

HEALING ARCHITECTURE

Construction Specialties 05



**HANDRAILS:
INCREDIBLY USEFUL IN
HOSPITALS AND RESIDENTIAL
CARE FACILITIES
(BUT OFTEN UNDERRATED)**

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As a healthcare provider, the infrastructures of your facility are crucial tools and capital that directly impact the health and safety of your users, as well as your reputation. Preventing the risk of infection and protecting against falls and knocks are critical priorities.

Despite being an often-overlooked feature, handrails are an excellent solution to meet these priorities. The cost of installing handrails in healthcare facilities is minimal compared to the annual costs of treating fall-related injuries.

Acrovyn® handrails offer impact- and scratch-resistance, providing a sense of security and support. They are specifically designed to provide stability and guidance to users. Additionally, our handrails are available in a variety of materials, colours, finishes, and surfaces with bacteriostatic and bactericidal properties. Whether you run a hospital, clinic, residential care facility, retirement home, or assisted living facility, Acrovyn® handrails are a valuable investment in improving health and safety for your users.





Risk of falls among older people and those with a disability

As you age, your body becomes weaker and less agile, and your balance is not what it was. That's why there is a greater risk of falls as you age.

To give you a better idea of the situation in Switzerland, here are a few figures:

	65–79 years of age	Over 80 years of age
Number of people over 65 living in a residential care facility ¹ (2021)	17.148	64.678
Occupancy rate in % in a residential care facility ¹ (2021)	1,4	13,7
Percentage of people unable to do basic household tasks or with serious difficulty ² (2017)	1,9	6,3
Percentage of people unable to take a bath or shower or with serious difficulty ² (2017)	1,8	5,3
Percentage of people unable to move around or only a few steps ² (2017)	1,5	7,9
Percentage of people who have fallen at least once in a year ² (2017)	23,5	33,1



¹ To 31 December

² People living in a private dwelling

Sources: SOMED, ESS

« Every year, 33% of people over 65 years of age suffer a fall, rising to 50% for the over-80s. »

Falls are the primary cause of death in older people. When an elderly person or someone with a disability falls, the consequences are generally more serious. As their bodies are weaker, these people are more injury-prone and find it harder to recover. What's more, these people suffer serious psychological trauma due to falls.

That's why we shouldn't downplay the issue of falling when it comes to older people and those with a disability.

HEALTHCARE FACILITIES: PLACES THAT SHOULD BE SECURE AND ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

Take France for example, each resident in an EHPAD care home falls twice a year on average. Half of all falls in such facilities, whether in France or Switzerland, go unnoticed as they occur at night. Estimates place the cost of care following an age-related fall at around 2 billion Euros a year.



Making hospitals physically accessible to all

As a place that welcomes patients, hospitals must ensure universal accessibility, catering to individuals regardless of their physical, mental, psychological condition or social standing. Hospital proprietors and directors need to prioritize the physical accessibility of their buildings to ensure that everyone can navigate the space comfortably and safely.

Hospitals are more than just facilities to alleviate suffering; they are designed to promote socialization, hope, and a sense of well-being. Therefore, it's crucial to consider accessibility as a universal issue, and adapting healthcare facilities to make them more accessible is essential to improve the comfort, safety, and

independence of all users, especially older people and individuals with disabilities.

Christine Bon, a Public Health Sociologist, believes a hospital for all considers everyone seeking treatment as a human first and foremost, rather than just a patient. Creating an inclusive and welcoming environment where patients feel valued, respected, and supported can promote better healthcare outcomes and improve the overall patient experience. Accessibility is a universal issue that requires consideration to enhance safety, comfort, and independence for all.

PROTECTING USERS IN HOSPITALS AND RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES

STAIRS REPRESENT A HAZARD

Stairs can be hazardous, causing many people to fall every year. Even a moment of inattention can result in serious consequences. To mitigate such risks, it is essential for public buildings, especially residential care facilities and hospitals, to invest in securing their stairs.



Lighting

Good lighting in stairs can prevent falls and must be:

- Uniform, so there are no shadows;
- Indirect to prevent glare and distraction



Fixtures and fittings

A first step in making stairs safer is to ensure they are highly visible. One effective way to achieve this is by using bright colours on the first and last risers, as well as those for intermediate landings. Additionally, stair nosing can be painted in a contrasting colour to the riser, which will make them stand out even more.

Another important consideration for safety is the height of the risers themselves. According to ISO 21542, risers should not exceed a height of 150 mm. Adding seats on every landing can also help to improve user comfort and safety.

