

# CHEMICAL RESTRAINT

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Chemical Restraint is a type of restrictive practice defined in a law called the Senior Practitioner Act 2018. This law applies to providers.

These are medications that are used to help manage behaviours of concern. Behaviours of concern are behaviours that hurt the person or any other person.

If the person has a physical condition or illness or a mental illness, and they are taking medication that helps that physical or mental illness, that is treatment.

It is not unusual that when behaviour escalates the person may be prescribed a medication for a short amount of time while other supports are put in place.

### **I'm a provider, how can I tell if the medication that I am giving needs to be reported?**

This is decided by the purpose.

Ask: 'What is the medication going to help with?' If the answer is a behaviour of concern, or to help manage behaviour problems, chances are you will need to report it while seeking a greater understanding of what is causing the behaviour.

If you are giving the medication and you are a provider under the Senior Practitioner Act 2018, section 10 of the Senior Practitioner Act 2018 says each time you give the medication you need to report the use to the Senior Practitioner.

If in doubt, please contact the Senior Practitioner to discuss.

### **If the doctor has prescribed it, do I need to report it?**

All medication in response to behaviour is prescribed, and doctors prescribe it in order to help. If the medication is helping to manage behaviour, you should report it.

## What should I, or the family, ask the doctor?

- What is the medication going to help with?
- Are there any side effects I should know about?
- How do I know if it is working?
- When should I see an improvement?
- If it's not working what should I do?
- When should we review this medication?

## What do I do if I have no say over what the doctor prescribes for the person?

Start the conversation with the people, for example the person's family, who do have a say. Collect and communicate data on the things that the medication is meant to be helping with, as well as any potential side effects. This will help the doctor make decisions about prescribing.

Provide information and education on a range of options for behaviour support, including frameworks such as positive behaviour support, and help implement them where you can.

## If there is a change in medication do we need a new plan?

If a restrictive practice is added, or the use or amount increases, usually this means that we haven't got our supports and strategies for the person quite right.

A new medication to manage behaviour should be reported as an emergency restraint while the PBS Plan is being reviewed and rewritten if needed. The revised plan should be submitted to the Panel for approval then the Senior Practitioner for registration.

To understand more about the Senior Practitioner Act 2018, go to:

<https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/quality-complaints-and-regulation/office-of-the-senior-practitioner>