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# Strengthening behaviour support to reduce inappropriate use of restrictive practices

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# Acknowledgement of Country

Artwork by Dreamtime Creative





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# Restrictive Practices Framework

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# Restrictive Practices Framework

- Restrictive practices sit at the intersection of safety and rights
- **Balance between autonomy and preventing harm to the person or others**
- Must be applied in the right way, at the right time, **with appropriate safeguards**
- Framework includes consent, **behaviour support planning and reporting**



# Legislation and history



- Governed by the *Aged Care Act 2024* and associated Rules
- Strengthened framework introduced in 2021 to shift away from reliance on restraint
- Greater emphasis on behaviour support strategies
- Protection for the rights, dignity and wellbeing of older persons

# Expectations

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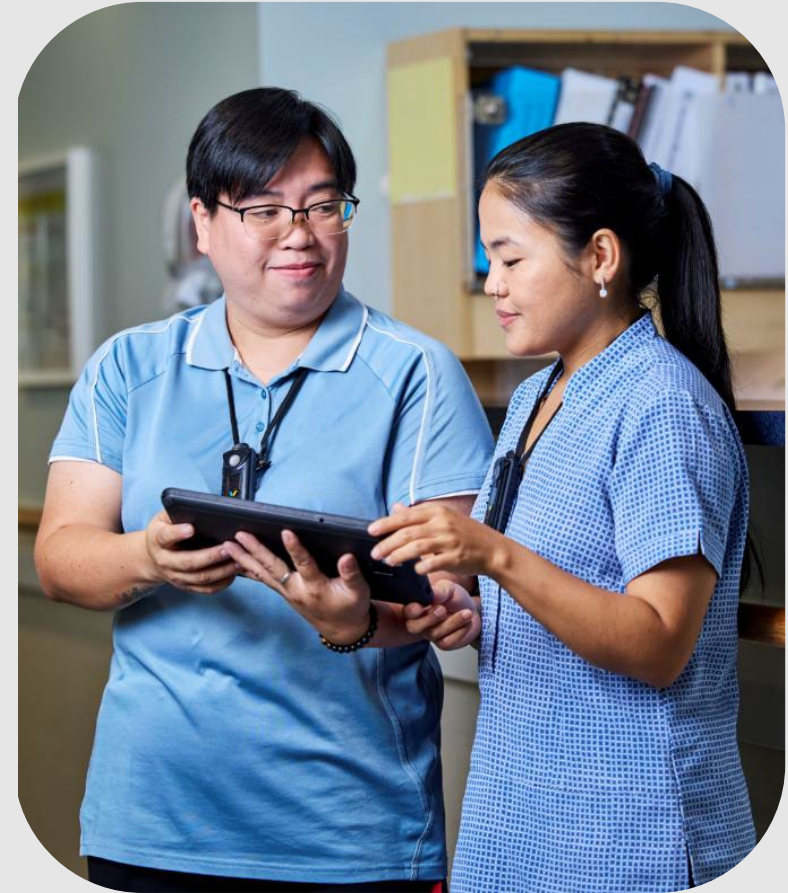
- Restrictive practices are a last resort
- Clear safeguards to support appropriate use
- Understanding behaviours (e.g. unmet needs) before restraint
- Person-centred, proportionate approach
- Reducing reliance on restrictive practices



# Consent

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- Valid, informed consent required
- Person with capacity to make decisions
- Restrictive practice substitute decision-making if the older person does not have capacity to consent
- Consent must be:
  - Informed
  - Freely given
- Time limited, reviewed and can be withdrawn



# Holistic approach

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- Rights based, person-centred care
- Quality Standards support safe and appropriate use
- Reporting mechanisms:
  - SIRS (incident reporting)
  - QI Program (system visibility)
- Investment in training and sector capability
  - Behaviour support services ([www.dementia.com.au](http://www.dementia.com.au))
  - Dementia Training Program ([www.dta.com.au](http://www.dta.com.au))
- Reducing and eliminating the inappropriate use of restrictive practices