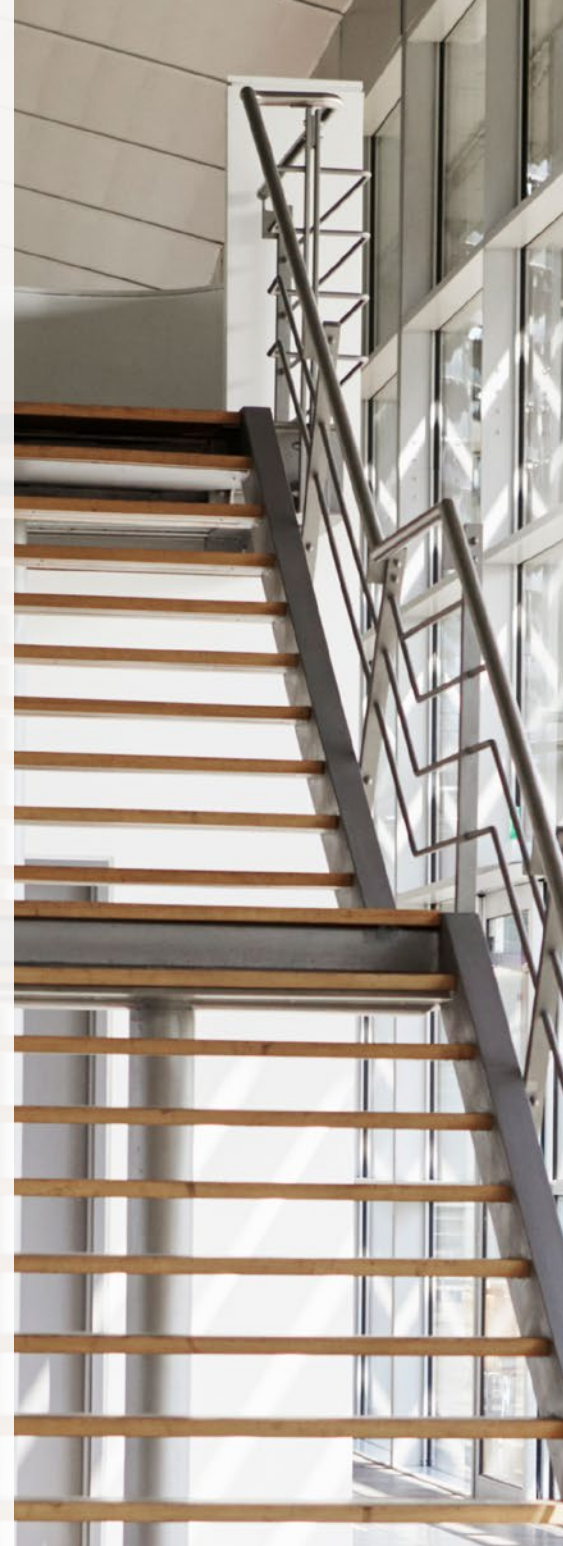
In addition to visible markings and appropriate riser height, fixtures such as guard railings and handrails are essential for securing stairs. Guard railings are necessary when stairs do not follow a wall, while handrails on walls provide an extra layer of safety and support."



Limiting falls in stairs with handrails

According to ISO 21542, handrails must be installed on both sides of all flights of stairs, and a central handrail should be provided when the unobstructed width of the stairs exceeds 2,700 mm. In this case, there must be an unobstructed width of at least 1,500 mm on one side. Additionally, stepped and sloped paths, ramps and stairs, and lift cars must also have handrails.

Besides being a legal requirement, handrails on stairs significantly reduce the risk of falls. People can use the handrails for support and catch themselves if they fall or slip. This is particularly important for children, older people, and those with disabilities who may have difficulty negotiating stairs without support.



« According to ISO 21542, handrails must be installed on both sides of all flights of stairs. »

THE UNDERESTIMATED ROLE OF HANDRAILS IN CORRIDORS, AREAS OF CIRCULATION, WAITING ROOMS AND OTHER LIVING AREAS

Handrails are not only suitable for stairs but also waiting areas and circulation spaces. They provide support, are helpful for patient transfers, and serve as a walking aid in lifts, corridors, washroom facilities, and more. For older people or those with disabilities, handrails offer more independence and a lower risk of falls, and they also add an extra layer of safety to inclined surfaces.

In bathrooms, grab rails help users get up from toilets and baths more easily and safely. And in showers, they limit the risk of a fall.

Handrails give users the everyday support and sense of security they need to negotiate stairs, corridors and other areas. They make getting around easier and safer as they prevent the risk of falls.

What are the requirements for handrails in public buildings and hospitals?

Handrails are an essential safety feature in buildings and facilities, but the requirements for their installation can vary across regions and countries.

The ISO standard 21542 requires handrails on both sides of all flights of stairs, with a 'rounded profile that can be inscribed into a 45 mm circle and subscribed to a 35 mm circle'. The radius of the rounded edges must be a minimum of 15 mm. Handrails must also have a horizontal extension of not less than 300 mm beyond the first and last nosing of each flight, with a minimum width between handrails of 1,000 mm.

In France, the NF P01-012 standard requires specific spacing between vertical and horizontal members in guard railings. Meanwhile, the new European standard EN 17210:2021 on accessibility in the built environment aims to improve accessibility for people with disabilities, but rules on disability access can vary between countries.

In Switzerland, each canton and commune has its own rules, and the requirements for licences to operate residential care facilities differ.

For example, in Fribourg, the premises and equipment must meet patient health and safety standards (Article 100 of the cantonal law on health). And with residential care facilities, this entails the installation of handrails in corridors.

