

# UNI T1780: 2020 Furniture - Hospital and medical furniture

## - Requirements and test methods

Alberto Gelosa, Andrea Giavon

May 2020

The healthcare sector, as regards the non-specific equipment that we can see every day, has always been characterized by a diversified situation in which some products are heavily regulated by laws and consequent harmonized standards (for example medical devices) while for others it does not exist any specific regulatory reference. Among the latter, furniture is certainly involved, as an essential element for the functionality and receptivity of the health structures (in all their variants) so as to become, very often, a dedicated product line by the furniture industry if not even characterized by dedicated companies.

It is easy to understand how this type of furniture must have specific characteristics oriented to the particular intended use and the particular user involved (patient, healthcare staff, visitors).

This was the starting point of the Italian Furniture Commission when we started the standardization work. This approach has also been shared with other industrial sectors involved who have found it interesting and indispensable to produce a voluntary technical standard that gives clear references in the market by regulating and enhancing the products for the market.



The standard applies to the following products:

- Waiting seats in the wards, in the common areas and in the hospital rooms
- Tables in common areas and in hospital rooms
- Unheated food trolleys and service trolleys
- Container furniture in common areas, in hospital rooms and in doctors' offices
- Cots for babies
- Baby beds

The document does not apply to electrified products, medical beds, therapeutic treatment beds and wheelchairs as they are covered by the European legislation. It also does not apply to office furniture.

In any case, as suggested in a note, the standard can be used for the risk assessment of the aforementioned products,

# UNI T1780: 2020 Furniture - Hospital and medical furniture

## - Requirements and test methods

Alberto Gelosa, Andrea Giavon

when the relevant harmonized standard does not exist or when it is not considered sufficient for a correct risk management.

Hospital safety, the ongoing health emergency teaches us, is a value that cannot be underestimated in order not to endanger the health and physical safety of patients and operators.

For this reason, UNI T1780 was conceived and developed starting from the assumption that in hospital structures there is a complete scenario of possible risks (physical, chemical and biological), which are difficult to find in other realities.

Starting from the design, great importance was given to cleaning and sanitizing all the furnishings. Particular attention is given to the fabrics used in upholstered furniture, as they present high risks of hosting pathogenic bacteria. The standard suggests the use of specific materials and construction methods to face this danger.

The metal components must guarantee resistance to corrosion and static drawing.

The surfaces used in storage units and tables must ensure adequate resistance to various stresses, such as: resistance to scratching, dry and humid heat, cold liquids, resistance to cleaning / disinfection products, etc.

Table 3 - *Requirements for the finishes of the storage units* - lists the requirements and the relative test methods, referring to the European standards in force.

*EN 71-3 - Toy safety - Migration of some elements* - is used to avoid any chemical risk that all surfaces of the different furniture parts may present in direct contact with users.

Storage furniture, tables, seats, cots and cribs must meet the general safety and stability requirements and ensure compliance with the resistance and durability requirements set by the maximum levels of the relevant European standards.

A chapter was also dedicated to the biological risk that products can present.

Particular attention has been given to those bacteria (*Staphylococcus aureus*, *Klebsiella pneumoniae* and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*) responsible for infections that can be fatal and that are the most common in all European hospitals.

For this reason, the furniture manufacturer must provide, in addition to the instructions on cleaning and maintenance of the same, detailed information on suitable disinfectants that can be used to face this danger.

In an informative attachment some examples of disinfection materials and methods / products are reported.

Finally, the information and instructions that must be provided by the manufacturer are of great importance to ensure the safe and adequate use of furniture.

### For info:

Alberto Gelosa  
+39 039 464567  
gelosa@catas.com

Andrea Giavon  
+39 0432 747230  
giavon@catas.com