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# Behaviour support planning and restrictive practices

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# Overview

- The use of behaviour support plans and restrictive practices
- Commission's expectations of providers
- The importance of good clinical governance
- Commission's focus for FY26-27



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A change in behaviour is often  
a response to **unmet needs.**





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**Freedom of movement  
is a fundamental human right.**





# Statement of Rights

*Independence, autonomy, empowerment and freedom of choice*

(1) An individual has a right to:

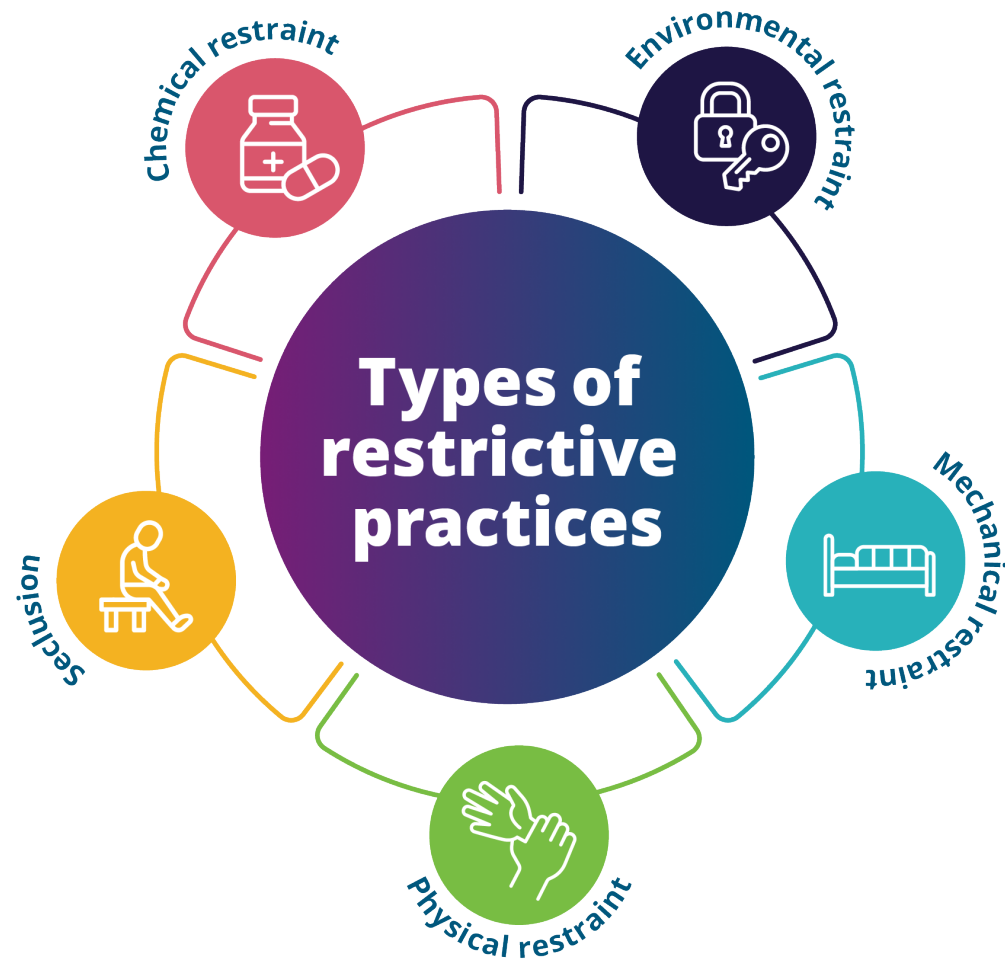
- **exercise choice and make decisions** that affect their life
- **be supported** to make those decisions, and have those decisions respected
- **take personal risks**



**Effective person-centred  
behaviour support**



**Prevent inappropriate use  
of restrictive practices**



‘A **restrictive practice...**  
is any practice or intervention  
that has the effect of  
**restricting the rights**  
or **freedom of movement**  
of an individual.’