In Geneva, Article 7 of the cantonal law on managing facilities for older people requires secure infrastructure and specific building standards. Article 9 of this same law defines general building standards.

The canton of Neuchâtel requires adequate infrastructure for facilities wanting licences to operate and drew up architecture norms in 2015 accordingly.







The quality requirements set by the association Qualivista are in use by the canton of Appenzell Rhodes-Extérieures. Meanwhile, the Berne cantonal ordinance on residential care facilities stipulates that the premises, layout, installations and location must meet the residents' needs.

Despite these differences, the consensus is that handrails provide valuable support and safety to residents in corridors of residential care facilities. Though handrails are not always mandatory, they are strongly recommended. Failure to install them may lead to legal issues if a claim is filed due to a fall, as lawyers may scrutinize the specific conditions for granting a licence to operate.





 Bactericide Handrail Acrovyn® HREB-6

KEY CRITERIA TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A HANDRAIL?

Handrails may often be overlooked, but their value is no longer up for dispute.

To help you choose the handrail for your new build or renovation, we have compiled a list of key criteria that your handrails must meet.

Comfort and grip: the first things to consider

When choosing a handrail, it's important to prioritize user comfort and grip. A round handrail with a diameter of 40mm is ideal, as it provides better grip than square or rectangular ones. Handrails installed on stairs should extend at least 300mm from the top and bottom of each flight of stairs. The ends of the handrail must be smooth and continuous, with no sharp edges and no risk of injury or getting caught. Additionally, handrails that are too wide, narrow, high, or have sharp edges are prohibited.

Sturdiness and Safety

The sturdier the handrail, the safer it is for users. Choose high-quality handrails made with reliable materials that will not break, crack or splinter. Handrails must also be fastened securely, as this can significantly affect their safety.

Visibility

A handrail must be clearly visible to ensure it is easy to spot and grasp hold of. Opt for handrails that contrast visually with the wall onto which they will be installed. This makes them more visible, especially for people with visual impairments.

With this in mind, Acrovyn® offers a range of illuminated handrails that use backlighting to make the handrail visible even in low light conditions, providing an added layer of safety.





🖼️ Illuminated Handrail Acrovyn® HREB-6 LED

Hygiene: vital for residential care facilities and hospital environments

Handrails in healthcare facilities must not only be sturdy but also hygienic. It is crucial to select materials that are **bacteriostatic** or have **bactericidal** properties to prevent healthcare-acquired infections, which are a leading cause of hospital deaths.

When choosing the finish for handrails, consider the ease of cleaning and resistance to detergents. Fixtures and fittings in hospital settings must meet the following criteria:

- Smooth, durable, continuous and waterproof surfaces for ease of cleaning and maintenance
- Materials that do not stimulate mould and microbial growth
- Robust installations that can withstand minor impacts
- Resistance to detergents and disinfectants

For example, while materials like wood are aesthetically pleasing, they are not suited to hospital settings. Stainless steel and aluminium are safer and easier to clean. But there are even more suitable materials for hospitals: Acrovyn®.

Its product range offers bacteriostatic protection as a minimum and another one that offers bactericidal protection.

Standard NF EN 1040 classifies bactericidal activity on plastic surfaces as follows:

- A surface is **bactericidal** when the bactericidal activity is 5-log kill or more, meaning there are up to 100,000 times fewer bacteria than on an untreated surface.
- A **bacteriostatic** surface corresponds to a bactericidal activity between 5-log kill and 1-log kill, that is, between 100,000 and 10 times fewer bacteria.
- When the **bactericidal** activity of a surface is less than 1-log kill, that denotes an inactive surface.

Acrovyn® wall protection products and handrails were created in 1969 at the request of interior architects. Since then, its product range has been constantly evolving and innovated to offer today versions with Acrovyn® Bactericide, woodgrain and PVC-free versions.

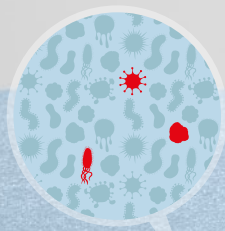


For the Acrovyn® Bactericide product range, Construction Specialties, the manufacturer of Acrovyn®, has partnered with Sanitized AG CH, the number one Swiss company for hygiene solutions. For instance, Acrovyn® Bactericide handrails are infused with a molecule developed by Sanitized, which provides a 5-log kill to limit bacterial growth on the surface of the

material, reducing the risk of cross-contamination and the transmission of infections.

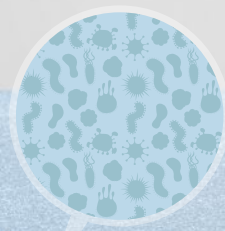
However, it is important to note that good hygiene and regular cleaning remain essential in maintaining a clean and healthy environment, and no single solution alone can replace these practices.

On non-bactericide surfaces bacteria might not find ideal living conditions but do not get actively killed. Surviving bacteria continue to constitute a serious infection risk.



Ordinary wall protection sheet

Acrovyn® Bactericide kills all bacteria through surface contact leaving no survivors. Its surface is 100% bacteria free.



