

## 5 Common Issues Related to Environment of Care

Effective environmental services are essential for providing safe and sanitary environments for both patients and staff; however, regulatory inspections show that many hospitals face some common challenges. Below are commonly cited issues related to the environment of care identified during healthcare regulatory inspections with tips on how to address them.

01

### Proper Labeling of Chemicals

Unlabeled chemicals can pose safety risks for patients and staff. Establish clear guidelines for labeling all chemicals with product names, hazard warnings and instructions to prevent potential hazards. Assign one person to conduct a review of all chemicals used routinely.



02

### Security of Environmental Services Carts

Unlocked and unattended environmental services carts leave potential for unauthorized access or tampering. Ensure environmental services carts are outfitted with secure locking mechanisms to prevent unauthorized access or tampering. Instruct staff on when and how EVS carts should be locked.

03

### Cleaning Responsibility for Ice Machines

Ice machines require regular cleaning to maintain hygiene standards. Responsibilities for cleaning and maintenance of ice machines should be clearly defined and cleaning schedules clearly documented and easily accessible.



04

### Condition of Ceiling Tiles, Air Ducts and High Dust

Dirty, moldy or spotted ceiling tiles and air ducts can compromise indoor air quality, and high dust can lead to contamination of patient care areas. Staff members should be trained on proper dusting techniques and appropriate tools and equipment.

05

### Maintenance of Furniture

Chipped or damaged hospital furniture can harbor bacteria and give an unclean appearance. Staff should conduct routine inspections of furniture to identify any damage, wear or cleanliness issues and ensure they are addressed promptly.



Sodexo Healthcare can help you achieve consistency and standardization across your environmental services and infection prevention programs.