Dirty utility room for bedpan processing: Design manual
283:0.2:England
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Overview
Room description and layout (dirty utility room for bedpan processing)

This room will fulfil the same functions as the dirty utility room with the addition of the disposal of the contents of bedpans and urine bottles into a macerator or bedpan washer.

It will also be used for storing clean urine bottles, bedpans (or bedpan liners) and vomit bowls, and for holding dirty linen where used. Commodes and sani-chairs may be stored here.

The location of the dirty utility rooms should minimise travel distances for staff from patient areas to reduce the risk of spillages and cross contamination, and to increase working efficiencies.

Local policy will determine whether to use disposable or reusable urine bottles and vomit bowls and/or whether to use bedpans with liners.

The room layout provided is based on the use of a macerator or washer.

Where a macerator is used, consideration should be given to providing both a macerator for the disposal of the liners and waste products and a washer for the subsequent cleaning of bedpan holders etc. This arrangement is currently a topic for discussion on the basis of perceived improved infection control but is not specifically recommended.

The illustrated space requirements for accessing modular base and upper cabinets is based on space to access standard cupboards, not using baskets or trays. However, adequate space is available for side access to baskets or trays.

The layout has taken on board research from the Loughborough University Healthcare Ergonomics & Patient Safety unit, DH research report B(05)02, Dec 2007.
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Ergonomic drawings (dirty utility room for bedpan processing)

Clinical wash-hand basin

These ergonomic drawings show the space requirements for standing use of a clinical wash-hand basin assembly. For seated use, the basin will need to be lowered.

The basin should be fitted with non-touch taps.

The recommended fixing height of a lever tap on a clinical wash-hand basin is 1095 mm. Where a lever tap is used, the fixing height of the dispensers should be chosen to reduce any possible conflicts in use.

The illustrated clinical wash-hand basin projects 400 mm from the back panel or wall. However, clinical wash-hand basins may vary from 350 to 500 mm projection (see Health Technical Memorandum 64). Where basins deeper than 400 mm are used, the impact on/from other components and/or activities undertaken within any space should be considered when evaluating any room layout.

The glove and apron dispenser illustrated is a combined unit; this is considered the most compact solution although separate units may also be used. Even the most compact unit cannot practically be located within comfortable reach of the basin; it should, however, be conveniently located within the room.

The ergonomic advice for the height of horizontal elbow operated lever taps is based on the following data:

Elbow height for shod, slightly bent posture (as when leaning forward) for 50%ile UK male = 1134 mm, for female 1049 mm.

1090 mm is considered the best compromise for an elbow height for both male and female use.

The ergonomic advice for the height of a lever tap is ‘75 mm below elbow height giving a figure height of approx 1015 mm’.

However, this recommendation conflicts with the practical fixing height of taps recommended by Health Technical Memorandum 64; the recommended fixing height of 1095 mm for a lever tap is therefore a compromise.
Lever taps are not illustrated.

For detailed information on basins, see Health Technical Memorandum 64 – ‘Sanitary assemblies’.
Space to use basin at high level, i.e., above 600 mm from floor level

Space to use basin at low level, i.e., up to 600 mm from floor level

Minimum distance to side wall (450)

Minimum clearance between paper towel dispenser and duct (50)

Elevation (showing sensor tap)

Projecting concealed services duct

Flush concealed services duct

Comfortable reach to side of basin

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Health Technical Memorandum 64 – ‘Sanitary assemblies’

Disposal unit
This ergonomic drawing shows the space requirements for a disposal unit.

A disposal unit is for the disposal of soiled water (into the sink) and small quantities of human waste (into the slop hopper).

The illustrated disposal unit is as defined in Health Technical Memorandum 64.

Subject to local infection control advice, consideration may be given to providing integrated units (that is, a combined unit with a washer or macerator, bucket sink, and base cupboard/storage unit).
Space to use slop hopper at low level ie up to 600 mm from floor level

Space to use slop hopper at high level ie 600 mm above floor level

Approx 900 mm

Slop hopper

Sink

Standing close to sink to allow infrequent passing while someone stands close to the sink

Space for infrequent passing while someone stands close to the sink

600 mm

600 mm

1000 mm

Space to use sink

175 mm

1600 mm

50 mm

50 mm

50 mm

1100 mm

1600 mm

175 mm

900 mm

450 mm

150–200 mm

approx 900 mm

1100 mm

600 mm

800 mm

600 mm

1000 mm

(400)

1600

175

Slop hopper

Sink

50

50

for use in England
Washers and macerators

Washers are available in tall and low profile models. Tall models are front loading, with the loading door generally at working height. Low profile units may be top or front loading.

Most washers can process three bedpans and three urine bottles per cycle, with each cycle taking just under 10 minutes.

Consideration should be given to the safe storage of the detergents used in the cleaning process.

Macerators are generally low profile and top loading.

When macerators are used, local infection control advice should be sought on the appropriate cleaning regime for the bedpan itself since the macerator will only deal with the bedpan liners.

Electricity supply requirements for the washer or macerator are subject to manufacturers’ information.

Drainage requirements vary. They may be located in rear, side or bottom of the unit but are generally 110 mm for washers and 50 mm for macerators. The indicative room layout assumes a 110 mm waste located in the rear.

It is important to consider the spatial requirements and services for the equipment as early as possible in the planning process. Failure to do so can result in a loss of functional space within the room (for example to allow for service ducts), which may be detrimental to safe and efficient working.

This ergonomic drawing illustrates the space requirements for a macerator or washer.
Space to use washer at low level ie up to 600 mm from floor level

Space to use washer/macerator at low level ie up to 600 mm from floor level

Space to use washer/macerator at high level ie 600 mm above floor level

Front-loading tall washer

Top-loading washer/macerator

Front-loading washer

Service duct

approx 1450–1650

approx 600

approx 150

600

900–1040

approx 1450–1650

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for use in England
**Standard base and wall cupboards**

This ergonomic drawing shows the space requirements to access standard, floor mounted, base and wall cupboards. Where worktops or other obstructions project more than 500 mm, the reach dimensions illustrated relate to the front edge of the wall cupboard (that is, reaching into the cupboard would proved difficult).
Recommended depth of cupboard depends upon depth of worktop

Depth of wall cupboard
200–400 (300)

Distance between front of worktop and front of wall cupboard

Sloping top to wall cupboards will assist with cleaning/infection control

Maximum height of wall cupboard
2100

Maximum height that allows all users access
1700

Maximum height that allows full forward reach onto shelf etc
1350

Clear space between worktop and bottom of wall cupboard
(300)

Space for working and ambulant passing, 1600 preferred for frequent passing
1600 (1000)

Standing close for infrequent passing
Space for ambulant passing when someone is working at the worktop

Distance between front of worktop and front of wall cupboard

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