



On the ward

Bathroom

This audit module is designed to look at bathrooms in a ward. It can be used for bathrooms with both a toilet and shower, or one or the other.

The audit module is designed to be used when you have some resources available. Most suggestions would take some budget and/or timeframe to implement. Please note – there is a separate bathroom audit module designed to be used when you have a small budget and short timeframe. Neither are intended for major refurbishments or new builds.

You may use this audit module on its own or as part of an audit of other parts of the ward.

This audit module contains 26 questions and will take approximately 25 – 30 minutes to complete all sections. It contains 14 general questions, plus an additional 6 questions for a toilet and additional 6 questions for a shower.

Some questions may not be relevant. Where this is the case, there is an option to select 'not applicable', however please complete as many questions as possible to conduct a thorough audit.

A notes section is provided underneath each question to record any additional information or prompts for action that you identify while carrying out the audit.

Information, recommendations and suggested strategies to address any issues are provided below each question.

When you have completed the audit, please keep it for your reference. You may wish to use it to create your own action list, or to use the information to educate staff about the role of the environment in patient care.

If you want to audit more than one bathroom, please print a new copy of this module and complete the audit again for the new location.



Name _____ Date _____

Hospital and ward _____

Bathroom location _____

Bathroom – general

1. Is the water temperature of taps limited so that it cannot scald?

- Yes** - *Correct* - The water temperature of all taps used by patients should be limited to less than 45 degrees Celsius. This is mandated by the Victorian Government.
- No** - The water temperature of all taps used by patients should be limited to less than 45 degrees Celsius. This is mandated by the Victorian Government.
- N/A**

Notes

2. Is a call bell or other emergency alarm system working and in easy reach of a patient on the toilet and in the shower?

- Yes** - *Correct* - This is important to facilitate independent toileting and showering.
- No** - This is important to facilitate independent toileting and showering. If it is not in reach, consider having it repositioned. If it is not working, organise for it to be fixed as a matter of urgency and take other precautions in the meantime.
- N/A**

Notes

3. Is the door to the bathroom able to open outward?

- Yes** - *Correct* - The door should open outward to enable access if a patient falls against the inside of the door.



No - The door should open outward to enable access if a patient falls against the inside of the door. Consider rehangng doors to open outward or both inward and outward.

N/A

Notes

4. Can the door be unlocked from the outside?

Yes - *Correct* - Internal locks maintain patient privacy and should be used generally, but it is important that they can be overridden and the door can be unlocked from the outside in an emergency.

No - Internal locks maintain patient privacy and should be used generally, but it is important that they can be overridden and the door can be unlocked from the outside in an emergency.

N/A

Notes

5. Do the sinks have lever taps?

Yes - *Correct* - Lever taps are easier for people with reduced strength or mobility to operate than other types of taps, such as cross handles.

No - Lever taps are easier for people with reduced strength or mobility to operate than other types of taps, such as cross handles. Consider replacing existing taps.

N/A

Notes



6. Is the sink positioned so that a wheelchair can fit under it and a person in a wheelchair can reach the taps?

- Yes** - *Correct* - This is important for independent toileting and for hygiene.
- No** - This is important for independent toileting and for hygiene. Consider raising the sink if it is too low or replacing the sink if it protrudes too far from the wall.
- N/A**

Notes

7. Are the walls a contrasting colour to the floor?

- Yes** - *Correct* - This is important for older people with dementia and people with visual impairment as it helps to distinguish where the edge is.
- No** - This is important for older people with dementia and people with visual impairment as it helps to distinguish where the edge is. Consider repainting the wall. A contrasting stripe around the base (skirting) is not recommended.
- N/A**

Notes

8. Are doors to the bathroom/toilet clearly marked?

- Yes** - *Correct* - This assists with wayfinding and encourages independent toileting.
- No** - This assists with wayfinding and encourages independent toileting. Consider providing signs on bathroom doors and toilets. Signs should include a picture of a toilet.
- N/A**

Notes



9. Is the bathroom free of clutter?

- Yes** - *Correct* - Maintaining a clutter free room is important for safety. Items not in use should be stored in an accessible but out of the way location.
- No** - Maintaining a clutter free room is important for safety. Items not in use should be stored in an accessible but out of the way location.
- N/A**

Notes

10. Are mirrors able to be covered so they cannot be seen?

- Yes** - *Correct* - There is some evidence that covering mirrors can aid in reducing confusion and agitation in patients with dementia. This should be considered if the issue is relevant to your patient group.
- No** - There is some evidence that covering mirrors can aid in reducing confusion and agitation in patients with dementia. Consider covering mirrors if this issue is relevant to your patient group, for example by installing a roller blind or other retractable screen.
- N/A**

Notes

11. Is an appropriate chair (e.g. a shower chair) provided so that older people can sit when using the wash basin?

- Yes** - *Correct* - A chair for older people to use at the basin aids mobility and comfort.
- No** - A chair for older people to use at the basin aids mobility and comfort. Provide one if it is safe and there is enough room.



N/A

Notes

12. Are there sufficient lights available for night time use?

Yes - *Correct* - This is important for safety and promotes independence. Nightlights should be outside bathrooms and light switches should be visible in the dark.

No - This is important for safety and promotes independence. Nightlights should be installed outside bathrooms, ideally 300mm from the floor. Light switches should also be visible in the dark, preferably by being illuminated. If this is not possible consider using glow in the dark paint or stickers to highlight light switches.

N/A

Notes

13. Is the temperature in the bathroom able to be controlled (i.e. independently operated heating and air-conditioning are available)?

Yes - *Correct* - This is important both for comfort and a sense of control.

No - This is important both for comfort and a sense of control. Consider installing reverse cycle air-conditioners in patient bathrooms.

