

- Title** Building planning and infection prevention: sanitation equipment in rooms and in cubicles in specialized care units
- Agency** INESSS, Institut national d'excellence en santé et en services sociaux  
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### Aim

The ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS) asked the Institut national d'excellence en santé et en services sociaux (INESSS) to examine the issue of installing modular sanitary units (integrated toilet and sink units) or installing a toilet and sink in the space occupied by a patient rather than in a separate area.

The primary objective of this request was to examine the issue of installing a toilet close to a hospital bed that can be used without the patient having to leave the room. This pertains mainly to intensive care rooms, outpatient cubicles and emergency room cubicles.

### Methods

The literature search and descriptive analysis of the documents retrieved take into account the different elements that influence the choice of installation. The databases consulted for the purpose of this literature review were MEDLINE (PubMed), Embase and Evidence-Based Medicine Reviews (The Cochrane Library). In addition, searches were conducted in the grey literature with the Google search engine using these same keywords and their different variants, and on certain websites of government bodies and professional associations charged with creating building planning and nosocomial infection prevention and control guidelines, or guidelines for designing care units, or charged with taking a position or drafting opinions.

### Conclusions and Results

Upon completion of the literature review, INESSS drew the following conclusions:

- No building planning publication sets out standards for installing sanitary units (integrated toilet and sink unit) or both a toilet and a sink in patient rooms in intensive care units (ICUs) or in cubicles in emergency departments or outpatient units.
- The guidelines established by professional associations or expert groups generally advise against the use of swivettes (integrated into modular sanitary units, if they are fixed) in ICUs, usually because of the risk of contamination and of transmission of nosocomial infections. One of the main contributing factors is the fact that they are

used most often to empty bedpans, which creates an increased risk of splash or aerosols.

- These guidelines recommend that there be direct access to a bathroom in patient rooms, to a bathroom containing bedpan processing equipment or to a room for holding soiled items in order to be able to dispose of human waste. As for the concerns about carrying soiled bedpans, the distance between the bed and the place of disposal should be reduced to a minimum, and carrying them outside the patient care area should be avoided as much as possible.
- As for bedpan processing equipment, preference should be given to airtight models.
- The use of commode chairs should be limited. In cases where such a device is required, rigorous contamination control measures should be taken.

### Written by

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