

LET'S TALK ABOUT Restraints

A Trainer's Perspective

As part of the development of this resource, we enlisted the help of an experienced trainer to run a pilot session. He worked to the scheme you're working through, and provided us with some thoughts and feedback.

We've offered his feedback here in full as we thought it offered useful insight for any experienced trainer preparing to run this course.

Every trainer will work differently, and every room will respond in a different way. We know every session will go slightly differently, and we encourage you to bring your own style and adapt things as necessary.

Here is one person's experience. We hope you find his insight useful.

I was asked to deliver this session 'cold' using only the materials provided on the website as part of the piloting phase for the training course. I am an experienced trainer used to working in community and not for profit settings with a diverse range of participants on a broad range of topics. I would describe myself as a facilitator rather than an instructional type of trainer.

I found the website easy to navigate and the resources easy to access and print. The 'technical' information on restraint is limited to a few definitions and a useful video. The tutor session plan is basic but functional.

The challenge for me was thinking through the learning process and utilising the resources to achieve the stated outcomes. This is where the each trainer's unique perspective and style comes into play and there is no one size fits all but this is how I approached it.

My principle concern was getting participants to talk so I wanted a relaxed atmosphere and a low key inclusive delivery style. I did not worry about the limited information on restraint but thought carefully about examples of where I have experienced or heard about restraint being used. I was also keen to make sure that I could link my input and the participants input back to restraint at every point in the session and I planned to use the flipchart and slides to do this.

I used the front page of the website as a holding page at the beginning of the session when participants were getting settled and then flicked to the tab with the presentation on it when the session started.

I would recommend printing off the slides as the ones on the session plan are too small to read.

The Introduction

I added housekeeping.

I also added 2 key points for an introduction:

- This is a structured conversation about restraint and not a list of do's and don'ts. Your experience is as valid as the next person.
- There are no right or wrong answers – sort of!

I held back handing out the participants session plan and background information sheet until the end.

Defining restrain section

I watched the video and listed the (relevant for me) key points on the session plan. I also added an additional exercise to the video:

- When you watch the video think about the issues it raises for you and we will summarise these at the end on the flipchart - key words or phrases.

I spent a couple of minutes linking these back to the first exercise 'what comes to mind when you hear the word restrain?'

This section ran over by 5 minutes

Power imbalances

I opened this section by referring back to the video, which emphasised issues of power and control.

I did debate how best to address this topic. There is no information provided in the toolkit so I had to surmise based on my past experiences. I decided to give a couple of personal examples to set the scene and then set additional groundrules about disclosure so that participants didn't feel vulnerable or exposed when thinking about how they might contribute to the discussion. I asked them to:

- Think about a situation where they felt powerless
- Think about how they felt in that situation, focusing on emotions and feelings

I did not flipchart the answers but facilitated a discussion about:

- How the feelings might relate to a restraint situation
- How this would influence the kind of conversations we might have if we were discussing restraint with someone.

I repeated this approach with 'feeling in control'.

I did not feel it was appropriate to deal with the last activity in this section as it could be divisive and spoil the good group dynamics in the room. It may work with a different mix of participants if handled carefully.

This section ran over by 15 minutes.

Break

I had a 10 minute break – this may not be needed but does give a breathing space to change the pace/tone of the session.

Traffic lights

I used this exercise to get back some time by doing only 3 of the examples. This was not ideal as the participants enjoyed this exercise and it provoked some very constructive discussion and challenged participants perspectives and judgements on restraint scenarios in a positive and supportive way.

I would strongly recommend having a set of red/green/amber cards for each participant so they can vote individually.

I got back 10 minutes on this section.

Case studies

I was still over running on time and decided to use 1 case study with the whole group. This method worked well and a consensus was quickly reached.

I did not flipchart any answers in the section to save time but it was not really needed as the learning points were explicit and reinforced by me and the participants.

I divided the last 2 case studies between 2 groups and used the relevant slides during the group feedback so that the other group could read the scenario.

This was a useful extension exercise of the traffic light section and worked well. I could have explored the case studies further but that would be a judgement call depending on time and they work well as 'quick' exercises to reinforce the assessment of a restraint situation.

I finished this section on time.

Moving forward

In the context of this session I did not think the personal action plan provided was the most appropriate format. I would have preferred to use a simple postcard that participants could write to themselves with one or two things they will do as a result of being on the course.

In conclusion

I enjoyed delivering this session and the participant's feedback was very positive. It could easily have stretched to a 4 hour session with the content and materials provided and would also provide an excellent springboard for additional sessions that look in more detail at roles and responsibilities in a restraint situation and listing specific actions and strategies that could be used by individual employers and PA's to eliminate or reduce the potential for inappropriate use of restraint.