

Soft Restraints and Safer Holding System Policy



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Author/s:	Senior Charge Nurse, Orchard Clinic Management of Agression Link Trainer Forensic Service Forensic Work based Advisor Training Team		
Policy Owner/s:	Orchard Clinic Senior Management Team		
Executive Lead:	Executive Medical Director		
Target Audience:	All Nursing Staff within the NHS Lothian Forensic medium secure service, namely The Orchard Clinic		
Supersedes:	NHS Lothian Mechanical Restraint Procedure for the use of Emergency Response Belt ERB 2012		
Keywords (min. 5):	Soft Restraints, Safer Holding System, Restraint, Safety, Violence, Self Injurious Behaviour.		

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Version Control

Date	Author	Version/Page	Reason for change
08/08/2019	Senior Charge Nurse, Orchard Clinic	0.1	Draft Development
27/08/2019	Senior Charge Nurse, Orchard Clinic	1.0	Policy approved by PAG
July 2021	Senior Charge Nurse, Orchard Clinic	1.1	Under review
Aug 2021	Senior Charge Nurse, Orchard Clinic	2.0	Approved by Policy Approval Group

Executive Summary

The safer holding system and soft restraints is a form of mechanical restraint which can be used to control and manage violent and aggressive or serious self injurious behaviour. The implementation and use of soft restraints and safer holding system is intended to reduce the length of time physical restraint and seclusion is used and to reduce restrictive practice and to improve the safety and security of both patients and staff. It is envisaged that the application of these restraints will lead to fewer patient and staff injuries and will address a number of issues around trauma and dignity, also around religious and cultural beliefs. This will also allow for a less combatative way of beginning the de escalation process following an incident. This will apply to staff working in areas identified where the application of these restraints is seen as a required option and staff trained will be at the service managers discretion. They will also ensure the safe transfer of individuals to other secure facilities to allow for less traumatic transfers. It can also be considered in the case of administering life saving treatment as well as gaining vital samples for determining a persons physical health.

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1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to add the use of soft restraint, safer holding systems and soft cuffs to the existing range of options available to staff to manage patients requiring some form of restraint and is supplementary to, and should be read in conjunction with, the existing NHS Lothian Restraint Policy.

Associated materials, as referenced at section 6.0, explain the function of soft restraints and Safer Holding System, set out the decision making framework supporting its use, and describe the appropriate method for the implementation of the soft restraints and Safe Holding system.

This policy will support the organisational requirement to protect and support staff and patients at risk of harm.

2.0 Policy statement

The introduction of soft restraints and safer holding system will improve the safety and security of patients and staff, it is hope it will reduce the physical restraint time and reduce the time in seclusion.

NHS Lothian has previously adopted the 'NHS Lothian Mechanical Restraint Procedure for the use of Emergency Response Belt ERB 2012' in the use of mechanical restraints however the terminology and equipment has developed and is reflected in this policy.

3.0 Scope

This policy applies to staff working in clinical areas in which the safer holding system and soft restraints have been identified as a required option for management of violent, serious self injurious harmful behaviour that cannot be safely controlled by other methods or when restraint using the safer holding system and soft restraints is the least restrictive option.

4.0 Definitions

Body Belts – Soft restraints, nylon belts that can be wrapped around the body at the elbows, hips and knees to secure these limbs.

Safer Holding System – a nylon belt with integrated nylon cuffs for securing the arms to the body.

Soft Cuffs – Nylon material wrist cuffs for securing arms or feet

5.0 Implementation roles and responsibilities

5.1 Orchard Clinic management of aggression work based advisers training team

The work based advisers will be responsible for training staff. All nursing staff, working within the Forensic Service, will be trained in the use of Soft Restraints, soft cuffs and Safer Holding system. Staff can only use the system after training. There will be completed competency assessments for all staff which will indicate their level of skill and any further training requirements.

6.0 Associated materials

The following documents have been approved for use by the Orchard Clinic Senior Management Team :

- [Safe Use of Soft Restraint and Safer Holding System Standard Operating Procedure](#)
- [Soft Restraint and Safer Holding System Risk Assessments](#)
- [Notification of use of Soft Restraint and Safer Holding System](#)
- [Staff Debrief Form](#)
- [Patient/Carer Debrief Form](#)

7.0 Evidence base

- [NHS Lothian Restraint Policy: Considerations and Alternatives v2.1 \(2018\)](#)
- [Metal Welfare Commission - Rights Risks and Limits to Freedom](#)
- [Safer Handling – Soft Restraint Equipment](#)
- [Restraint Reduction Network \(RRN\) Training Standards 2019 Standard 2.8.A](#)
- [Psychiatric Patients Experiences with Mechanical Restraints: An Interview Study](#)
- [PMVA-PGN-01 - Safe use of Restraint Equipment - V03 - Issue 3 - Jun 16, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust](#)

8.0 Stakeholder consultation

This policy was developed in conjunction with and support of the forensic work based advisor group Staff group, Orchard Clinic management team, REAS Senior management team, Health & Safety, Management of Aggression Team. Patients and carers have been consulted with via information booklets and debriefs.

9.0 Monitoring and review

The management of aggression work based advisors team have developed various forms for reporting, monitoring and recording, including:

- [Notification Forms](#)
- Recording forms
- [Soft Restraint and safer holding system Risk Assessment](#)
- Equipment control
- [Staff Debrief forms](#)
- [Patient and carer Debrief forms](#)