

## Restraint Policy

It is the aim of the practice to provide a high-quality service and to protect service users from harm. For the purposes of this policy, restraint should be viewed as 'an intervention that prevents a person from behaving in ways that threaten or cause harm to themselves, to others or to property' (Duff et al. 1996).

It is the practice's policy that we will not restrain our patients. 'Clinical Holding' requires postgraduate training in special care dentistry and is out of our scope of practise. If a patient has learning disabilities or mental ill health we will take all steps necessary to ease their discomfort including:

- Giving more time for explanations about treatment and what to expect so that the patient does not feel hurried
- Gradually introducing the patient to more advanced and lengthy treatments if required
- Being prepared to stop appointments early if the patient is not feeling well
- Giving the patient ways to feel in control of the appointment such as 'hold your hand up if you would like me to stop'
- Offering sedation options such as RA, oral sedation or IV sedation with an anaesthetist
- Teaching the patient about relaxation techniques

### Assessing patients

Understanding a patient's behaviour and responding to individual needs is at the centre of patient care. All patients are assessed to establish what sort of therapeutic behaviour management might be of benefit. This will involve identifying the underlying cause of the behaviour (epileptic fit, agitation, aggression etc.) and deciding whether the behaviour needs to be controlled.

Possible causes of behavioural conditions, which will be taken into account during the assessment, are:

- Hypoxia
- Hypotension
- Pyrexia
- Need to empty bladder or bowel
- Pain or discomfort
- Electrolyte or metabolic imbalance
- Anxiety or distress
- Mental illness – e.g. dementia
- Other form of memory impairment
- Drug dependency or withdrawal
- Brain insult / injury or cerebral irritation
- Reaction / side effect of medication
- Intoxication (due to alcohol, drug overdose or drugs of abuse)



If a patient's mental health is an issue, the mental health services will be contacted for advice / support. Before using restraint an individual assessment is carried out, which considers:

- The environment
- Patient's behaviour
- Patient's underlying condition and treatment
- Patient's mental capacity, including issues of consent as described in The Mental Capacity Act (M 289)
- Duty of care

If we are unable to safely treat a patient with learning disabilities or mental ill health safely, after following our process above, we will refer the patient to the following specialist service:

Special Care Dental Services	
Referral to:	Berkshire Community Dental Service
Quickest method of contact:	Rego Referral
Waiting time:	Variable (4-6 months currently)

We will follow up on this referral to check that it has been received and the patient has been contacted.

The full guidelines from The British Society for Disability and Oral Health are: <http://www.bsdh.org/index.php/bsdh-guidelines>

