

Strategies to Assist Residents Living with Dementia with Isolation Protocols

Least Restrictive

Providing the resident with an explanation of why they are being isolated.

- Depending on the resident's capabilities, they may require frequent reminders about why there are limitations.

Explaining to the resident the boundaries of their isolation space.

- Identifying boundaries to a resident living with dementia can help deter them from areas of concern.

Redirecting the resident to their isolation space if they leave or attempt to leave.

- Verbal redirection can help guide residents back to their room.

Distracting the resident with activities that they enjoy.

- Provide residents living with dementia opportunities for stimulation based on their activities of interest.

More Restrictive

Increased supervision of the resident.

- Team members and essential caregivers can provide frequent check-ins and reminders, or consider additional staffing to support supervision.

Implementing alarms or other audio reminders that signal the resident has left the isolation space.

- Alarms and audio reminders alert team members of resident movement

Implementing non-restrictive barriers to the resident's room.

- Non-restrictive barriers can vary in level of restriction (e.g. stop signs on removable Velcro strips that go across the door vs. disguised door handles). They can prevent a resident from wandering into other residents' rooms.

Moving the resident into an area with a cohort of other residents with the same need for isolation.

- Be aware that taking a resident away from a familiar environment may lead to an increase in personal expressions.

Most Restrictive

Pharmacological restraints as per LTC guidelines and policy.

- This should be considered as a last resort only if other strategies have failed. Additional medications to help calm a resident living with dementia may have associated risks (e.g. increased risk of falls).

Physical restraints as per LTC guidelines and policy.

- This should be considered as a last resort only if other strategies have failed. Physical restraints can lead to injury.

Remember:

Keeping a resident in their room is a form of restraint. A resident feeling that they cannot leave their room may cause increased anxiety, anger or risk of injury.

Source: Iaboni, A., Grigorovich, A., Barned, C., Rodrigues, K., Kontos, P., Chu, C., Astell, A., & Dementia Isolation Toolkit Team. (2020). Ethical guidance for people who work in long-term care: What is the right thing to do in a pandemic? <https://baycrest.echoontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Ethical-guidance-for-people-who-work-in-long-term-care.pdf>