CS Acrovyn® Bactericide

Classification of bactericide

A plastic surface can only be called bactericide if more than 99% of all bacteria are eliminated. This is determined by the ISO 22196 test and classified according to EN 10403 standard.

ISO 22196 determines the bactericidal activity of a plastic surface by applying the following formula:

Bactericidal activity = log bacteria on control surface - log bacteria on treated surface

Bactericide:

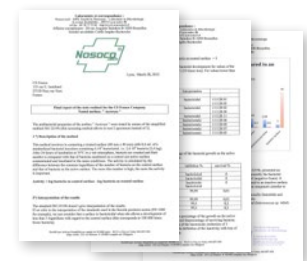
When its bactericidal activity is 5 or higher, which translates to 100,000 times fewer bacteria on the treated surface than on the inactive control surface.

Bacteriostatic:

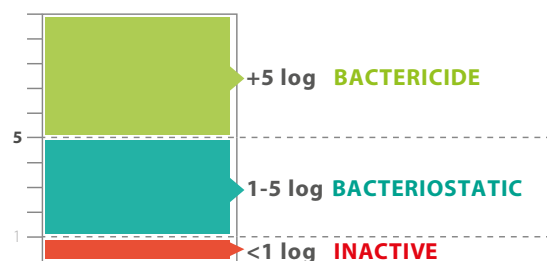
When its bactericidal activity is between 5 and 1 (100,000 to 10 times fewer bacteria).

Inactive:

When its bactericidal activity is lower than 1.



Nosoco.Tech, a renowned research institution of antimicrobial surface properties, tested and certified Acrovyn® Bactericide.



¹ ISO 22196: 2011 – 'Measurement of antibacterial activity on plastics and other non-porous surfaces'

² Sanitized® is a registered trademark of Sanitized AG.

³ EN 1040: 2005 – 'Chemical disinfectants and antiseptics - Quantitative suspension test for the evaluation of basic bacterial activity of chemical disinfectants and



A matter of taste and budget

You'll find a vast array of handrails on the market. So when your handrails meet the criteria listed above, all you have to do is select the product that best suits you and your budget.

Within the Acrovyn® product range, you'll find handrails with a wide range of colours and finishes that will blend in seamlessly with the other architectural features in your facility.

Using these handrails, you can create warm, inviting spaces that follow the principles of healing architecture. To learn more about healing architecture, refer to our previous articles 01, 02, 03, and 04.



« Residential care facilities and hospitals should be designed to promote life and comfort, not as places where life ends. Patients should feel at ease and at home in these environments. »

OUR TOP TIPS FOR INSTALLING HANDRAILS

Distance between the floor and the wall

To ensure accessibility and usability of the built environment, it is important to follow the guidelines set out in ISO 21542 for installing handrails in public buildings.

The handrail height should be between 850-1,000 mm from the floor or pitch line of a stair. This ensures that the handrail is at a comfortable height for most users.

Handrails must extend at least 300 mm on either side of the stairs, with the end either turning down to terminate at the floor or ground level or turning towards the wall. This provides users with ample support and stability when using the stairs.

To allow users' hands to slide freely without obstruction, there should be a minimum clear space of 40 mm between the wall and the handrail.

In hospitals, it is crucial to accommodate all, including people with disabilities. Handrails must be installed on both sides of stairs and corridors to ensure accessibility for everyone. This is particularly important for older people or those with disabilities, as they may find that one side of their body is more able than the other. Having handrails on both sides ensures that they can use the handrail that best suits them.

Securely fastened from underneath

To ensure that users can slide their hands freely along the handrails, they must be fastened from underneath. Moreover, it's crucial to fasten handrails securely to the wall to prevent detachment or failure, even when a heavy load is applied.

There are different types of wall fasteners available for handrails,

each suited to a specific wall texture such as concrete, plasterboard, or wood. The handrail must be secured to the wall using the most appropriate means.

Acrovyn® handrails offer two secure installation options. They can be fastened to the wall with hidden fasteners or the patented Quick Lock system. The latter allows for instant assembly and disassembly with the turn of a spanner, ensuring a flawless installation without drilling into the aluminium fastening rail.

Handrail continuity

Handrails must provide continuous support and guidance to users, especially in corridors or spiral staircases, even if the direction changes. This is where rail adapters come in handy.

Not only do handrails provide users with the support they need, but they also guide and help people with visual impairments find their way around. That is why they must be continuous and uninterrupted.

When to install handrails

Handrails can be included in the initial design of a new building or added during a renovation project for an existing structure.

It's important to note that regulations may vary depending on whether it is a new build or an older building. It is recommended to consult with your contractor to understand the local and national legal requirements for handrails in your area.



ACROVYN[®] HANDRAILS:

Stylish, Functional, and Comfortable



Acrovyn[®] handrails are designed to meet all the necessary standards for safety and accessibility, while also providing a comfortable and secure grip. They are not only functional but also stylish, making them an ideal choice for a variety of settings and configurations.

In addition to being easy to grip and clean, Acrovyn[®] handrails are extremely durable, withstanding scratches and impacts that can occur in high-traffic areas. They are also available in a range of materials and colors to match any architectural style.

