

Use of Medications and Chemical Restraint

A restraint means any chemical, electronic, mechanical, physical or other means of controlling or restricting a person in care's freedom of movement, including accommodating the person in care in a secure unit¹

Chemical Restraint versus Treatment:

When a medication is used with the specific intent to reduce a person's mobility or promote sedation beyond that required to establish a normal sleep cycle, then it is considered **a chemical restraint**.

This should not be confused with medications used to treat drug responsive behavioural/neuropsychiatric symptoms associated with specific medical and psychiatric diagnoses. A medication prescribed as part of assessment and rational plan of care, whether on a scheduled or as needed basis, is **a treatment**, not a chemical restraint ².

See your health authority/organizational policy about the use of restraints

¹ Residential Care Regulation – see http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/96_2009#division_d2e4728.

² Interior Health AH2500 Least Restraint – see <https://www.interiorhealth.ca/AboutUs/Policies/Documents/Least%20Restraint.pdf>.