



Center for Medicaid, CHIP, and Survey & Certification/Survey & Certification Group

Ref: S&C-10-18-LSC

DATE: May 14, 2010

TO: State Survey Agency Directors
State Fire Authorities

FROM: Director
Survey and Certification Group

SUBJECT: Revision of S&C-04-41 dated August 12, 2004, Corridor Width & Corridor Mounted Computer Touch Screens in Health Care Facilities – Clarification Effective Immediately

Memorandum Summary

- **Changes to Previous Instructions:** This letter addresses the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) policy regarding the use of corridor wall-mounted computer touch screens.
- **Installation of Corridor Wall Items:** Corridor wall mounted technologies and other items, if properly installed, shall not be considered corridor obstructions
- **Corridor Obstructions:** Other items may be considered corridor obstructions.

This memorandum updates and revises information first conveyed in Survey and Certification letter S&C-04-41, issued on August 12, 2004 by CMS, which provided guidance on corridor width requirements associated with the installation of wall-mounted computer touch screens in health care facilities. These computer devices are commonly used to input medical records such as the Minimum Data Set (MDS) or other online patient/resident records. In the six years since CMS issued guidance on this topic, science and technology have advanced, resulting in the changes in the types, frequency of use, and dimensions of such devices. These devices are now commonly utilized throughout the health care community and many different systems are now available. The increase in use and variety of these devices has resulted in many inquiries concerning the applicability of guidance provided in the S&C-04-41 memorandum to certain new wall-mounted technologies and other wall mounted items.

In addition, the exception for wall-mounted computer touch screens has raised question as to whether other items of similar dimension may be mounted to corridor walls, (e.g., artwork, wreaths, sharps disposal units, infection control supply cabinets, lighting devices).

CMS is revising its previous guidance to now allow for other items to be wall-mounted in corridors as long as they do not project out more than 6 inches from the corridor wall or conflict with other sections of the Life Safety Code. In addition, the projection shall not exceed a length of 36 inches, shall be separated by at least 48 inches from other projections, shall be installed at

least 40 inches or greater above the floor, and shall only be installed in corridors that are at least 6 feet in width. These dimensions are consistent with sections 18/19.2.3.4 of the 2009 edition of the Life Safety Code, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 101. These requirements for wall-mounted items should allow for the installation and use of a handrail without impediment. Projections shall be permitted on either side of the corridor.

The placement of items associated with the use of these wall mounted pieces of equipment such as chairs, tables, cabinets, carts, etc. in the corridor, which would reduce corridor to less than the required width, are not permitted when not in use. An item is considered “not in use” if it is left unattended or is not moved for more than 30 minutes. In addition, corridor wall alteration to reduce the projection of a wall-mounted item is prohibited if it reduces the protective requirements of the wall.

Items such as linen carts, medication carts, and janitorial equipment would not be included in these exclusions. Infection control supply cabinets outside of a specific room are allowed in the corridor while precautions are in force for that room. Crash carts are allowed in the corridor for quick access in an emergency.

To evaluate compliance with these requirements, the surveyor should verify that:

- The wall-mounted item does not project out more than 6 inches from the wall, does not exceed 36 inches in length, is separated from other wall-mounted projections by at least 48 inches, and is located at least 40 inches above the floor;
- No chairs, tables, cabinets, carts or other items associated with the wall-mounted items are located in the corridor when not in use where they would reduce the corridor to less than the required width. This includes keyboard trays and equipment doors that project more than 6 inches into the corridor when in use. These items shall be closed or retracted when the equipment is not in use or is unattended for any period of time.
- Alterations to reduce the projection of a wall mounted item do not reduce the protective requirements of the corridor wall.

If you have further questions regarding this matter, please contact James Merrill at (410) 786-6998.

Effective Date: The information contained in this memorandum is current policy and is in effect for all healthcare facilities. The State Agency (SA) should disseminate this information within 30 days of the date of this memorandum.

Training: This clarification should be shared with all survey and certification staff, fire authorities, surveyors, their managers, and the State/regional office (RO) training coordinator.

/s/

Thomas E. Hamilton

cc: Survey and Certification Regional Office Management