- Aged Care Act 2024



# The purpose of a Behaviour Support Plan (BSP)

- An effective tool to support the person
- A communication tool that helps staff understand the person's behaviour
- Keep the person and others safe

**Rights-based, person-centred  
behaviour support**





# Person-centred behaviour support planning

## Behaviour support plan

- ✓ includes **key information**  
*e.g. needs, causes, potential triggers, impact*
- ✓ outlines **person-centred** support strategies
- ✓ reviewed and updated regularly

- ✗ Labelling people
- ✗ Templated approach
- ✗ Cut and paste, pre-fill information
- ✗ Tick box approach



## Residential care:

It is a legislative requirement for **behaviour support plans** to be developed for those who require one when:

- 1) behaviour support is needed for the individual

### **AND / OR**

- 2) the use of a restrictive practice is assessed as necessary or used for the individual.



## Support at home:

It is best practice to have a behaviour support plan for all individuals who need behaviour support.



# Behaviour Support Plan + Restrictive Practice requirements

If a restrictive practice is assessed as necessary, used or if ongoing use is indicated, the BSP must:

- set out the assessment and information about the restrictive practices
- guide workers on the use of the restrictive practice.

**Note:**

The BSP also must include all information about the **individual's behaviour(s) that require support.**



# Strengthened Aged Care Quality Standards



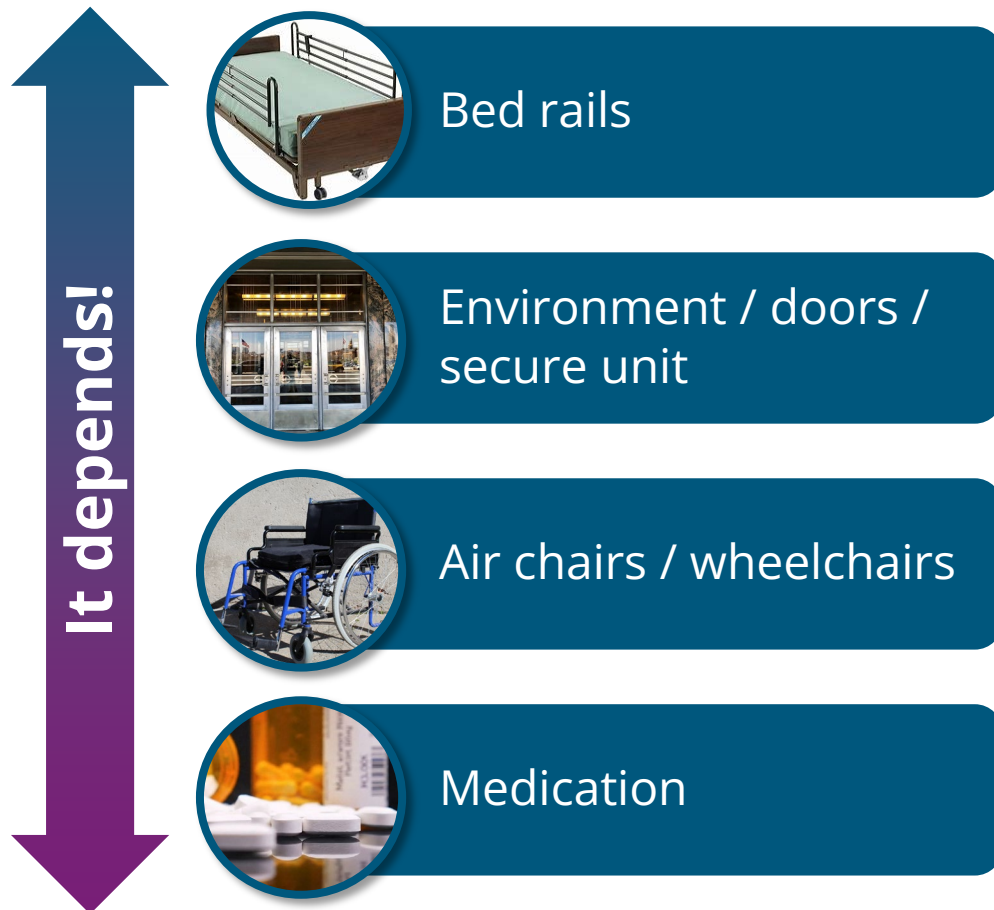
## Actions 3.2.7

The provider minimises the use of restrictive practices and, where restrictive practices are used, these are:

