 Series***  
ILCO Unican Corporation  
Unican Lock Division  
2941 Indiana Avenue  
Winston Salem, NC 27105  
1-800-849-8324  
<http://www.ilcounican.com>
  
9. Electromagnetic lock  
***Dynalock Corp. series 2011 Full Size Series***  
DynaLock Corporation  
705 Emmett Street  
P.O. Box 9470  
Forestville, CT 06011-9470  
1-877-DYNALOCK  
<http://www.dynalock.com>

10. Magnetic hold open device

***LCN SEM7800 Series***

Ingersoll-Rand  
Architectural Hardware  
LCN Division  
P.O. Box 100  
121 West Railroad Avenue  
Princeton, IL. 61356-0100  
1-815-875-3111  
<http://www.lcnclosers.com>

11. Sentronic closer

***LCN Fire/Life Safety Series Sentronic closer***

Ingersoll-Rand  
Architectural Hardware  
LCN Division  
P.O. Box 100  
121 West Railroad Avenue  
Princeton, IL. 61356-0100  
1-815-875-3111  
<http://www.lcnclosers.com>

12. Tamper-resistant screws

***McMaster-Carr; One-Way Screws***

McMaster-Carr Supply Company  
P.O. Box 4355  
Chicago, IL 60680-4355  
1-630-833-0300  
<http://www.mcmaster.com>

13. Shatter-resistant light bulbs

***GE Cov-R-Guard; Shatter Resistant; Teflon Coated***

General Electric Lighting  
3135 Easton Turnpike  
Fairfield, CT 06431  
1-800-626-2004  
<http://www.gelighting.com>

14. Institutional fire sprinkler head

***Reliable Automatic Sprinkler Company, Inc.; Model ZX-QR-INST***

The Reliable Automatic Sprinkler Co., Inc.  
525 N. MacQuesten Parkway  
Mt. Vernon, NY 10552  
1-800-431-1588  
<http://www.reliablesprinkler.com>

15. Curtain track – flush mounted  
***Kirsch Series 9046 track w/92122 Slides and 92111 sew on pleats***  
Kirsch  
524 W. Stephenson Street  
Freeport, IL 61032  
1-800-528-1407  
<http://www.kirsch.com>
16. Carpet  
***Lees Tenure Broadloom; Product Number L3106***  
Lee's Carpets  
3330 W. Friendly Avenue  
Greensboro, NC 27410  
336-379-3897  
<http://www.leescarpets.com>
17. Perforated air grilles  
***Carnes; Stamped, Perforated Diffuser; see catalog D-22***  
Carnes Company  
448 South Main Street  
Verona, WI 53593  
608-845-6411  
<http://www.carnes.com>
18. Stainless steel screen fabric  
***McMaster-Carr; Type 304 Stainless Steel, Standard Grade Woven Wire Cloth***  
McMaster-Carr Supply Company  
P.O. Box 4355  
Chicago, IL 60680-4355  
1-630-833-0300  
<http://www.mcmaster.com>
19. Key operated electric switches  
***Hubbell Locking Type Switch #5Z724***  
Hubbell, Inc.  
584 Derby Milford Road  
Orange, CT  
<http://www.hubbell.com>

20. Seamless floors

***Dex-O-Tex Cheminert “K” Flooring***

Dex-O-Tex  
Division of Crossfield Products Corp.  
140 Valley Road  
Roselle Park, NJ 07204  
1-908-245-2800  
<http://www.dexotex.com>

21. Impact-resistant wallboard

***National Gypsum Hi-Impact Brand Fire Shield Wallboard***

National Gypsum Company  
2001 Rexford Road  
Charlotte, NC 28211  
1-704-365-7300  
<http://www.nationalgypsum.com>

22. Access panel – lockable

***J. L. Industries, Inc. Standard SP Security Panel with mortise prep***

J.L. Industries, Inc.  
4450 West 78<sup>th</sup> Street Circle  
Bloomington, MN 55435  
1-612-835-6850  
<http://www.jlindustries.com>

23. Life safety window hardware

***Truth Hardware; Limit Device***

Truth Hardware  
700 West Bridge St.  
Owatonna, MN 55060  
1-800-866-7884  
<http://www.truth.com>

