



On the ward – limited resources

Lighting, signage and wayfinding

This audit module is designed to audit ward lighting, signage and wayfinding.

Wayfinding refers to all the ways in which people orientate themselves in a space and navigate their way from place to place. Older people need more wayfinding aids to assist orientation in a space and they need to be more obvious.

The audit module is designed to be used when you have a limited budget and short timeframe. Interventions suggested are able to be undertaken with a small amount of money (if any) and in a short space of time. Please note – there is a separate ward audit module for lighting, signage and wayfinding that is more comprehensive and suggests interventions that require a larger budget and a longer timeframe. Neither are intended for major refurbishments or new builds.

There is a separate audit module available for wayfinding in the 'Facility audits' section. You may also find some questions about lighting, signage and wayfinding in the other facility audit modules and the module 'On the ward - communal spaces.'

You may utilise this audit module on its own or as part of a broader audit of other parts of the ward.

This audit module contains 12 questions and will take approximately 15 – 20 minutes to complete.

Some questions may be relevant in some rooms/wards but not in others. Where questions are not relevant, 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 room or bed bay, please print a new copy of this module and complete the audit again for the new location.



Name _____ Date _____

Hospital _____

Ward/location _____

Lighting

1. Does lighting provide good visibility during the day?

Yes - Correct - Natural light is preferred. Artificial lighting should be bright enough to mimic daylight, however should minimise glare. Full spectrum electric lighting that mimics daylight (e.g. T5 and T8 fluorescent tubes) is ideal for increasing visibility within spaces; this assists with wayfinding.

No - Natural light is preferred. Artificial lighting should be bright enough to mimic daylight, however should minimise glare. Full spectrum electric lighting that mimics daylight (e.g. T5 and T8 fluorescent tubes) is ideal for increasing visibility within spaces; this assists with wayfinding. Consider ways to increase glare-free lighting in the space, for example adjusting shades and shutters, or rearranging furnishings.

N/A

Notes

2. Is lighting sufficient for safe navigation at night?

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

No - This is important for safety and promotes independence, especially for night toileting. 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



3. Is there an even level of light throughout the ward?

- Yes** - *Correct* - Varied light and low levels of light can be difficult for older people to negotiate; it can create confusion or a falls risk.

- No** - Varied light and low levels of light can be difficult for older people to negotiate; it can create confusion or a falls risk. Consider way you could make the level of light more even throughout the ward, for example adjusting shutters, screens and furnishings.

- N/A**

Notes

4. Is all patient personal lighting in working order (e.g. reading lamps in bed bays)?

- Yes** - *Correct* - Control over personal lighting is important for comfort and sense of control.

- No** - Control over personal lighting is important for comfort and sense of control. Consider implementing scheduled checks and placing a maintenance request, if needed.

- N/A**

Notes

5. Is there a source of natural light/daylight in the ward area?

- Yes** - *Correct* - Daylight is ideal for increasing visibility within spaces. Access to natural light also has benefits for improving mood, orientating patients to the time of day/night and general wellbeing.

- No** - Daylight is ideal for increasing visibility within spaces. Access to natural light also has benefits for improving mood, orientating patients to the time of day/night and general wellbeing. Consider adjusting shutters, screens and furnishings to allow daylight to enter spaces without glare. If this isn't possible, allow patients to access areas where they can experience daylight.

- N/A**



Notes

Signage

6. Are there clear signs to identify the ward, with directions for where to go with enquiries?

- Yes** - *Correct* - Visitors may not recognise the ward if it is not clearly signposted, and feel unsure where to go on arriving to the ward. Signs help orientate patients and visitors and make them feel welcome.
- No** - Visitors may not recognise the ward if it is not clearly signposted, and feel unsure where to go on arriving to the ward. Signs help orientate patients and visitors and make them feel welcome.
- N/A**

Notes

7. Are signs able to be seen from seated eye level as well as at standing eye level?

- Yes** - *Correct* - Older people and people with dementia may look down when walking rather than straight ahead and alternative locations of signs can assist them to navigate. People in wheelchairs or seated have an eye level lower than a person standing.
- No** - Older people and people with dementia may look down when walking rather than straight ahead and alternative locations of signs can assist them to navigate. People in wheelchairs or seated have an eye level lower than a person standing. Consider placing signs at different heights to maximise their chance of being easily seen.
- N/A**

Notes



8. Do signs display the minimum amount of information for clarity?

- Yes** - *Correct* - Cluttered signs can make it difficult to understand what of the information is necessary.

- No** - Visual clutter can make it difficult to understand what of the information is necessary. Try to ensure that there is not too much information on one sign – consider printing a replacement sign with only key information on it; you can laminate this or use a plastic sleeve for displaying.

- N/A**

Notes

9. Are signs in large font with good contrast between background and text?

- Yes** - *Correct* - Using a clear, large font and a contrast of colours will increase the clarity of signs.

- No** - The font size should be at least 16 mm high on small signs and at least 40 mm high on larger signs. Helvetica is the recommended font, or if unavailable another clear, simple sans serif font such as Arial. Signs should use capitals and lower case letters. Using all capitals is not recommended. Make sure the contrast of colours enhances the visibility of the text. Consider printing signs as needed.

- N/A**

Notes

10. Are there clear signs showing the location of toilets and other amenities?

- Yes** - *Correct* - Signs should be at entry points, exit points and throughout the ward, as well as the rooms themselves. Signs should follow the same size and clarity guidelines as other hospital signage to cater for visitors with visual, cognitive and mobility impairments.

- No** - Signs should be at entry points, exit points and throughout the ward, as well as the rooms themselves. Signs should follow the same size and clarity guidelines as other hospital signage to cater for visitors with visual, cognitive and mobility impairments. Consider printing off signage as needed.

- N/A**



Notes

Wayfinding

11. Are wayfinding cues (e.g. direction and information signs) distinct from decorative elements?

- Yes - Correct** - Signs and other wayfinding cues should be obvious and stand out from decoration such as patterns, paint colours, furnishings and artworks. This increases visibility of the wayfinding cues and decreases confusion when navigating spaces.

- No** - Signs and other wayfinding cues should be obvious and stand out from decoration such as patterns, paint colours, furnishings and artworks. This increases visibility of wayfinding cues and decreases confusion when navigating spaces. Consider moving decorations to improve the visibility of wayfinding cues.

- N/A**

Notes

12. Are contrasting colours used to distinguish features, such as handrails, and surfaces in the ward?

- Yes - Correct** - Features that contrast in colour to the wall are easier to see and use independently.

- No** - Features that contrast in colour to the wall are easier to see and use independently. Paint features in a colour that contrasts to wall surfaces. If this is not possible, highlight them with stickers or coloured tape.

- N/A**

Notes