- used as a **last resort**
- used in the **least restrictive form** and for the **shortest time** needed
- used with the **informed consent** of the individual
- monitored and regularly reviewed.



# Restrictive practice or not?



- Recognise the **impact**
- Understand **when** we use it, **why** we use it, and **how** we use.

**Individualised assessment** is essential.

Consider the person and their circumstances.

- **Rights (freedom of movement)**
- **Purpose & Reason**
- **Effect**





# Understanding Restrictive Practice Requirements

## - residential

Restrictive Practice	Informed consent (Individual or RPSDM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment</li> <li>Monitor</li> <li>Review</li> <li>Evaluate &amp; Documented</li> </ul>	Behaviour Support Plan	Alternative strategies considered, trialled and used	RP used as a... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>last resort</li> <li>least restrictive</li> <li>shortest period</li> </ul>	Who can assess the need for the restrictive practice?
Chemical	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Medical Practitioner Nurse Practitioner
Environmental	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Approved health practitioner*
Mechanical	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Approved health practitioner*
Physical	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Approved health practitioner*
Seclusion	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Approved health practitioner*

\* In accordance with the *Aged Care Rules 2025*, an approved health practitioner means a **medical practitioner, nurse practitioner or registered nurse**.



# Invalid Consent Process - Example

## Restraint Authorisation Form

**Name:** Mr Bill Jones

It is Homely Home's policy to only use restrictive practices when needed and after alternative options have been tried.

I consent to the need for mechanical restraint for Mr Jones and have been advised of the safety risks.

**Representative signature:**

**Medical Practitioner signature:**

**Date:** 10/05/2025

This does **not** evidence appropriate consultation or discussion to show valid informed consent was obtained. Information is non-specific and generic.

Specific information about the restrictive practice is **not** included.

This form does **not** provide evidence that the informing or consent process was done properly.

Only signing a consent form can indicate informed consent is **not** valid.



