



Why Door and Window Design Matters in Psychiatric Facilities

We just published an industry white paper, "Integrated Louver Privacy Systems in Psychiatric Healthcare Facilities", which examines privacy and safety requirements in mental health facilities and reviews available design options.

Mental health and its accompanying treatments are a major issue in the U.S. and around the world. With an estimated one out of five people in the U.S. suffering from some form of mental illness, hospitals and psychiatric facilities are increasingly looking for the best solutions toward creating safe and optimally functional patient environments.

Windows and doors present an important design consideration for these facilities.

Architects must take into account not only the patient's privacy, but also their safety. The most significant safety concern is undoubtedly suicide and patients harming themselves, as an estimated six percent of all suicides every year are inpatient suicides. So staff must be able to monitor patients to keep them – and others – safe.

To download "Integrated Louver Privacy Systems in Psychiatric Healthcare Facilities", visit: www.unicelarchitectural.com



Our white paper shows how integrated louver systems address all the safety, privacy and functional issues to provide a preferred solution for any mental health facility. Integrated louvers allow staff to have an adjustable view into any room or patient area for discreet observation. Most importantly, integrated louvers offer the safest solution for vision control as follows:

1. Cordless operation: No cords or strings that can pose a strangulation hazard. This is crucial as hanging is the most common method of suicide in psychiatric hospitals.
2. Anti-ligature knobs: Smooth operating knobs that present no corners or edges that pose a hanging risk from a kneeling or sitting position, or from self-mutilation.
3. High-impact glazing or polycarbonates: A glazing alternative that is impact and shatter resistant, and eliminates the risk of dangerous glass shards while maintaining the louvers in an insulating and protected hermetically sealed airspace.

The white paper further discusses patient and facility requirements for noise reduction, light and heat control, maintenance and the reduced impact on power resources. It reviews available window and door treatment options and assesses these for functionality and results.

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