Acrovyn[®] handrails are especially well-suited for healthcare and residential care facilities, where their bacteriostatic and bactericidal properties help to prevent the spread of germs and infections.

Whether you are designing a new building or renovating an existing one, Acrovyn[®] handrails are an excellent choice for providing both safety and style.



CREATING A HARMONIOUS, HEALING ENVIRONMENT WITH COUNTLESS COLOURS, MATERIALS AND FINISHES

You'll be spoilt for choice with the colours, materials and finishes available for Acrovyn® handrails.

This broad array of colours also means you will be able to create the necessary visual contrast between walls and handrails.

Acrovyn® handrails come in different materials, meeting a variety of hygiene requirements:



HREB-6

- Acrovyn Bactericide

Size: 40 mm Ø
Brackets: Stainless steel or aluminium

HRE-6

- Acrovyn

Size: 40 mm Ø
Brackets: Stainless steel or aluminium

HR-6N

- Acrovyn PVC-Free

Size: 40 mm Ø
Brackets: Stainless steel

HRW-6

- Timber

Size: 40 mm Ø
Brackets: Stainless steel

HRS-6

- Stainless steel

Size: 40 mm Ø
Brackets: Stainless steel

HRA-6

- Aluminium

Size: 40 mm Ø
Brackets: Stainless steel or aluminium

HRO-6

- Acrovyn ● Acrovyn PVC-Free

Size: 38 mm wide oval
Brackets: Stainless steel or aluminium

Oak Unfinished	Oak Natural
Oak Golden	Oak Walnut
Beech Unfinished	Beech Natural
Beech Golden	Beech Walnut

Wood finishes and varnish options

Acrovyn® handrails made from high-quality hardwood, stainless steel, or aluminium are prestigious products, but they are more suited for hotels, restaurants, and shops than healthcare facilities.

For areas where anti-bacterial control is crucial, we recommend handrail ranges designed for healthcare facilities, particularly the HREB-6 handrails with a bactericidal surface. The remaining Acrovyn® models are easy to clean and are bacteriostatic.

Acrovyn® handrails are available in a wide variety of colours, as shown in the following colour table:

9003 Snow White LRV 86	9010 Pure White LRV 83	933 Mission White LRV 74	100 Eggshell White LRV 73
801 Grey Cloud LRV 64	187 Tan Bark LRV 40	26 Taupe LRV 24	8019 Earth LRV 7
7044 Felt LRV 50	136 Pearl Grey LRV 39	162 Charcoal LRV 22	7043 Anthracite LRV 14
260 Misty Grey LRV 80	24 Dove Grey LRV 49	7024 Graphite LRV 10	108 Black LRV 8
11 Aqua Blue LRV 50	325 Cape Blue LRV 32	112 Pacific Blue LRV 24	520 Imperial Purple LRV 16
1015 Ice LRV 63	5018 Lagoon LRV 31	4030 Baltic Blue LRV 20	129 Yale Blue LRV 8
1510 Almond Green LRV 60	22 Anise LRV 56	3040 Prairie Green LRV 29	6020 Sequoia Green LRV 13
101 French Cream LRV 70	16 Golden Yellow LRV 66	17 Tangerine LRV 47	845 Spectrum Red LRV 15
510 Powder Pink LRV 79	2040 Coral Blush LRV 31	2050 Pink Grapefruit LRV 28	32 Sugar Plum LRV 13

Acrovyn and Acrovyn PVC-Free colour palettes

The range of colours and finishes offered by Acrovyn® handrails is designed to seamlessly integrate with any environment, whether it be a new build or a renovation project.

In addition to handrails, Acrovyn® also offers corner guards, wall protection sheets and crash rails that are available in the same array of colours, materials and finishes to complete and enhance the overall look and functionality of the space.

Colour and Contrast

Having the right colour contrast in a facility is important, especially for those with visual impairments or the elderly.

Contrast denotes the difference in luminance between two adjacent colours, which can be determined by measuring the Light Reflectance Value (LRV) using a spectrophotometer. Choosing colours with different Light Reflectance Values (LRVs) can help make different elements more visible.



When designing a facility, it's essential to consider the various elements that need contrast, such as:

