

OA Reablement service	OA Day Care	OA Residential Care	Domiciliary Services	DMH Day Services	DMH Supported Living	DMH Residential Services	EIA'd
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## **B3**

# **BEDRAIL USE**

### **POLICY**

To ensure the safe use of bed rails for service users.

#### **Purpose**

1. This has been written in line with Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance.
2. It identifies the procedures used by the home to assess the risks that must be managed when it is proposed that a service user requires the use of bed rails for safety reasons. The risks are assessed and managed as part of the service users care plan.

#### **PROCEDURE**

1. Bed rails include bed side-rail, safety sides, and bed guards. It is acknowledged that bed rails also act as potential restraints; therefore bed rails are only to be used as a last resort and when absolutely needed to keep a vulnerable person safe in their bed.
2. Before using bed rails, managers must obtain consent of the person or, in the case of someone who has been assessed as without mental capacity to give their consent, their representatives. This must be documented on the person centred care plan that a discussion has taken place.
3. Where a service user lacks the mental capacity to make a judgement about bedrails and it is proven to be in their best interests there MUST be a Dols application put in place. They may however have either fluctuating capacity or the capacity and control over other aspects of their care. This needs to be considered.
4. Risks posed by bed rails result from the service user's behavior and the suitability of the appliances. Injuries are known to be caused by:
  - poorly fitting or unsuitable bed rails so that parts of the body become trapped, e.g. between the mattress and the bedrail
  - poor bed rail design, which leave too large a gap space between the rails
  - movement of the bed rail away from the side of a divan mattress
  - thick mattresses or mattress overlays that reduce the effective height of the bed rail so that the person can fall out over the top of the rail

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- air mattresses that are too light and unbalanced to keep the bed rail assembly in position on a divan bed
  - bedrails in poor condition due to a lack of maintenance.
5. Managers must distinguish between bed rails that are built into the design of the bed (integral type) and those that are added on to an existing bed arrangement (third party type). The risks to a person's safety from, for example, entrapment, are higher for third party types of bed rail. Wherever possible managers must only obtain a bed that enables the integral type of bed rails to be applied.
6. Managers / supervisors must seek advice from relevant professionals such as occupational therapists and physiotherapists to establish the need for bed rails and the most suitable type of bed rail to be used for any individual service user.

### Assessing the Risks Posed by Bed Rails

1. Managers / Supervisors involved use bed rails as a clinical decision / best interest meeting only after considering other methods that would keep the person safe in bed. However, managers must also be aware that under health and safety regulations, once it has been decided that bed rails are necessary, it is essential to provide them; otherwise it could be considered negligent.
2. A bedrail risk assess must be completed using the Appendix 1 and any actions from this must be added to the bedrail risk assessment must also be acted upon.
3. Once it has been agreed that the individual requires a bedrail a Dols application must be applied for (only where the individual lacks capacity). Once the Dols application has been approved it is at that point that CQC must be notified by completing a Dols notification form.
4. The risks of injury increase if the bed rail is unsuitable in relation to the service user and the type of bed and mattress, therefore, manager / supervisor and or professional must assess:
- the service users head and body is small enough to pass through the bed rail bars
  - the gap between the bed rail and the side of the mattress will allow the service users body to pass through it, or could trap their head
  - the bed rail supplier's or manufacturer's instructions have been fully followed

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- the bed rail has been fitted correctly to the bed and is secure — different fittings may be required for different types of bed
  - there any gaps present when the bed rail is fitted to the bed that potentially will allow the service user to become trapped.
5. The results of the risk assessment with any specialist advice must be recorded in the person centred care plan.

### Risk Management of Bed Rails

1. The manager / supervisor must ensure regular checks are made to ensure that any bed rails fitted remain properly adjusted and continue to be suitable for the service user.
2. If there are any changes to the service users condition, bed, mattress or bed rail the risks must be reviewed immediately. There will be a monthly review of the service users condition routinely however as indicated above the condition may change more frequently. **The risk assessment must be reviewed in line with the person centred /support plans.**
3. All bed rails, mattresses and fittings must be inspected monthly using the M7 Managers Monthly Safety Checklist. However, on a daily basis the bed rail and mattress check must be recorded on the service user's daily diary.

### Accident Reporting

1. Although Cumbria Care aim to make bed rail accidents “never events”, we recognise that there could be occasions when a service user might be injured by the faulty use of any bed rails applied or through defects that have arisen. In the event of a service user being harmed (as a result of a bed rail injury) the manager / supervisor must report the incident to CQC (If classed as a serious injury) and it may need to be reported as a Safeguarding alert to the local safeguarding team.
2. The Duty of Candour will need to be implemented by informing and discussing any adverse event arising from bed rail use with the service user and their representatives.
3. We also have responsibility under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 to report any accidents resulting in injuries to the service user might result from the misuse of bed rails to the Care Quality Commission under its notifications requirements

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### Training

The manager must ensure that staff who support service users are familiar with the manufacturer's instructions.

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