

## PATIENT AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

**Violence against health care workers is never OK. Any threatening or violent behaviour towards staff in the hospital maybe reported to the Police.**

## COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK

You have the right to complain. If you are not happy you can tell us and we will try to help. Firstly, please talk to the staff caring for your relative or friend.

Alternatively

You can call St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne Patient Liaison Officer on 9231 3108 or email [plo@svha.org.au](mailto:plo@svha.org.au)

**If you are still unhappy, please contact**

### All patients

Health Complaints Commissioner  
1300 582 113

<https://hcc.vic.gov.au>

### Patients receiving mental health care

Mental Health Complaints Commissioner 1800 246 054

<https://www.mhcc.vic.gov.au/>

Independent Mental Health Advocacy Service  
1300 947 820  
[www.imha.vic.gov.au](http://www.imha.vic.gov.au)

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# Restraint Information for Families



**ST VINCENT'S  
HOSPITAL**  
MELBOURNE

A FACILITY OF ST VINCENT'S HEALTH AUSTRALIA

St Vincent's  
PO Box 2900 Fitzroy  
VIC 3065 Australia  
(03) 9231 2211  
[www.svhm.org.au](http://www.svhm.org.au)

 St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne  
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**Keeping everyone safe in hospital is very important; this includes patients/ consumers, staff and family members.**

**This brochure provides information about why your relative or friend is being restrained during their hospital stay.**

## WHAT IS RESTRAINT?

Restraint is when a person is stopped from moving for safety reasons.

**The clinical team will only use restraint when all other options have not worked.**

## WHY A PERSON MAY BE RESTRAINED:

- If they are at risk of hurting themselves
- If they are at risk of hurting other people

The person may have an illness that makes them feel agitated, confused, or find it hard to understand what is happening. If they are affected by illegal drugs or alcohol, they may be at a higher risk of hurting themselves or other people.

Whatever the reason, staff will do all we can to make sure the person is safe. We will try to help the person feel calm before we decide to use restraint. This may include:

- Talking with the person to work out what is causing them to feel scared or angry
- Asking what we can do to help so we can provide the right support.
- We may provide medication.
- Sometimes, just having family or friends with the person may mean restraint is not needed. You can tell staff when you are available to sit with the person to provide support and company.

If we try these things and the clinical team are still worried about the person's safety, they may be restrained.

## WHAT HAPPENS DURING RESTRAINT?

- The person may be held still by staff, such as nurses or security staff.
- The person may be restrained using special equipment, such as soft mechanical restraints around their wrists or ankles,
- Or, by furniture such as special chairs or tables.

A nurse will stay with the person at all times to make sure they are safe.

**We will explain what is happening and what needs to happen for the restraint to be stopped as soon as possible.**

For any person who is restrained, the patient's next of kin will be contacted as soon as possible to let them know they have been restrained. They will be told:

- The type of restraint,
- The reason for the restraint,
- The plan of care,
- The expected length of time restraint will be used,
- And, any risks.

If the person is a compulsory patient under the Mental Health Act, and they have a nominated person, that person will also be contacted.

## TIPS FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

**Violence against health care workers is never OK. Any threatening or violent behaviour towards staff in the hospital may be reported to the Police.**

**If the risk is the person hurting themselves,** the staff will talk to you about leaving dangerous objects at home, and perhaps staying with the

person if they need to use the bathroom or if they need to leave the ward.

**If the risk is the person pulling out tubes,** you may be asked to try to distract them with TV, music or games to try to keep their mind and hands busy.

**If the risk is the person being violent or aggressive, you may be asked:**

- To try and stay calm yourself and to keep noise levels down
- To ask the person what they need, or if they are feeling uncomfortable, in pain, worried or scared.
- To encourage the person to try to do things to feel calmer, like deep breathing or listening to quiet music.
- Above all please ensure your own safety at all times.

We understand it can be distressing to see your friend or family member restrained. If you have any questions please speak with the staff.