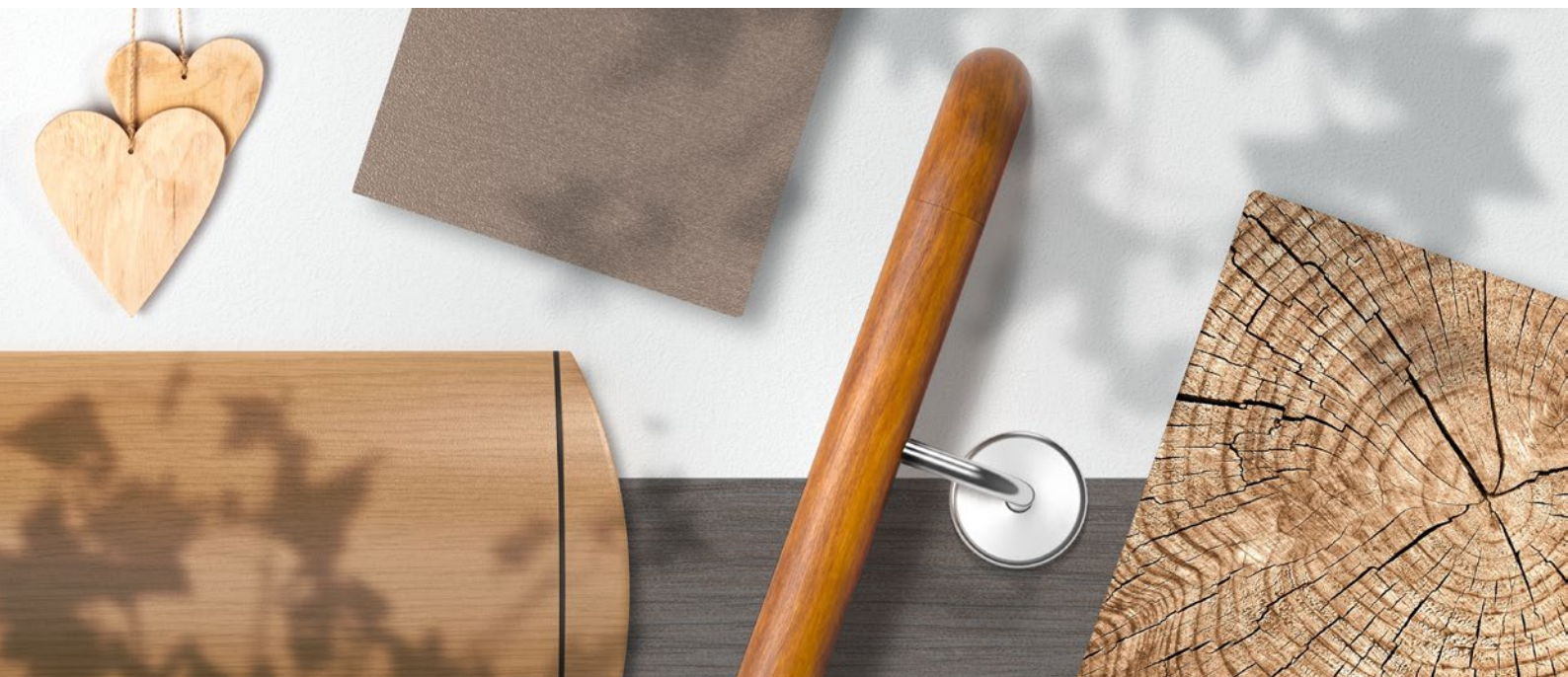
The elements that must contrast are:

- Doors or door frames and walls;
- Walls and floors;
- Walls and ceilings;
- Obstacles (angles, posts, and so on);
- Handrails and walls;
- Treads and steps;
- Toilet facilities

The notion of colour contrasts varies between different European countries. Contact your local authorities to check the directives and legislation that apply in your country.

Harmonious areas with different levels of contrasts

Acrovyn® offers a range of colours that can be combined to create peaceful, nature-inspired spaces. Each of the combinations below has a different level of contrast - none, low, and high.



COMBINATION 1

This first combination echoes the harmony of the branch and the bird. The walnut finish for the floor, wall protection and handrail offer minimal contrast. This combination is suited to people with good vision and is a better fit for hotels than healthcare facilities.

NCS 0300-N



COMBINATION 2

This second combination is used to create a light, harmonious space with moderate contrasts. You have Marmoleum flooring with grey hues, cream-coloured wall protection, walls painted a medium light shade of yellow, and a silk grey handrail. The inspiration for this look was the beauty of a landscape bathed in the light of a misty sunrise.

NCS 2010-Y30R



COMBINATION 3

This last combination was inspired by woodgrain with driftwood-style flooring, copper-coloured wall protection, a taupe handrail and a white wall. This elegant, harmonious look has stark contrasts, making it ideal for hospitals and retirement homes.

NCS 2010-Y30R





Angle adapters for handrail continuity

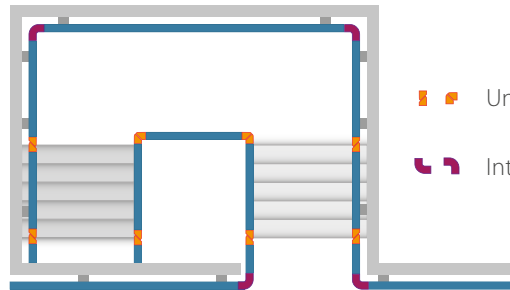
When it comes to handrails, it's essential that they provide continuous support and guidance throughout corridors and stairs.

Acrovyn® offers angle adapters to ensure that their handrail range can adapt to all configurations, whether it's stairs, corridors, or more.

The universal angle adapters mean you can install continuous handrails on stairs. The rotary connectors

adapt to all angles and all stair configurations as they swivel on both axes.

Additionally, Acrovyn® handrails can be installed on curved walls, bending and curving to follow walls continuously, even when they are not flat. This flexibility allows for a seamless and secure handrail solution in any space.



