



Title	Comparative Analysis of Bedpan Processing Equipment
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Aim

To assess the use of bedpan washers for reusable bedpans compared to macerators for disposable bedpans, examining their effectiveness, safety, and organizational, economic, and environmental factors.

Results and conclusions

Bedpan processing methods in Québec healthcare facilities are not uniform. Decisions regarding the most suitable method, based on eliminating sources of risk, are left to each facility's infection prevention and control team in conjunction with facility management and other medical and professional staff. Basic principles should be followed in regard to 1) infection prevention, 2) infection control, 3) workplace layout, and 4) preventive measure follow-up.

1) Manual bedpan cleaning must be proscribed; the use of automated bedpan washers or macerators for processing bedpans is recommended if it adheres to stringent infection prevention procedures; reusable bedpans must be disinfected after each use; piling up soiled bedpans on counters must be avoided; and disposable bedpan supports must be transferred to a centralized sterilization area for disinfection in a washer-disinfector after patient discharge. 2) Sterilization of reusable bedpans between patients must be considered; if the use of bedpan washers is adopted, a backup option must be planned and the use of hygienic bags for all patients should be considered in some circumstances. 3) Bedpan washers and macerators must be installed in dirty utility rooms located a reasonable distance away from patients' rooms; dirty utility rooms must be large enough to house the reprocessing equipment and to allow supplies to be properly stored; installation of modular bedpan-washer units or macerators in the washrooms of isolation rooms should be considered. 4) Staff must be properly trained and consistently comply with procedures for human waste management, bedpan reprocessing and equipment operation; preventive maintenance and verification of the equipment's operational parameters must be monitored

on a regular and ongoing basis. Finally, analysis of the literature revealed that both types of bedpan processing equipment have benefits and drawbacks. The data helped identify the issues specific to each type of equipment, without determining the best choice for hospitals. Although consultation with professionals in the field shed light on several relevant aspects, it did not help establish a consensus guideline. Several variables influence that choice: bedpan use requirements, risk of infection and outbreaks, staff availability, the possibility of redesigning infrastructures, geographic area, and budgets.

Methods

An exhaustive narrative review of selected articles and grey literature was performed.