



Category 4: Facilities

OPTIONAL

4.10 Practice creates calming environments through lighting and sound engineering.

Practice must provide **at least of one (1)** of the following sound and lighting strategies to foster Fear Free environments to attain the 60 points.

- Minimize phone ringer, pager and intercom volume
- Sound walls around exam, treatment, wards
- Sound reduction strategies (baffles, ceilings, etc.)
- Masking sound
- Dimmable lighting in wards and exam rooms
- LED lighting in animal wards
- Natural light in animal wards and exam rooms

Equipment and Supplies

May include but are not limited to:

- Dimmers on lighting fixtures
- Sound projection equipment for masking sound
- Wall baffles for reducing noise
- Visual paging equipment to reduce noise

Examples and Compliance Paths

Possible Compliance Paths for Sound Engineering

- Visual and/or vibrating paging systems or turn down phone and pager ringer volumes
- Sound walls around exam, treatment and wards:
 - o During the design of the hospital, walls around these spaces can be insulated with sound batt insulation and can be constructed full height with all penetrations sealed to reduce sound leakage between spaces.¹
- Sound reduction strategies can include:
 - o High NRC (noise reduction coefficient) ceiling panels/tiles. These can be placed when the hospital is constructed or can be retrofitted after the hospital is in operation.²

¹ Sound Transmission Class (STC) of sound walls should achieve 43 or greater, and the doors and windows within sound walls should achieve an STC of 35 or greater.



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- Baffles added to walls or hard ceiling surfaces to reduce sound transmission. Choose baffles with an NRC of at least 1.0.
- Masking sound
 - Play classical music, music made for animals, audio-books, or use a white noise machine to mask background noises
 - Can be delivered through central speaker systems or simple sound systems in each room
 - Should be played at low volume (softly audible from a human perspective).

Possible Compliance Paths for Lighting Engineering

- Dimmable lighting in wards and exam rooms
- Lighting is turned down in wards and examination environments when medically appropriate. For example, a healthy patient can be housed in a darker ward when medical observation is not required. Dimmable lighting can be added when the hospital is being constructed or it can be retrofit.
- LED lighting in animal wards:
- LED lighting emits no buzzing or flickering common to fluorescent technologies. Use LED lighting when possible.
- Natural lighting in animal wards and exam rooms
- Provide outside windows in animal wards and exam spaces when possible
- Daylight can be brought into a space via skylight or tubular daylighting system and these can be retrofitted

Scoring

Observational

² Choose cleanable products that achieve the noise reduction criteria. For example, ceiling products made for human hospitals are appropriate.

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Photo Examples



Natural lighting in an examination room. Credit: Foto Imagery / Tim Murphy