

## **WHAT ARE RESTRAINTS?**

### **1. PHYSICAL RESTRAINTS**

Any manual method, physical or mechanical device, material or equipment attached or adjacent to the resident's body that the individual cannot remove easily, which restricts movement or normal access to one's own body.

### **2. CHEMICAL RESTRAINTS**

A psychopharmacological drug that is used for discipline or convenience and not required to treat medical symptoms.

### **WHY ARE PHYSICAL RESTRAINTS USED?**

- As a perceived means of protecting frail and demented residents from falls
- As a substitute for individualized care
- Fear of liability

### **WHY ARE CHEMICAL RESTRAINTS USED?**

- To control behavior

### **ETHICAL ISSUES**

- Resident's right to be free of physical and chemical restraints
- Preservation of autonomy

## **WHAT ARE THE POOR OUTCOMES OF RESTRAINT USE?**

### **Changes In Body Systems Due To Physical Restraints**

- Loss of muscle tone
- Weakened bone structure
- Cardiovascular stress
- Pressure sores
- Incontinence
- Chronic constipation
- Increased agitation
- Depression
- Loss of mobility

### **Changes In Body Systems Due To Chemical Restraints**

- Loss of ADL (Activities of Daily Living) function
- Loss of cognition
- Aggression
- Hallucinations

### **Changes That May Affect Quality Of Life**

- Reduced social contact
- Withdrawal from surroundings
- Less participation in activities
- Loss of independence and control
- Decreased desire to eat
- Increased problems with sleep patterns
- Loss of dignity

### **Risk With Restraints:**

- Possible death
- Strangulation/injury
- Pressure sores
- Agitation
- Reduced bone mass
- Stiffness in joints
- Permanent decreased loss of Mobility

### **Risk Without Restraints:**

- Falls
- Temporary decreased/loss of Mobility as a result of a fall

## **LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

### **OBRA 1987 States The Resident Has The Right To Be Free From... Physical Or Chemical Restraints Imposed For Purposes Of Discipline Or Convenience And Not Required To Treat The Resident's Medical Symptoms.**

This does not preclude the use of assistive Devices when deemed medically necessary and/or appropriate.

The CT LTCOP has compiled the information contained in this brochure from multiple resources that address the "Use of Restraints" in nursing homes.

\*PUBLICATION NUMBER 02-18/Rev3/7/07

It is the facility's responsibility to assess, address, and resolve any medical, physical and environmental causes of falls. Physical or Chemical restraints should only be considered as a last resort and only to respond to a medical condition.

## **QUESTIONS TO ASK REGARDING FALL PREVENTION**

### **INTERVENTION**

1. Has there been a medical evaluation to Look for active medical problems? For Example: muscle weakness, anemia, medication side effects, infection, cardiac arrhythmia, dehydration, neurological impairments .etc.
2. Has there been a gait evaluation and referral to a physical therapist for restorative training? For example: muscle strengthening, balance training, prescription of assistive devices.
3. Has there been an environmental assessment of possible contributing factors? for example: poor lighting, slippery floors, bed too high, inappropriate footwear, visually confusing patterned rugs, door thresholds, etc.

*Thorough, individualized resident assessment, and care planning are the most effective methods for determining the need and/or appropriateness of the use of restraints.*

For Further Information and Available Resources Contact Your Regional Ombudsman

**TOLL FREE NUMBER  
1-866-388-1888**

**CENTRAL OFFICE  
LTC State Ombudsman  
25 Sigourney Street,  
Hartford, CT 06106  
(860) 424-5200**

### **REGION I – Western**

**1057 Broad Street,  
Bridgeport, CT 06604  
(203) 597-4181  
&  
249 Thomaston Ave.,  
Waterbury, CT 06702  
(203) 597-4181**

### **REGION II – Southern**

**414 Chapel Street, Suite 301,  
New Haven, CT 06511  
(203) 597-4181  
&  
401 West Thames Street,  
Norwich, CT 06360  
(860) 424-5221**

### **REGION III– Northern**

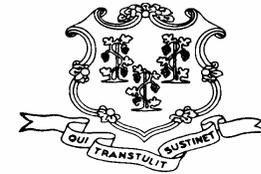
**3580 Main Street,  
Hartford, CT 06120  
(860) 424-5221  
&  
3580 Main Street,  
Hartford, CT 06120  
(860) 424-5221**

**All of the Regional Offices cover multiple towns.**

## **RESTRAINTS**

### **ARE THEY NECESSARY?**

### *What You Need To Know*



Prepared by:

## **THE OFFICE OF THE STATE LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**