 Universal angle adapters

 Internal/external angle end caps



A range of Acrovyn® Bactericide products

Acrovyn® offers a comprehensive range of bactericidal products, including handrails, that are designed for use in hospitals and residential care facilities where hygiene is of utmost importance in reducing the risk of hospital-acquired infections.

The Acrovyn® Bactericide HREB-6 handrails are certified ISO 22196, ensuring bacteria-free surfaces. These handrails are highly effective against most bacterial strains in food and hospital-acquired infections, with a plastic surface being considered bactericidal if it eliminates at least 99% of bacteria (5-log kill).

Acrovyn® Bactericide products are made with Sanitized's antimicrobial additive - zinc pyrithione - which is effective throughout the product's lifetime. This molecule is incorporated into the Acrovyn® material and continues to be effective, even with cleaning.

Not only are Acrovyn® Bactericide handrails safe, hygienic, aesthetic and multi-purpose, but they also have other advantages. They can withstand and deflect a rolling load of 250 kg that hits it at 5 km/h (3 mph) with no damage, deformation or cracks. As they are ultra-resistant, the protection against impacts and scratches is unparalleled.

In addition, Acrovyn® Bactericide handrails can withstand chemical agents, UV rays, and artificial light. They are designed using Acrovyn® self-extinguishing resin and have European fire ratings M1 and b-s2, d0. These handrails have been formulated to withstand the most common acids, detergents, mineral and vegetable oils, alcohols, essential oils, and more.

Complete technical data sheets, including chemical resistance tests, are available upon request. Lastly, these bactericidal handrails are produced in an environmentally-friendly way, making them a green solution for hospitals and residential care facilities.

Tested and certified



Acrovyn® Bactericide has been tested to ISO 22196 for its bactericidal efficacy against 7 common species and classified under EN 1040.

Escherichia coli



Activity in log: 5,4
Classification:
Bactericidal

Staphylococcus aureus



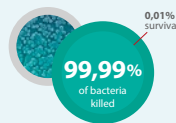
Activity in log: 5,1
Classification:
Bactericidal

Mycobacterium smegmatis



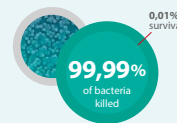
Activity in log: >5
Classification:
Bactericidal

SARM*



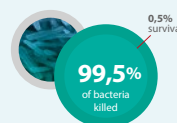
Activity in log: 3,92
Classification:
Bacteriostatic

Salmonella enteritidis



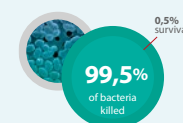
Activity in log: 4,1
Classification:
Bacteriostatic

Listeria monocytogenes



Activité : 2,661
Classification:
Bacteriostatic

Enterococcus species



Activité : 2,28
Classification:
Bacteriostatic

* Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus

LOOKING AT THE OVERALL PICTURE WHEN DESIGNING A NEW BUILD OR RENOVATING

Use case – Monthey Clinique Gériatrique de Réadaptation, a geriatric rehabilitation clinic in Switzerland



View of the main entrance to the Monthey Clinique Gériatrique de Réadaptation (Opened in 2022)

The Monthey Clinique Gériatrique de Réadaptation is a geriatric rehabilitation clinic located in Switzerland, which opened its doors in September 2022. As part of the Riviera-Chablais hospital in Rennaz, the clinic was established in the hospital's historic buildings, requiring a renovation project that aligned with the hospital's visual branding to convey a sense of unity between the two structures.

With the same brown and beige colour palette, the renovation focused on achieving an appealing look that would match the colour and materials of the hospital and make it clear the two structures were related. By incorporating the hospital's branding within the clinic, patients and visitors could easily identify with it and find their way around.

Laurence Di Florio, the hospital's interior architect, explains that the decision-making committee involved several working groups that consisted of architects, prime contractors, senior management, and employees from various departments within the future geriatric rehabilitation clinic, such as physiotherapists, medical staff, and technical and logistics services. The result is a beautifully designed and functional space that supports the needs of patients and staff alike.

With each person's suggestions and requests for fixtures, fittings and products to hand, the specifications genuinely reflected user needs in terms of safety, mobility, user-friendliness and well-being.

The designers also considered the layout of spaces, signs, and colour choices to ensure patients could find



View of the hospital foyer (same shades and signs as the Monthey geriatric rehabilitation clinic)



ascending the floors were likened to ascending the Haute Cime in the Dents du Midi mountain range.

The blues, greens and browns on levels 1,2 and 3 and the hospital logo “recall the water in the lake, the lush green valley and the earth of the mountains.”

Although there are no legal requirements that dictate the installation of handrails in geriatric rehabilitation centres, these accessories have become increasingly popular. Physiotherapists highly recommend their installation, and medical staff have observed their usefulness in terms of patient mobility and safety.

Legally speaking, handrails are only required in areas such as sloped paths, stairs, ramps, and lift cars. However, in geriatric services, staff members understand the importance of equipping spaces with fixtures and fittings that enable patients to have as much independence as possible while remaining safe. As a result, handrails are strongly recommended in areas designed for patients, particularly circulation spaces or waiting areas.



