



Communities
& Justice

Restrictive Practices Authorisation (RPA) News

RPA Newsletter - December 2019



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Welcome to our December issue of the RPA Newsletter. In this issue we will be discussing:

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Top 10 RPA highlights from 2019

2019 has been a BIG year for the Central Restrictive Practices Team and restrictive practices authorisation in NSW! Some of the highlights that the Central Restrictive Practices Team have worked on include:

- Publishing **11** informative **RPA Newsletters**.
- Releasing **two** major **upgrades to the NSW RPA System**.
- Developing and publishing **4 whiteboard style videos** which cover an overview of RPA in NSW, Interim Authorisation, Reviews of authorised restrictive practices, and DCJ Independent Specialists.
- Presenting at **13 workshops** across metro and regional NSW with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, National Disability Services, as well as **other DCJ presentations** throughout regional NSW.
- Releasing the **NSW RPA System training environment**.
- Conducting a **Temperature Check survey** of the sector.
- Publishing **new and revised resources** including an updated NSW Restrictive Practices Authorisation Policy and Procedural Guide, an easy read version of the NSW Restrictive Practices Authorisation Policy, 6 new NSW RPA System User Guides, and a series of fact sheets.
- Conducting **a number of online webinars** on how to use the NSW RPA System.
- Conducting an **open tender** for new Independent Specialists which resulted in the appointment of **20 new Independent Specialists**.

To access any of the resources mentioned above and more refer to the [Restrictive Practices Authorisation webpage](#).

The RPA statistics so far



The NSW RPA System has now been live for well over twelve months. Below is a snapshot of the RPA data as at December 2019:

There are currently **4,686 RPA Submissions** in the NSW RPA System with **6,222 restrictive practices**. Of these submissions 54% are Planned applications, 22% are Interim

applications, and 24% are not specified.

1,996 participants are subject to a restrictive practice with 60% of these participants being subject to more than one restrictive practice. Of all of the proposed restrictive practices in the NSW RPA System, environmental restraint (45%) is currently the most prominent. This is followed by chemical restraint (37%), while seclusion (2%) has the least number of proposed restrictive practices.

2,689 RPA Panel meetings have been held or are proposed to be held. DCJ funded Independent Specialists have attended or been requested to attend 39% of these RPA Panels.

To date, **76 approved restrictive practices have been ceased**, of which 23 are due to reduction or elimination of the practices(s).



Behaviours of Concern

Tom is a sociable, caring and kind man in his mid-20s. He has a hearing impairment and a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. Tom uses a combination of vocalizations, gestures and key word signs to communicate with his support staff and those around him. Tom has recently changed Service Providers as his parents were dissatisfied with the service that Tom was receiving.

Tom can become frustrated when he communicates with staff or others around him, if they are slow to realise/understand what he wants. When Tom becomes frustrated or anxious he can hurt himself (self-injurious behaviour) or he will strike out at others.

Proposed Restrictive Practices

Tom's previous Service Provider managed his behaviour of concern with PRN Seroquel as was written into his Behaviour Support Plan. Tom's new Service Provider took this restrictive practice to an RPA Panel for approval. The Behaviour Support Plan submitted to the Panel did not however contain a functional assessment of the behaviour.

Considerations for the RPA Panel members

The RPA Panel members would have considered the following:

- How frequently does Tom's behaviour escalate to self-injurious behaviour or aggression?
- What has the service done to facilitate Tom's communication needs and therefore reduce his incidences of frustration? Do the documents submitted adequately address this?
- What other strategies have been attempted to manage the behaviour of concern?
- What training have staff received in the use of Tom's current communication strategies?
- Are Tom's current communication strategies sufficient to allow him to express choice and control in his life? Are they adequate to allow him to engage with other individuals and his broader community?
- Has a fade-out strategy been included in the Behaviour Support Plan?
- Has the Behaviour Support Plan been reviewed and updated to reflect that Tom is now receiving service from a different provider and under a different environmental context?