N/A

Notes

14. Is there enough room in the bathroom for a wheelchair to be manoeuvred by a carer?

Yes - *Correct* - This is important for both staff/carers and patient safety and comfort.



No - This is important for both staff/carer and patient safety and comfort. Consider if any furniture or fixtures can be rearranged or removed to increase the amount of room.

N/A

Notes

Bathrooms with toilets

Is there a toilet in this bathroom?

Yes – Please answer the following questions.

No – Please skip to the next section.

1. Are there handrails on both sides of the toilet?

Yes - *Correct* - This is important for safety and promotes independence. Handrails on both sides of the toilet are recommended. They should be low enough for patients to easily lower themselves down and push back up.

No - This is important for safety and promotes independence. Handrails on both sides of the toilet are recommended. They should be low enough for patients to easily lower themselves down and push back up.

N/A

Notes

2. Is the toilet seat a contrasting colour to the toilet bowl and the floor?

Yes - *Correct* - This is important for older people with dementia and people with visual impairment as it helps to distinguish where the seat is.



No - This is important for older people with dementia and people with visual impairment as it helps to distinguish where the seat is. Consider changing the toilet seat to one of a different, contrasting colour.

N/A

Notes

3. Is there a commode or over-toilet seat available?

Yes - Correct - It is important to have these available for patients who either cannot safely get to the toilet or are unable to safely or comfortably lower and raise to sit on the toilet.

No - It is important to have these available for patients who either cannot safely get to the toilet or are unable to safely or comfortably lower and raise to sit on the toilet. Ensure these are easily available whenever necessary, particularly if the toilet does not have handrails on both sides.

N/A

Notes

4. Is the commode or over-toilet seat height adjustable?

Yes - Correct - The commode or over-toilet seat height should allow the patient's feet to be flat on the floor for safety and comfort.

No - The commode or over-toilet seat height should allow the patient's feet to be flat on the floor for safety and comfort.

N/A

Notes



5. Are the arms on the commode or over-toilet seat secure and sturdy?

- Yes** - *Correct* - Arms should be secure and sturdy for safety and checked regularly, and repaired or removed if not.
- No** - Arms should be secure and sturdy for safety and checked regularly, and repaired or removed if not.
- N/A**

Notes

6. Is the toilet paper positioned within easy reach for people with limited mobility and dexterity (i.e. not behind the toilet)?

- Yes** - *Correct* - This promotes independent toileting as well as being important for comfort and safety. Check by sitting and reaching for the toilet paper. If it is not easily reached, consider placing a maintenance request to have the dispenser moved or an additional one installed.
- No** - This promotes independent toileting as well as being important for comfort and safety. Check by sitting and reaching for the toilet paper. If it is not easily reached, consider placing a maintenance request to have the dispenser moved or an additional one installed.
- N/A**

Notes

Bathrooms with showers

Is there a shower in this bathroom?

- Yes** – *Please answer the following questions.*
- No** – *You have completed the audit.*



1. Is there a shower seat?

- Yes** - *Correct* - Shower seats should have sturdy arms that patients can use to support themselves or there should be handrails on both sides of the shower. They should be well maintained so that they do not tip when used (e.g. ensure that the rubber stoppers on the legs are intact).

- No** - Shower seats should have sturdy arms that patients can use to support themselves or there should be handrails on both sides of the shower. They should be well maintained so that they do not tip when used (e.g. ensure that the rubber stoppers on the legs are intact).

- N/A**

Notes

2. Are there handrails on the walls of the shower?

- Yes** - *Correct* - Handrails on the shower walls, that are low enough for patients to easily lower down into a shower seat and push themselves back up, are recommended. They also improve patient safety when standing.

- No** - Handrails on the shower walls, that are low enough for patients to easily lower down into a shower seat and push themselves back up, are recommended. They also improve patient safety when standing. Consider installing handrails in an appropriate position.

- N/A**

Notes

3. Are the walls around the shower/bath and sink marked in contrasting colours to the shower/bath and sink?

- Yes** - *Correct* - This is important for older people with dementia and people with visual impairment as it helps to distinguish where the edge is. Consider repainting the wall. A contrasting stripe around the base (skirting) is not recommended.

- No** - This is important for older people with dementia and people with visual impairment as it helps to distinguish where the edge is. Consider repainting the wall. A contrasting stripe around the base (skirting) is not recommended.



N/A

Notes

4. Is there adequate space and suitable receptacles in the bathroom to place soap, shampoo and washers that can be reached from a seated position and without bending?

Yes - *Correct* - If there are not suitable receptacles with enough room for toiletries and washers they may be placed on the floor, creating a safety hazard and discomfort when reaching for them. Ensure that they can be safely reached from a seated position.

No - If there are not suitable receptacles with enough room for toiletries and washers they may be placed on the floor, creating a safety hazard and discomfort when reaching for them. Consider installing additional receptacles that can be safely reached from a seated position.

N/A

Notes

5. Are any full length glass panels in the shower area marked?

Yes - *Correct* - This is for patient safety, to ensure the panel is recognised as glass.

No - This is for patient safety, to ensure the panel is recognised as glass. Consider using stickers or coloured tape at standing and seated eye level.

N/A

Notes



6. Are clothing hooks and towel rails easily accessible from the seated position?

Yes - *Correct* - Towel rails and other accessories should be 1200mm or less from the floor to be accessible from a seated position. However, make sure they are not placed where they may be hazardous to visually impaired people.

No - Towel rails and other accessories should be 1200mm or less from the floor to be accessible from a seated position. However, make sure they are not placed where they may be hazardous to visually impaired people. If you are unable to install or reposition accessories, consider alternative arrangements.

N/A

Notes
