

4th May 2021

Dear all,

We have been made aware of a research paper published by the *Journal of Emergency Medicine and Care* which concludes that Wrist Flexion Techniques (WFT) are pain inducing with increased risk of injury, and that individual WFT only vary in the degree of pain they induce.

As restraint that deliberately inflicts pain cannot be proportionate and should never be used on the children and young people cared for in children's homes I am writing to make you aware of this research. All children's homes are governed by the Children's Home Regulations 2015 and the quality standards which require homes to have a behaviour management policy that focuses on establishing positive relationships with young people, encourages acceptable behaviour and sets out the acceptable restraint measures. The Regulations themselves note regarding behaviour and restraint:

Restraint and deprivation of liberty

20.—(1) Restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing—

- (a) injury to any person (including the child);
- (b) serious damage to the property of any person (including the child); or
- (c) a child who is accommodated in a secure children's home from absconding from the home.

(2) Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate.

(3) These Regulations do not prevent a child from being deprived of liberty where that deprivation is authorised in accordance with a court order.

As you are aware, when restraint involves the use of force, it must not be more than is necessary and should be applied in a way that is proportionate i.e. the minimum amount of force required to avert injury or serious damage to property for the shortest possible time.

The Department is aware that there is a range of different restraint techniques that have been developed by different providers, but homes should never adopt any techniques that are pain inducing. It is good practice for the registered person to routinely review the effectiveness of any restraint system

commissioned. They should particularly check the medical assessment of the system remains up to date.

Additionally, you will be aware of the requirement to record any incidents of restraint under regulation 35 of the Children's Home Regulations (2015).

HM Government guidance on reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention for children and young people with learning disabilities, autistic spectrum conditions and mental health difficulties, which in turn applies to Children's Homes. is available at the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/812435/reducing-the-need-for-restraint-and-restrictive-intervention.pdf

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathan Bacon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and a long, sweeping underline.

Jonathan Bacon,

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