Recommendations made by the RPA Panel

In this instance, the RPA Panel did not approve the use of Chemical Restraint PRN. The Panel did make the following recommendations:

- A functional analysis of the behaviour of concern be conducted to ensure that the proposed strategies address Tom's physical aggression in an adequate and positive manner.
 - Explore less restrictive strategies to manage the behaviour of concern.
 - Skill development for Tom in recognising his anxiety and managing this more appropriately.
 - Skill development for staff in recognising Tom's triggers and managing, deescalating or redirecting strategies more effectively.
 - Ensuring all staff were adequately trained in using Tom's communication strategies and that the team explore further AAC (Alternative and Augmented Communication) strategies to allow Tom more control and choice in his life.
 - The Panel also suggested that a referral be made to a speech therapist for a review of Tom's current communication, to assess whether current communication allows him make informed choices/decisions and build interpersonal relationships.
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New resources in 2020



The Central Restrictive Practices Team is currently busy working on a range of new resources which are to be released in the new year. Some of these resources include:

1800 Hotline

The Central Restrictive Practices Team is currently exploring the option of establishing a 1800 telephone support number which service providers and users of the NSW RPA System can call to receive advice on policy implementation and Independent Specialists bookings.

Panel Video

A Panel simulation video is under development which will provide a good practice example of the end to end Panel process - from discussing the application with the participant, through to the Panel meeting and finally ending with completing and discussing the Panel outcome with the participant.

NSW RPA System Video Tutorials

A series of short online video tutorials are planned which will provide a walk through of how to use the NSW RPA System to submit and complete restrictive practice authorisations. These video's will cover the entire end to end process and are designed to compliment the [NSW RPA System User Guides](#).

Chemical Restraint Animated Video

A new animated video on the authorisation of chemical restraint as a restrictive practice will be available shortly on the [Restrictive Practices Authorisation web page](#).



As always, the above resources are designed to support the [NSW Restrictive Practices Authorisation Policy and Procedural Guide](#).

RPA Panel collaboration



Feedback from the recent Temperature Check Survey indicated that some Service Providers are willing to collaborate and open their RPA Panels to external parties. Further information on Panel collaboration is now available on the Restrictive Practices Authorisation web page. Please note some Service Providers may also request a fee for this service.

It is important to note the following:

- A Senior Manager from the implementing service provider is still required to attend the RPA Panel meeting. The Senior Manager takes responsibility for all decisions made at the Panel and therefore must attend the Panel.
- If you choose to utilise this service, any arrangements or agreements made are with the Service Provider and are not facilitated or funded by the Department of Communities and Justice.
- This service is separate to the function and services provided by the DCJ funded Independent Specialists.

To access the list of Service Providers willing to collaborate and open their RPA Panels please [click here](#).

If you require any further information please contact the Central Restrictive practices Team at RestrictivePracticesAuthorisation@facs.nsw.gov.au, or should you wish to request a DCJ funded Independent Specialist for your RPA Panel please contact the team at RPAIndependentSpecialists@facs.nsw.gov.au.

Test your knowledge!



Question 1. What are the four steps required when completing an outcome summary in the NSW RPA System?

Question 2. What can't you do during a review of an authorised restrictive practice?

Question 3. How many panel roles can an Independent Specialist fulfil in an RPA Panel?

Shutdown Dates for the Central Restrictive Practices Team



The Central Restrictive Practices Team will be closed during the Christmas/New Year period from **Monday 23 December 2019 to Friday 3 January 2020**. Any correspondence or emails received, or requests for Independent Specialists, will not be answered during this time.

From all of us at the Central Restrictive Practices Team, we wish you all a safe and happy holiday!



Get in contact!



RPA News will be published monthly on the Department of Communities and Justice [Restrictive Practices Authorisation web page](#). If you would like to suggest a colleague or service to be included in *Spotlight On...* or *Provider in Focus*, you have a **case study** you would like to share, or if you have any questions about restrictive practices authorisation or this newsletter, please email: RestrictivePracticesAuthorisation@fac.s.nsw.gov.au.

Test Your Knowledge Answers

Question 1. 1. The outcome summary is **released** to the Panel Members once all of the information has been entered into the form. 2. All Panel Members **approve** the outcome summary. 3. **Evidence of formal consent** is entered and uploaded onto the outcome summary form. 4. The **complete button** is clicked by the service provider.

Question 2. You cannot use a review to re-authorise an expired or expiring restrictive practice. If you wish to re-authorise a practice you must create a new restrictive practice authorisation submission.

Question 3. The Independent Specialist fulfills the role of both the independent and the specialist in behaviour support on a restrictive practices authorisation panel.

Our mailing address is:
RestrictivePracticesAuthorisation@fac.s.nsw.gov.au

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