

# Non-pharmacological interventions to reduce restrictive practices in adult mental health inpatient settings: the COMPARE systematic mapping review

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## Plain English summary

The COMPARE systematic mapping review

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## Plain English summary

Service users can become upset and aggressive in adult inpatient services for the treatment of mental illness. Staff may respond by holding service users down or putting them in a room on their own. These are called 'restrictive practices' and can be harmful for service users and staff. Many interventions exist for reducing the use of restrictive practices but we do not know which ones work, or why. Staff training could reduce the use of restrictive practices by encouraging staff to behave differently, for example by learning better ways of talking to somebody who has become aggressive or is self-harming.

There is a list of 93 techniques for changing behaviour, which is like a dictionary. You can look up terms that best describe parts of an intervention to make it easier to describe and compare them. We wanted to see how many different interventions we could find, and describe them using this list.

We identified all of the interventions that we could find and recorded information such as whether participants were staff or service users, the number of participants involved, study setting, location and how success was measured. We looked in detail at the interventions and described the techniques using the list. We also assessed the quality of research about the interventions.

We found 150 different interventions. Common techniques involved setting goals for staff to work towards, such as reducing how often they use a restrictive practice; educating staff; changing the environment to prevent incidents; and giving staff feedback about incidents. The most successful interventions were more likely to include these common techniques.

To our knowledge, this study is the first to describe these interventions in a standard way. It will help researchers, policy-makers and clinicians to describe and understand interventions in order to reduce restrictive practices. Better understanding could lead to better safety for service users and staff.

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