



Did You Know?

Health PEI

Least Restraint Policy

Health PEI follows the practice of a **least restraint** meaning a patient/client/resident is not restrained unless all other alternatives have been unsuccessful to assure safety, and a restraint is only then used after consultation with healthcare providers and family.

A **restraint** is a measure used to limit the activity or control of a person or a portion of their body (Canadian Nurses Protective Society, 2021). Restraints can be used if it is necessary to prevent serious harm/injury to a patient/client/resident or others.

Check out the *Self Directed Resource Guide: Least Restraint* available on the Staff Resource Centre:
<https://src.healthpei.ca/nursing-education>

Types of restraints include:

- **Environmental** – any barrier or device that limits the mobility of an individual to a specific geographical area or location;
- **Physical/mechanical** – use of a technique, device or mechanism to prevent, restrict or subdue the free movement of a person or a portion of their body;
- **Chemical/pharmacological** – use of medication to specifically control a person's behaviour.

The purpose of *Health PEI's Least Restraint Policy* is to assist health care providers in focusing on strategies for assessment and to minimize, where possible, any method of limiting patient/client/resident freedom. The policy is available on the Policy Development Management System (PDMS/MedWorxx).

Keep in Mind:

- A comprehensive assessment and care plan of the patient/client/resident is required prior to the use of a restraint.
- Any restraint will be used as a last resort and for the shortest time possible.
- Regular monitoring of a restrained patient/client/resident is essential and frequency of monitoring is outlined in the Least Restraint Policy.
- The patient/client/resident and/or the substitute decision maker must be informed of the reason for the restraint, risks associated with the initiation of a least restraint, and the risks of not initiating least restraint.
- A restraint may be initiated in an emergent situation (where there is immediate, serious risk of harm to patient/client/resident or others) to maintain safety.