24. Patient room furniture

***Hill-Rom, Harbor Glen Series***

Hill-Rom  
Batesville, IN 47006  
1-812-934-7777  
[www.hill-rom.com](http://www.hill-rom.com)

25. Manually adjustable hospital bed  
***Hill-Rom, Resident Upgradeable LTC Bed***  
Hill-Rom  
Batesville, IN 47006  
1-812-934-7777  
[www.hill-rom.com](http://www.hill-rom.com)
26. Clothes pole design  
***Odd Ball Industries; SPI Closet "Bar"***  
Odd Ball Industries Mfg. Co., Inc.  
P.O. Box 376  
Greenlawn, NY 11740  
1-631-242-8482  
<http://www.oddballindustries.com>
27. Sheet vinyl flooring  
***Armstrong World Industries, Inc. Commercial Flooring, vinyl, homogeneous***  
Armstrong World Industries, Inc.  
P.O. Box 3001  
Lancaster, PA 17604  
1-877-ARMSTRONG  
<http://www.armstrong.com>
28. Vinyl floor tile  
***Armstrong World Industries, Inc. Commercial Flooring, vinyl composition tile***  
Armstrong World Industries, Inc.  
P.O. Box 3001  
Lancaster, PA 17604  
1-877-ARMSTRONG  
<http://www.armstrong.com>
29. Shower floor basin  
***The Swan Corporation, Swanstone Solid Surface Shower Floors***  
The Swan Corporation  
One City Centre, Suite 2300  
St. Louis, MO. 63101  
1-314-231-8148  
<http://www.theswancorp.com>

30. Synthetic wall material  
***Avonite Solid Surface Wall Panels***  
Avonite  
1945 Highway 304  
Belen, NM 87002  
1-800-4-AVONITE  
<http://www.avonite.com>
31. Emergency door stop  
***Stanley; ES-1 Emergency door Stop***  
Stanley Hardware  
480 Myrtle Street  
New Britain, CT 06053  
1-800-337-4393  
<http://www.stanleyworks.com>
32. Double lipped door strike  
***Stanley; DLS-2***  
Stanley Hardware  
480 Myrtle Street  
New Britain, CT 06053  
1-800-337-4393  
<http://www.stanleyworks.com>
33. Pivot hinges  
***Stanley; DAP-3 Center Hung Door Pivot Set***  
Stanley Hardware  
480 Myrtle Street  
New Britain, CT 06053  
1-800-337-4393  
<http://www.stanleyworks.com>
34. Robe hook – break-away  
***Stanley; DAP-3 Center Hung Door Pivot Set***  
Stanley Hardware  
480 Myrtle Street  
New Britain, CT 06053  
1-800-337-4393  
<http://www.stanleyworks.com>

35. Shower head – institutional  
***Odd Ball Industries; SP7 Shower Head with Quick Disconnect Hand Held Shower***  
Odd Ball Industries Mfg. Co., Inc.  
P.O. Box 376  
Greenlawn, NY 11740  
1-631-242-8482  
<http://www.oddballindustries.com>
36. Seclusion room floor material  
***Lonseal, Inc. LonFloor plain, smooth***  
Lonseal, Inc.  
928 East 238<sup>th</sup> Street, Building A  
Carson, California 90745  
1-800-832-7111  
<http://lonseal.com>
37. Security Glass Laminates  
***ACE Security Laminates, 200 Series – High-end Safety***  
Ace/Security Laminates, Inc.  
200 Isabella St., Ste. 500  
Ottawa, ON, Canada  
K1S 1V7  
1-888-607-0000  
<http://www.smashandgrab.com>
38. Flush mounted door pull  
***Stanley Hardware cast, flush door pulls***  
Stanley Hardware  
480 Myrtle Street  
New Britain, CT 06053  
1-800-337-4393  
<http://www.stanleyworks.com>
39. Surface mounted slide bolt  
***Stanley Hardware CD4060 solid brass 6inch long surface bolts***  
Stanley Hardware  
480 Myrtle Street  
New Britain, CT 06053  
1-800-337-4393  
<http://www.stanleyworks.com>

