



The Hon Ken Wyatt AM, MP

**Minister for Senior Australians and Aged Care
Minister for Indigenous Health
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MEDIA RELEASE

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STRONGER RESTRAINT REGULATIONS TO PROTECT SENIOR AUSTRALIANS

The Morrison Government has moved to significantly strengthen the regulations that apply to the use of physical and chemical restraints in aged care homes.

In January this year, I said we would strengthen regulations because we will not tolerate the use of physical and chemical restraints. Restraint must only be used as a last resort.

The regulatory changes I intend to sign into law next week set out specific provider responsibilities in relation to the use of physical and chemical restraint in aged care homes to apply from 1 July 2019.

We have moved quickly, working with a group of key stakeholders to inform a regulatory approach to minimise the inappropriate use of restraints, treating chemical and physical restraints as separate issues.

I intend to amend the *Quality of Care Principles 2014* and require providers to satisfy a number of conditions before restraint can be used, including assessment by an approved health practitioner (physical restraint) or assessment by a medical practitioner or nurse practitioner who has prescribed the medication (chemical restraint).

The aged care home must also have the informed consent of the consumer or their representative before using physical restraint, unless restraint is necessary in an emergency.

In all cases of restraint, the home will also be required to document the alternative options to restraint that have been used. Any use of restraint must also be regularly monitored.

This supports our broader reform agenda to ensure aged care is delivered to a high-quality at all times and in all places.

From 1 July 2019, the new Aged Care Quality Standards will come into full force. The Standards stipulate best-practice to ensure those receiving aged care get safe and effective personal and clinical care, tailored to their needs.

Service providers delivering clinical care will be required to have a clinical governance framework in place that minimises the use of all forms of restraint.

We have equipped managers and staff in aged care facilities with tools and guidelines to achieve safe, high-quality care and practice safe management of medicines.

We will also mandate the collection of three quality indicators for all Commonwealth-subsidised residential aged care providers from 1 July 2019.

This includes an indicator on the use of physical restraint as well as pressure injuries and unplanned weight loss.

Protecting our senior Australians, ensuring their safety, health, well-being and quality of life when they are receiving aged care, is a top priority.

Our quality and safety reforms, alongside the work of the Royal Commission, will ensure senior Australians will be protected and treated with the respect and dignity they deserve.

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