

Mitigating suicide risks in healthcare facilities

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Patients seeking help for mental health or behavioral issues are often vulnerable and in need of a safe place for treatment. It's important that healthcare facilities are prepared to care for these patients' unique needs. Beyond medical attention, this includes treatment spaces that don't present opportunities for strangulation or other forms of self-harm.

Understanding the risks

Hospitals and behavioral health facilities are at high-risk for sentinel suicide events, even when regular monitoring checks are in place. [The Joint Commission's 2018 article](#) on suicide in hospitals in the United States reports that around 75 percent of hospital inpatient suicides were among psychiatric inpatients.

In the same research, statistics from 2010-2017 show that more than 70 percent of suicide attempts during hospital inpatient treatment utilized a ligature or strangulation point. Almost 54 percent of those used a door or door hardware, commonly in the patient's bathroom, bedroom or closet.

Given the threat, these types of facilities often have routine monitoring policies in place, especially for high-risk patients. That said, it only takes four to five minutes of adequate pressure on the carotid arteries in a person's neck to cause death by oxygen deprivation to the brain. Therefore, suicide watches every 15 minutes can allow a patient sufficient time to harm themselves.

Mitigating threats

Facilities cannot provide constant supervision of every patient—nor would that be a healthy atmosphere for their recovery. To mitigate suicide risks more effectively, facilities are trying to create spaces to keep patients safe from self-harm. For example, the [US Department of Veterans Affairs \(VA\) was able to reduce the number of in-hospital suicides from 4.2 per 100,000](#)

[admissions to 0.74 per 100,000 admissions in mental health units](#). This 82.4 percent reduction was achieved by adopting standards that remove many hazards within the inpatient health units. According to [The Joint Commission article](#), “well-designed quality improvement initiatives can lead to a reduction in the occurrence of these tragic events.”

Specifying ligature resistant solutions can be a life-saving choice for hospitals and behavioral health facilities. These solutions are designed to reduce the risk of injury or death due to ligature strangulation.

Evolving healthcare market

Ligature resistant solutions are increasingly important as the healthcare market is changing to be more accommodating to behavioral health treatment. According to the [2018 Hospital Construction Survey](#), 53 percent of respondents with specialty construction projects said they had built or are planning behavioral health care projects. This is up 36 percent since 2013, reflecting a noticeable change during the last five years.

As the market grows, healthcare facilities are also looking for ways to accommodate for an increase in behavioral health patients. Hospitals are converting standard rooms to flex spaces, meaning a room that is set up with equipment for traditional patient care can be easily transitioned into a room for behavioral health patients. If there's an influx of these patients these spaces are specially set up to cater to their unique needs. Therefore, they need ligature resistant hardware already in place that's appropriate for behavioral health patients—even if a majority of the time the room may not require it. Also, instead of installing medical equipment permanently, they may use mobile machines that can be easily removed when needed, eliminating the presence of cords, sharp objects and other materials that could be a potential threat.



Ligature resistant hardware

Allegion™ offers a portfolio of door hardware that reduces the risk of injury or death due to strangulation. Schlage® recently expanded its lock offering to meet customer needs in low, medium and high-risk applications. The new HSLR trim features the highest level of ligature resistant design and is available in both mortise and cylindrical chassis. Both ligature resistant trim packages are accepted for high-risk areas by the New York State Office of Mental Health and compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations.

Schlage HSLR



Schlage HSLR

- Available for both the Schlage L Series mortise lock and Schlage ND Series cylindrical lock
- Recommended for low, medium or high-risk applications
- The highest level of ligature resistance to positively contribute to healing environments
- Patented crescent-style handle design
- “Paperclip Protection” designation as determined by NYS-OMH testing
- ADA Compliant; “no pinch, no grasp”

[Read more](#) about the features.

Recommended applications¹

High Risk Areas

Patient difficult to manage or risk of solitary and/or unsupervised areas

- Patient bedroom
- In-suite bathroom
- In-suite closet
- Time-out room

Medium Risk Areas

Patient access is controlled or use is supervised with no solitary and/or unsupervised care

- Living room
- Dining room
- Group room
- Kitchen
- Janitor’s closet
- Hallway restroom

Low Risk Areas

No patient use or area is constantly supervised

- Medication room
- Nurse station
- Office
- Laundry room
- Staff restroom
- Classroom

¹ New York State Office of Mental Health. Patient Safety Standards, Materials and Systems Guidelines: August 15, 2018

Schlage SL1/SK1



Schlage SL1

Schlage SK1

- Available for the Schlage L Series mortise lock
- Recommended for low and medium risk applications
- Multiple safety facets:
 - Recessed trim
 - Sloped surfaces
 - Concealed fastening hardware
- Integrated clutch that allows the lever to rotate in event of excessive force

[Read more](#) about the features.

Ives Hospital Tip hinges

- Ligature resistant sloped tip
- Available on architectural hinges, geared continuous hinges and pin and barrel continuous hinges

Zero International ligature resistant gasketing

- Patented ligature-resistant option prevents unintended usage of the gasketing, including harming oneself or others
- When ZAG is specified, the rubber is scored before insertion into the aluminum extrusion. This allows for normal function for its specified purpose, but the seal will now break apart if removal is attempted or any weight is placed on the seal.



About Allegion

Allegion (NYSE: ALLE) is a global pioneer in safety and security, with leading brands like CISA®, Interflex®, LCN®, Schlage®, SimonsVoss® and Von Duprin®. Focusing on security around the door and adjacent areas, Allegion produces a range of solutions for homes, businesses, schools and other institutions. Allegion is a \$2 billion company, with products sold in almost 130 countries. For more, visit www.allegion.com.

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