



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Communities**



# Information sheet for families on chemical restraint

This information sheet is for family members of people with disability to provide information about the use of chemical restraint and is part of a series of information sheets that have been developed to help everyone understand the 'Authorisation of Restrictive Practices in Funded Disability Services Policy' (the Policy) that applies in Western Australia from 1 December 2020.

For further detailed information please refer to the [authorisation of restrictive practices](#) website.

## Table of contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>What is chemical restraint? .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>How families may be involved .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Policy requirements .....</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) .....</b>	<b>4</b>
	<b>Quality Assurance Panel.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Contact information.....</b>	<b>5</b>

# 1 Introduction

The State Government is committed to working towards the reduction and elimination of the use of restrictive practices for people with disability in Western Australia (WA) and has endorsed:

- the National Framework for Reducing and Eliminating the Use of Restrictive Practices in the Disability Services Sector; and
- the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Quality and Safeguarding Framework (NDIS Framework).

Under the NDIS Framework, the State Government is responsible for establishing arrangements for the authorisation of regulated restrictive practices (also referred to as 'restrictive practices' for short throughout the Policy) in NDIS services in WA.

The Policy establishes the requirements for authorisation of restrictive practices in relation to people who are receiving disability services funded through the NDIS or by the State Government.

People with disability, their families, carers, and other significant persons who people with disability choose to share their life with, are pivotal in this process.

Please read this information sheet in conjunction with the 'Information sheet for families on the authorisation of restrictive practices' document (listed on the [restrictive practices resources](#) page under 'Individuals and families').

# 2 What is chemical restraint?

Chemical restraint is the use of medication or chemical substance for the primary purpose of influencing a person's behaviour. It does not include the use of medication prescribed by a medical practitioner for the treatment of, or to enable treatment of, a diagnosed mental disorder, a physical illness or a physical condition.

Implementing Providers and/or NDIS Behaviour Support Practitioners supporting a person with disability, need to work together with the person with disability, their family member/s, guardian, and the prescribing medical practitioner/s to clarify the purpose of medication as well as the conditions under which it should be used. This may involve information gathering with the medical practitioner (see the 'Chemical restraint' information sheet listed on the [restrictive practices resources](#) page under 'Providers and Behaviour Support Practitioners').

If there is uncertainty about whether a medication is prescribed to address an underlying condition or for behaviour support needs, then, under the Policy, it needs to be interpreted as being a chemical restraint.

### 3 How families may be involved

Family members play an important role in assisting Behaviour Support Practitioners, Implementing Providers and medical practitioners to gather information that can help all stakeholders in better understanding a person's needs and what support or treatment may be required. Family members may be asked to help gather information from medical practitioners to understand the details and purpose of prescribed medication/s. Some information family members might be asked about includes, but isn't limited to:

- the prescribing doctor's contact details
- medication brand and chemical names
- purpose of medication and details related to diagnosis
- medication dosage
- circumstances in which the medication is to be used and/or not used, including information about when, where, time, how
- potential side effects
- any anticipated positive and negative effects of the medication on the person
- how the medication may be reduced and eventually eliminated over time
- details of review.

There may be other information that is needed by Implementing Providers and Behaviour Support Practitioners to support their understanding of the person's needs and meet the requirements of the authorisation process under the Policy.

It may be helpful to ask the medical practitioner to provide a letter or document that includes this information and that can be shared with the Implementing Provider/s and Behaviour Support Practitioner.

If family members need more information or support in asking the medical practitioner for information, Implementing Providers can help.

### 4 Policy requirements

Implementing Providers need to obtain authorisation for each regulated restrictive practice, including chemical restraint, that is used with a person with disability during the delivery of their services and supports, according to the requirements set out in the Policy.

Families do not require authorisation under the Policy to use a restrictive practice themselves, including chemical restraint, with their family member.

#### **Behaviour Support Plan (BSP)**

The NDIS Behaviour Support Practitioner needs to develop a BSP and include the person with disability, the person's family, carers, guardian, other service providers, and/or other relevant people in the person's life in developing the BSP.

This includes consulting with medical practitioners who may be providing care for the person, including the prescription of medication, and gathering comprehensive information that needs to be included in the person's BSP about the prescribed medication and use of chemical restraint (see the 'Chemical restraint' information sheet listed on the [restrictive practices resources](#) page under 'Providers and Behaviour Support Practitioners').

See the 'Information sheet for families on the authorisation of restrictive practices' document (listed on the [restrictive practices resources](#) page under 'Individuals and families') for more information about BSPs.

## Quality Assurance Panel

The Implementing Provider is responsible for convening the Quality Assurance Panel that reviews each regulated restrictive practice within the person's BSP (see the [Quality Assurance Panels](#) webpage for more details).

In some cases, a Quality Assurance Panel may not feel satisfied with the information available regarding a regulated restrictive practice, including the use of chemical restraint, and the practice under consideration may not be approved or may be approved subject to certain conditions (e.g. approved for one month with actions to address). In these situations, it will be important that further consultation with the person, their family and other stakeholders (including the person's medical practitioner/s) to re-consider the use of the restrictive practice(s) and/or to respond to actions or requests for additional information for consideration at a future Quality Assurance Panel meeting.

## 5 Contact information

For enquiries about the Policy, please contact the Department of Communities – authorisation of restrictive practices team:

**Email:** [ARP@communities.wa.gov.au](mailto:ARP@communities.wa.gov.au)

**Phone:** 08 6217 6888 or free call 1800 176 888

**Voice relay:** 1300 555 727

**Teletypewriter (TTY):** 133 677

**SMS relay:** 0423 677 767

[Last updated June 2021]