Aerial view of the Riviera-Chablais hospital (opened in 2019)

their way around easily. Medical staff brainstormed the design, drawing inspiration from the nearby mountain ranges. Therefore, the clinic’s services were named after mountain chains in the Chablais Alps, such as Grand Muveran, Chamossaire, and Haute Cime. Patients

For new builds or renovation projects, it is crucial to integrate these fixtures and fittings from the outset to ensure that delivery times are met. In the case of the Monthey geriatric rehabilitation clinic, much consideration was given to the contrast between walls

and handrails. The clinic ultimately decided on beige/off-white handrails that would blend in perfectly with the facility's interior design.

The Monthey geriatric rehabilitation clinic carefully selected the HREB-6 bactericidal handrail for patient safety and comfort. The 40mm diameter and round shape make it easy to grasp, while the Acrovyn material ensures it is highly resistant and withstands daily cleaning with stringent detergents without deteriorating over time.

In addition to handrails, other fixtures and fittings were installed to enhance patient comfort and safety:

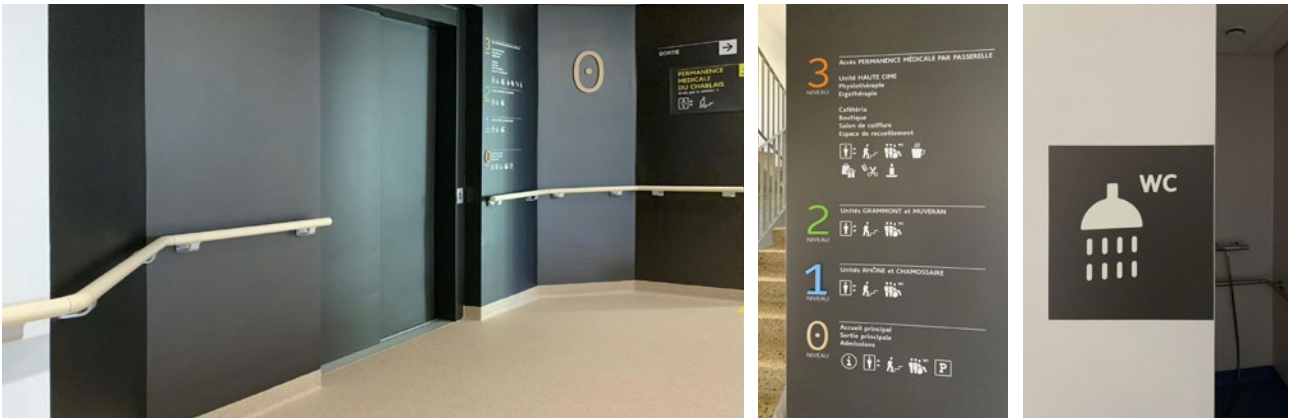
- Signage with bigger and more visible writing than that used on the Rennaz site.
- Phosphorescent symbols on washroom doors in bedrooms, making it easy for users to locate toilets at night.
- An automatic pilot light system with movement

detection, placed at the foot of the bed, which illuminates when the patient gets up, making it easier to visualise the space, especially corners in walls

- Removal of floor threshold strips, which can cause falls, at the entrance to rooms or between different units.
- Handles on medicine cabinets in patient bathrooms, allowing patients to use them for support if necessary.

A cafeteria designed to be a place for socialising and a haven of comfort, featuring warm beige and cappuccino hues and wood furniture for a pleasant and reassuring look overall.

Before this renovation project, falls were fairly common. Since then, even though it's still a bit too early to say for sure, the risk seems to be considerably less. Corner guards could be a valuable addition to prevent repetitive knocks on corners from equipment and trolleys.



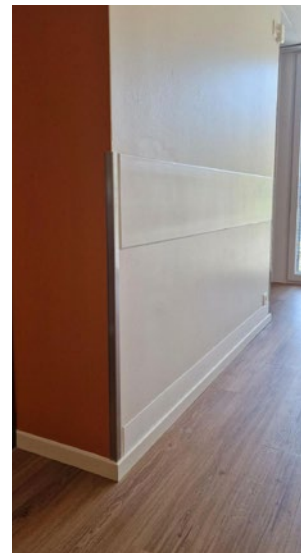


Residential Care Facility Les Roches, Orvins, Switzerland

Use case – Les Roches in Orvins, Switzerland, a residential care facility

Let's take a brief look at the example of another residential care facility – Les Roches in Orvins, Switzerland. Corner guards were installed along with handrails across the facility's three floors.

The natural wood handrails match the stainless steel end caps, coupled with stainless steel corner guards. To top off the look, sleek Acrovyn® rub rails were used.



Residential Care Facility Les Roches, Orvins, Switzerland



Conclusion

Very few building features can improve comfort and safety for such a low cost. Handrails are not a luxury. They are a necessity.

Acrovyn® handrails meet all health and safety standards. They are robust and are suitable for all configurations and interiors to create a contrasted and uniform look – a key part of healing architecture.



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