40. Light fixture – seclusion room  
***The L. C. Doane Company; CRN Series with polycarbonate external lens TP door fasteners***  
The L.C. Doane Company  
P.O. Box 975  
Essex, CT. 06426  
1-860-767-8295  
<http://www.lcdoane.com>
41. Air grilles – seclusion room  
***Anemostat Products Model ASSG – Supply/Return Grille, Heavy Duty Steel Perforated Face***  
Anemostat Products  
P.O. Box 4938  
1220 Watson Center Road  
Carson, CA. 90745  
1-310-835-7500  
<http://www.anemostat.com>
42. Toilet fixture – floor mounted, back outlet  
***Eljer; Signature Series 111-2163 Back Outlet Bowls***  
Eljer Plumbingware, Inc.  
14801 Quorum Drive  
Dallas, TX 75254  
1-800-423-5537  
<http://www.eljer.com>
43. Recessed flush valve  
***Sloan Valve Company Regal 153***  
Sloan Value Company  
10500 Seymour Avenue  
Franklin Park, IL 60131-1259  
1-800-9-VALVE-9  
<http://www.sloanvalve.com>
44. Trash can liner  
***Sani-Liner*** ®  
Wisconsin Converting  
Green Bay, WI  
1-800-544-1935  
<http://www.wisconsinconverting.com>

## **About the Authors**

**David M. Sine, CSP, OHST**, has had over a twenty-year career in safety, risk management, human factors, and organizational consulting. He has been the state Safety Director of two Eastern states, the Senior Staff Engineer for the JCAHO, and a Senior Consultant for the AHA. Founding partner and one time contributing editor for *Briefings on Hospital Safety*, co-author of *Quality Improvement Techniques for Hospital Safety*, one time Vice Chair of the board of Brackenridge Hospital in Austin, Texas, Mr. Sine is certified by the Joint Board of the American Board of Industrial Hygiene and Certified Safety Professionals and as a Certified Professional Healthcare Risk Manager by ASHRM. He has been a healthcare risk management consultant since 1980 and has conducted more than 1,300 JCAHO compliance assessment surveys. He serves as a member of the NFPA 101 Life Safety Code Subcommittee on Health Care Occupancies, the JCAHO Committee on Healthcare Safety, and acts as a risk management advisor to the National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems. Mr. Sine has served in the Corporate Offices of the Tenet HealthSystem in Dallas as Director of Risk Assessment and Loss Prevention and is currently the Vice President of Occupational Health and Safety for the Western Division. Mr. Sine continues to write and lecture extensively on healthcare policy, governance, quality improvement, and risk management. He can be reached at 3 Imperial Promenade, Suite 600, Santa Ana, CA 92707.

**James M. Hunt, AIA**, is a practicing design and facility management professional with over thirty years experience. He is a registered Architect, holds a certificate from the National Council of Architectural Registration, and began his career practicing architecture for several major healthcare projects. He then served as director of Facilities Management for the Menninger Clinic for 20 years. In addition to managing their main campus, he also consulted on behavioral healthcare unit remodeling projects for their Clinical Network program, which involved work in eight states including both coasts and the Midwest. During this time he was a founding member of the Health Care Council of the International Facility Management Association. He held several offices in the council including Chair. He was featured in a cover story of *Facility Design and Management* magazine and was published in *Psychiatric Hospital* magazine. Jim is now the president of Facility Services, Inc., a facility management company serving healthcare and general business organizations by assisting with efficient professional development and management of their facilities. He can be reached at 221 SW 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite A, Topeka, KS 66611.

## **About NAPHS**

**The National Association of Psychiatric Health Systems (NAPHS)** advocates for behavioral health and represents provider systems that are committed to the delivery of responsive, accountable, and clinically effective prevention, treatment, and care for children, adolescents, adults, and older adults with mental and substance use disorders. The NAPHS vision is of a society that values and maximizes the potential of all its citizens by helping them to achieve overall health. To achieve healthy communities, behavioral health will be recognized, respected, and allocated resources with fairness and equity. Through NAPHS representation within accreditation organizations – for example, with representatives on both the Hospital and Behavioral Health Professional and Technical Advisory Committees of the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) – NAPHS is able to provide input into and advance warning of regulatory and accreditation developments that affect behavioral healthcare providers.

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