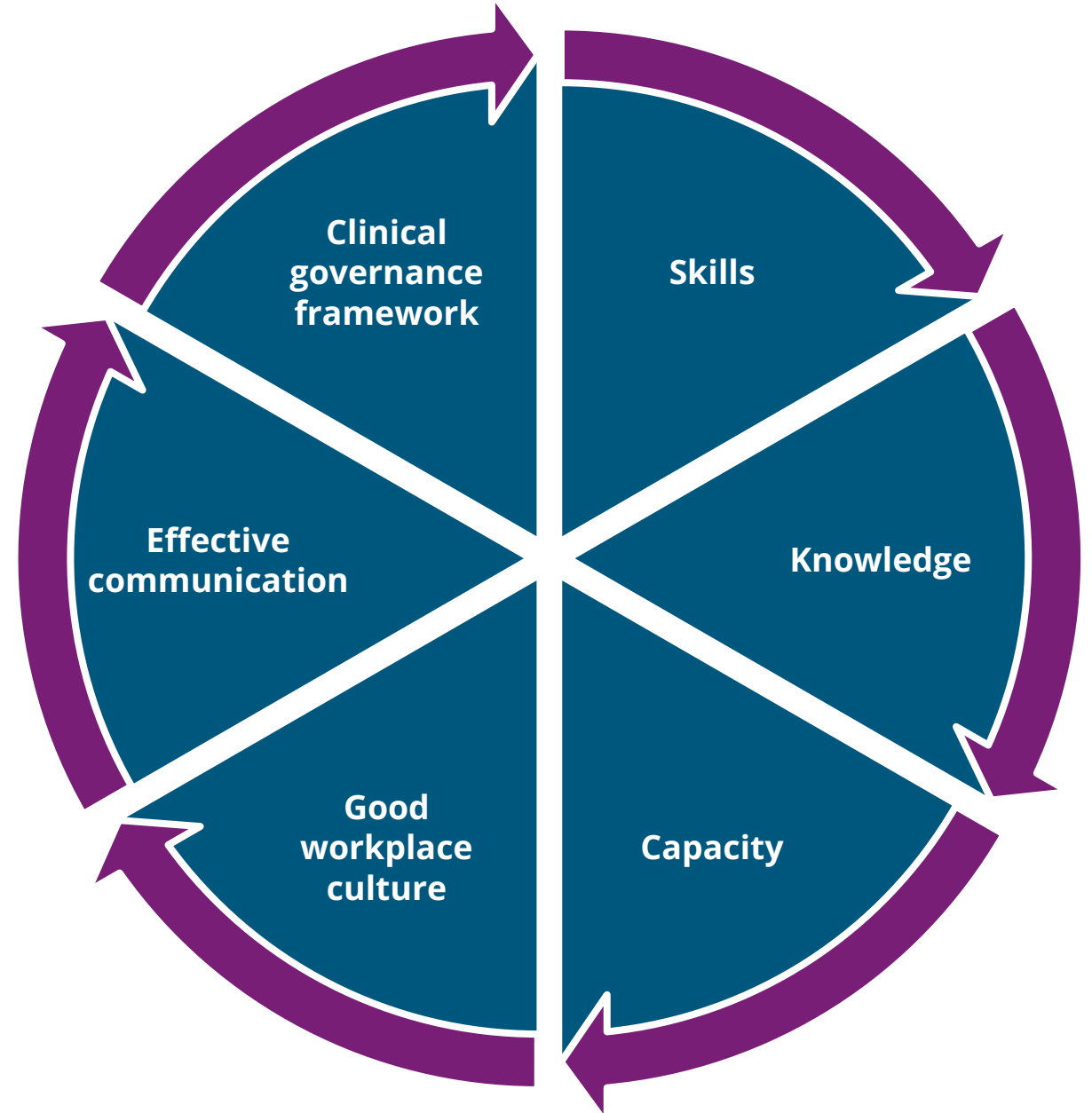
Registered providers are expected to have **effective behaviour support systems** to

- identify when specific behaviour support planning is needed
- develop plans to keep the use of restrictive practice to an absolute minimum.





# Building organisational capability





# Good clinical governance

There are policies and systems in place, with clear processes and procedures to

- **detect** early signs of changed behaviours
- **identify** the root cause or contributing factors that drives behaviours
- **assess** the impact
- **review and monitor** the implementation of BSP and the use of restrictive practices
- **evaluate** the effectiveness of the strategies used
- **record and document**
- **meet** reporting requirements  
*e.g. the Serious Incident Response Scheme and the National Aged Care Quality Indicator Program*
- **draw** from the data to identify trends and other behaviour occurrences



# Governance and oversight





# Commission's focus for FY26-27



**Improve  
understanding of  
barriers to effective  
behaviour support**



**Undertake  
targeted enquiries  
and monitoring**



**Provide  
education resources  
to support the sector**



# Latest resources

## Flip guide



### Restrictive Practices

This flip guide supports the Restrictive Practices online module. It references information about legal obligations and requirements around the use of restrictive practices and practical approaches to minimise the inappropriate use of restrictive practices and deliver safe, quality, rights-based and person-centred care and services.

[Open flip guide](#)

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**alis**

**Restrictive practices in aged care**



**Governing for Reform in Aged Care program – Restrictive Practices**  
An online module for governing body members and leaders

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**Restrictive practices in aged care**  
What it means for older people



**Restrictive practices in aged care - video**



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## Contact Us



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## Resources





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# Q&A session





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# Feedback survey

**We hope you enjoyed this webinar.**

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give your feedback.

