

Management of Housing Modifications and Behavioural Support Requirements

This document should be read alongside Appendix Three of the *Practice Guideline: Interface between Needs Assessment and Service Coordination and Equipment and Modification Service Assessors and Providers (Ministry of Health; September 2015)*.

Appendix Three outlines the requirement for a documented interagency process to be completed to ensure the solutions put in place provide safety for the person and their family / whānau. The documented solution should be the least restrictive and invasive option to meet the identified need. The service provided should be appropriate, safe and follow best practise for both the assessment process and the Equipment and Modification Services (EMS) solution provided.

The impact of locking devices on doors is restriction of a person's normal freedom of movement. This impact becomes an 'environmental restraint.' When a person's environment is intentionally restricted by having restraints eg locking devices on doors, the following points must be considered and documented in the EMS proposal:

- The person's safety and dignity is upheld
- Clinical justification - the use of the restraint is a clinical decision and only used in the context of good clinical practise. (Please note: The EMS Assessor needs to clearly document why the restraint is needed eg a child is absconding from their play area, and what measures are in place to support the child to engage in play eg the child is provided with appropriate toys to engage in play activities in the safe play area)
- The use of a lock on a door does not restrict the normal movement of others
- There is a documented fire safety plan in place.

(Please note: The fire safety plan is to ensure the family have discussed and are all aware of how to exit the property in the event of an emergency eg a fire).

(The Ministry of Health's clarification of NZ 8134.2:2008 Health and Disability Services (Restraint Minimisation and Safe Practice) standards environmental restraint).

This document refers to specific situations as detailed below and should **not** be applied to **all** situations where a child with challenging behaviour requires referral for assistance with environmental modifications.

In the following **specific situations** an EMS Assessor may present a proposal to the EMS Provider for consideration on a case by case basis **prior** to a behaviour management plan being provided.

The EMS Assessor needs to include in the documentation that:

- NASC services are actively involved with the family
- A referral has been made to Behavioural Support Services (BSS) and
- The client is on the BSS wait list to be assessed or awaiting intervention.

The following EMS solutions are not intended to replace Behavioural Support Services but rather to support the family with implementing a behavioural plan.

1. Provision of a lock on an external door which forms part of an outdoor safe play area

When a child with challenging behaviour may abscond from their safe play area a proposal may be considered for a lock to be fitted to an **external** door within the home.

The intent of providing a lock on the external door is to **enable** the child to be safe within home and their outside play environment to enjoy being active and to develop independence in play.

The EMS Assessor should ensure there is a plan in place which promotes appropriate play opportunities for the child. A safe exit plan must be in place from the locked home (eg in the event of a fire).

2. Fitting of locks to kitchen/bathroom cupboards or drawers (oven power source, food storage area, cupboards e.g for sharp objects like knives)

When a child with challenging behaviour does not respond to the usual behavioural strategies eg kiddilocks, used by families to keep them safe from sharp objects or accessing food storage areas, then an EMS Assessor can present a proposal for locks to be fitted to specific drawers and / or cupboards.

When a child with challenging behaviour is placing both themselves and their family at risk by tampering with a power source (eg main oven switch) a switch guard may be fitted to ensure ongoing safety.

If the family require entry by the child into a bathroom or kitchen or other room to be restricted then a behavioural support plan is needed prior to the proposal being presented to the EMS Provider, as documented in Table 1 of the Practice Guideline.