

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
Chapter 32 of Title 22 DCR

**3216 FREEDOM FROM RESTRAINTS**

3216.1 Each resident has the right to be free from physical and chemical restraints.

3216.2 Each facility shall have written policies which define the use of physical and chemical restraints.

3216.3 If the facility employs a chemical or physical restraint, the facility shall include in the resident's care plan a program to reduce or eliminate the use of the restraint.

3216.4 Physical restraints shall not be applied unless:

- (a) The facility has explored or tried less restrictive alternatives to meet the resident's needs and such trials have been documented in the resident's medical record as unsuccessful;
- (b) The restraint has been ordered by a physician for a specified period of time;
- (c) The resident is released, exercised and toileted at least every two (2) hours, except when a resident's rest would be unnecessarily disturbed.
- (d) The use of the restraint does not result in a decline in the resident's physical, mental, psychosocial or functional status; and
- (e) The use of the restraint is assessed and re-evaluated when there is a significant change in the resident's condition.

3216.5 In an emergency and when alternative actions are not successful, a physical or chemical restraint may be authorized by a registered nurse only to protect the resident from immediate injury to himself or herself or to protect others, in which case a written physician's order shall be obtained by a licensed nurse within four hours.

3216.6 Chemical restraints shall not be administered unless:

- (a) Ordered by a physician after thorough interdisciplinary assessment and care planning, including an evaluation of alternatives to the use of chemical restraints and behavioral interventions to manage and improve behavioral symptoms, which must be carried out and documented in the resident's medical record;
- (b) The use of the chemical restraint does not result in a decline in the resident's physical, mental, psychosocial or functional status; and
- (c) The use of the restraint is re-evaluated periodically.