

New Unicel Architectural White Paper Makes Case for Integrated Louver Privacy Systems in Psychiatric Healthcare Facilities

Examines advantages offered by louvers-between-glass for enhanced patient safety and flexible vision control

MONTREAL, Canada – September 29, 2015: Unicel Architectural today published an industry white paper, "*Integrated Louver Privacy Systems in Psychiatric Healthcare Facilities*", which examines privacy and safety requirements in mental health facilities and reviews available design options. Mental health and its accompanying treatments have become a major issue in the U.S. and around the world. With an estimated one out of five people in the U.S. suffering from some form of mental illness, hospitals and psychiatric facilities are increasingly looking for the best solutions toward creating safe and optimally functional patient environments.

"Windows and doors present an important design consideration for mental health facilities," said Jean-François Couturier, CEO of Unicel Architectural. "Architects must take into account not only the patient's privacy, but also their safety. The most significant safety concern is undoubtedly suicide and patients harming themselves. Staff must be able to monitor patients to ensure that they do not harm themselves or others."

Building materials and finishes in patient spaces need to ensure maximum levels of patient safety and provide adjustable visibility for staff monitoring. This paper will show how integrated louver systems address all the safety, privacy and functional issues to provide a preferred solution for any psychiatric or mental health facility. They allow staff to have an adjustable view into any room or patient area for discreet observation. Most importantly, integrated louvers offer the safest solution for vision control as follows:

1. *Cordless operation:* No cords or strings that can pose a strangulation hazard. This is crucial as hanging is the most common method of suicide in psychiatric hospitals.
2. *Anti-ligature knobs:* Smooth operating knobs that present no corners or edges that pose a hanging risk from a kneeling or sitting position, or from self-mutilation.
3. *High-impact glazing or polycarbonates:* A glazing alternative that is impact and shatter resistant, and eliminates the risk of dangerous glass shards while maintaining the louvers in an insulating and protected hermetically sealed airspace.

The white paper further discusses patient and facility requirements for noise reduction, light and heat control, maintenance and the reduced impact on power resources. It reviews available window and door treatment options and ranks these for functionality and results.

To download "*Integrated Louver Privacy Systems in Psychiatric Healthcare Facilities*", visit: <http://www.unicelarchitectural.com/en/download/literature/Integrated-Louver-Privacy-Systems-Psychiatric-Healthcare-Facilities-white-paper.pdf>

About Unicel Architectural

For over 50 years, Unicel Architectural has built a reputation for the most advanced aluminum and glass solutions. These solutions encompass louvered glazing, skylights and more, to enhance major global construction initiatives with utmost quality and reliability. With its proprietary technology, Unicel's Vision Control® delivers unprecedented comfort and control of vision, light, temperature and sound with a patented combination of louvers between glass that are hermetically sealed and cordless. Unicel's solutions are guaranteed for longevity, optimized for energy efficiency, and customizable to any design, environmental or cultural requirements. Unicel combines its market leading know-how with great design to ensure optimal aesthetics and sustainable performance. For more information visit: www.unicelarchitectural.com



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