

What is Healthcare IPS?

From IPS styles and HBN compliant healthcare sanitaryware assemblies to infection control and maintenance, this article will take you through the key areas when specifying healthcare IPS units.

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Integrated Panelling Systems, also known as IPS, are used in washrooms to hide pipework and services, such as concealed cisterns, while still providing easy access for either routine or emergency maintenance. These can be used in various sectors but are often specified in healthcare environments such as doctor's surgeries and hospitals.

Healthcare IPS units are usually located in clinical areas to house sanitaryware and brassware for wash stations, disposal, plaster preparation or WC areas. Typically healthcare IPS have enhanced features over commercial IPS to ensure safety and cleanliness, carry on reading to find out the specifics.

Healthcare IPS Styles

There are two healthcare IPS styles that we offer, [Traditional Boxed out Unit](#) and [Trust System](#). It is important to note that neither style is superior to the other, the choice depends on client or design preferences. Both styles are compliant with HBN (Health Building Note) regulations and offer their own set of benefits.

Traditional Boxed Out Unit

Traditional healthcare IPS used to be the standard design for all healthcare environments featuring large access panels, flashgaps and frame. Still widely used in hospitals and GP surgeries across the UK, our [Traditional Boxed Out Unit](#) is a steel framed system that is securely mounted to the wall using tie back rods. It is available with hinged and lockable, top-hinged access panels, providing a large access area available to carry out maintenance on concealed pipework. Our panel-dock system technology ensures constant alignment of the panels, eliminating any dirt traps.



Trust System

In recent years, there has been a development in healthcare IPS design, resulting in a more modern look. Our [Trust System](#) follows this design trend, fabricated from Solid Grade Laminate (SGL) with a postformed laminated face creating a totally seamless appearance. In addition to its box style, the Trust System differs from the Traditional design with access being achieved through lockable hatches with neoprene seals. This postformed Trust System is installed using toggles that easily click into provided wall channels with secure tie back rods for enhanced strength.



HBN Compliant Healthcare Sanitary Assemblies

HBN compliant [Healthcare Sanitary Assemblies](#) consist of the chosen IPS paired with the appropriate sanitaryware and brassware for the intended use. The requirements for these units are outlined in the [Health Building Notes \(HBN\)](#), “give the best practice guidance on the design and planning of new healthcare buildings and on the adaptation or extension of existing facilities”. When it comes to healthcare IPS, we specifically focus on HBN 00-10 Part C Sanitary Assemblies. The document provides specific guidelines for healthcare sanitary assemblies to ensure they are safe, hygienic and durable.

It is essential to follow the HBN 00-10 Part C requirements when specifying healthcare sanitary assemblies. All of our healthcare IPS and selection of sanitaryware and brassware have been designed to ensure HBN compliance. The document uses a reference system to detail the typical room application and specifies the types of brassware and sanitaryware that can be used together. It also details the recommended distance between the brassware and sanitaryware items to prevent any cross-contamination with water splashing out of the basin or sink. Our [Healthcare Brochure](#) uses this reference system, providing imagery of typical room applications creating an easy to use specification guide.

Enhanced Infection Control

Healthcare IPS design has evolved over the years to bring the highest level hygiene. The HBN regulations emphasise panel materials to be “durable and impervious”. Our healthcare IPS units are supplied with Solid Grade Laminate panels, which has a compact core, making it highly durable. These panels are also impervious to liquid, making them it easy to clean without the need for meticulous drying to prevent damage. Our precision manufacturing techniques ensure that our Traditional healthcare IPS panels butt together precisely, eliminating a potential breeding ground for infections. Our Trust System features hygiene seals around the access hatches to prevent water ingress and provides a smooth all-round finish.

[Healthcare sanitaryware](#) and brassware play a crucial role in maintaining hygiene and preventing the transmission of infections. Features such as smooth surfaces, seamless designs, and easily to clean materials are prioritised to minimise the accumulation of bacteria and pathogens. [Brassware](#) that incorporates touchless technology can reduce the risk of cross-contamination through hand contact. In situations where mixer taps are required, the addition of a thermostatic mixing valve (TMV3) can regulate the flow of hot and cold water. The World Health Organisation (WHO) note that bacteria is rapidly destroyed at above 65°C, water initially moving through the pipework should reach this temperature to ensure that bacteria is not

present. The TMV3 then works to limit the temperature to reduce the risk of scalding and deliver a safe temperature (around 40°C) to the user.

Access and Maintenance

Most healthcare sanitary assemblies will require access to pipework and services behind so that routine or emergency maintenance can be carried out. At Bushboard Washrooms we offer two styles of access in our healthcare IPS.

Our [Traditional Boxed Out Unit](#) is a top hinged system with a locking panel stay mechanism. This allows the panel to be securely held in place during maintenance. The panel is locked through a cross brace, and access can only be granted with the correct key on the anti-tamper lock.



Our [postformed Trust System](#) is a hatch style access that is side hinged and lockable. The rebated hatch creates a flush box when shut. Similar to our Traditional Boxed Out Unit, this system also uses an anti-tamper lock with suited keys to grant access. The lock clicks onto a bracket inside the box, ensuring that it remains shut and flush at all times.



In addition to ensuring convenient access, regular maintenance routines should be established to address any potential issues and prevent disruptions in healthcare

facilities. This includes regular inspection of components such as pipes, valves, and fittings for leaks, corrosion or signs of wear. Brassware should also be inspected for any malfunctioning sensors or issues with temperature regulation. Training and educating staff on proper protocols, including identification of warning signs and reporting procedures, is vital to maintaining functionality and safety of healthcare IPS, sanitaryware and brassware.

Conclusion

In conclusion, healthcare IPS, sanitaryware and brassware play crucial roles in ensuring safety, hygiene and efficiency in healthcare facilities. Compliance with HBN regulations is a priority when specifying healthcare sanitary assemblies, as it guarantees that the units are suitable for their intended use. The evolution of healthcare IPS design, materials, water conservation and maintenance can all contribute to enhanced infection control. By considering these factors and following best practices, healthcare facilities can create sanitary environments that prioritise reducing the spread of infection and improving patient safety.