

## Reducing Restraint Use

### Why is reducing the use of physical restraints important?

While physical restraints were once regarded as necessary for the safety of some residents, research has proven that restraints increase the likelihood of injury and may cause serious health problems such as poor circulation, constipation, incontinence, weak muscles and bones, pressure sores, poor appetite and infections. Advancing Excellence's goal is to make sure all "nursing home residents are independent to the best of their ability and rarely experience daily physical restraints."

### How can nursing assistants help reduce the use of restraints?

- Abide by the philosophy that restraints are rarely used and are reserved for extreme circumstances.
- Learn the difference between a restraint and an enabler.
- Look for patterns of behavior that lead to falls.
  - Keep water close to a resident and take residents to the bathroom often to prevent falls.
  - Look for restless behavior, agitation and pain that can lead to residents wandering unsafely.
- Recognize that resident behaviors may reflect emotions or physical conditions such as pain or infection.
- Determine the triggers for agitated behaviors in each resident, and learn how to prevent them.
- Learn what calms a resident, and use that as an intervention to prevent and minimize restless behaviors, such as:
  - Doing an activity that he or she enjoys; ask activity staff for ideas to keep restless residents engaged;
  - Sit with a resident for a few minutes holding his or her hand and visit;
  - Offer a resident a snack or something to drink; or
  - Redirect or distract a resident with Alzheimer's.
- Check the care plans for specific interventions that calm residents.
- Be aware that the resident might be in pain, and discuss this with the charge nurse.
- Volunteer to be a part of the facility restraint-free committee.
- If a restraint must be used, be on the lookout for pressure areas, urinary tract infections, decrease in other functional abilities, and behavioral changes of your resident that may occur during the use of a restraint.
- Follow your nursing home's protocols for restraint use.
- Participate in in-services related to restraints.
- Talk to the charge nurse if you have a suggestion that you think would work better for a resident and prevent use of a restraint.



## Restraints Resources

### Campaign Resources:

- Webinar - Reducing Restraints Safely  
<http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org>
- "Implementing Change in Long-Term Care"  
<http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org>
- "Campaign Goals and Objectives"  
<http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org>
- "Top 10 Ideas to Involve All Staff in Advancing Excellence"  
<http://www.nhqualitycampaign.org>

### Best Practice Resources:

- Providing Restraint-Free Care: *One key to eliminating the perceived need for restraints in people with Alzheimer's disease is individualized care.*  
<http://www.providermagazine.com/pdf/caregiving-12-2006.pdf>
- Minimizing Restraints in Nursing Homes: A Guide to Action  
<http://oig.hhs.gov/oei/reports/oei-01-91-00840.pdf>
- Physical Restraint Use in Nursing Homes: The Exception Not the Rule Part – A 3 part series from CMS  
<http://www.cmstraining.info/pubs/archive.aspx>

### Lessons Learned Resources:

- Strategies for Reducing Physical Restraints – Audio Recording  
<http://www.qualishealthmedicare.org/QL/reducerestraintsnh.cfm>

### Links to Relevant Organizations:

- Untie the Elderly  
[www.ute.kendal.org](http://www.ute.kendal.org)
- National Association of Health Care Assistants  
<http://www.nahcacares.org>
- National Network of Career Nursing Assistants  
<http://www.cna-network.org>
- Nursing Assistant Resources On The Web  
<http://nursingassistants.net>
- American Association for Homes and Services for the Aged  
<http://www.aahsa.org/>
- American Health Care Association  
<http://www.ahcancal.org/>
- National Long Term Care Ombudsman Resource Center  
<http://www.ltombudsman.org/>