



# Safe Use of Bed Rails

Is your patient at risk of ...



Slipping

Sliding

Rolling

...off the bed



# Bed rail risk assessment.....

## Complete the Bed Rail Risk Assessment

What does my patient need bed rails for :

1. To keep the patient in bed as they are at risk of falling or coming to any other harm **X**

**This is mechanical restraint !**

2. To help the patient move round the bed **X**  
**The bed rails are not strong enough for this and could break – refer to physiotherapy for support.**

3. To stop the patient slipping, sliding, rolling out of bed **✓**  
**Bed rails should only be used for stopping a patient slipping, sliding, rolling out of/off the bed.**



# Is there any reason to doubt the patient's mental capacity?

A patient needs to be able to consent to bed rails and understand how to them.....

## Can the patient understand;

- What the bed rails are for?
- What the risks of using bed rails are – *not being able to get out of bed, entrapment of head or limbs.*
- How to get out of bed with the bed rails up – *the patient will need assistance to let the bed rail down, you cannot do this from in the bed.*
- How to use a call bell to seek assistance to get the bed rails down and get out of bed.

**Complete a Mental Capacity Assessment Record**

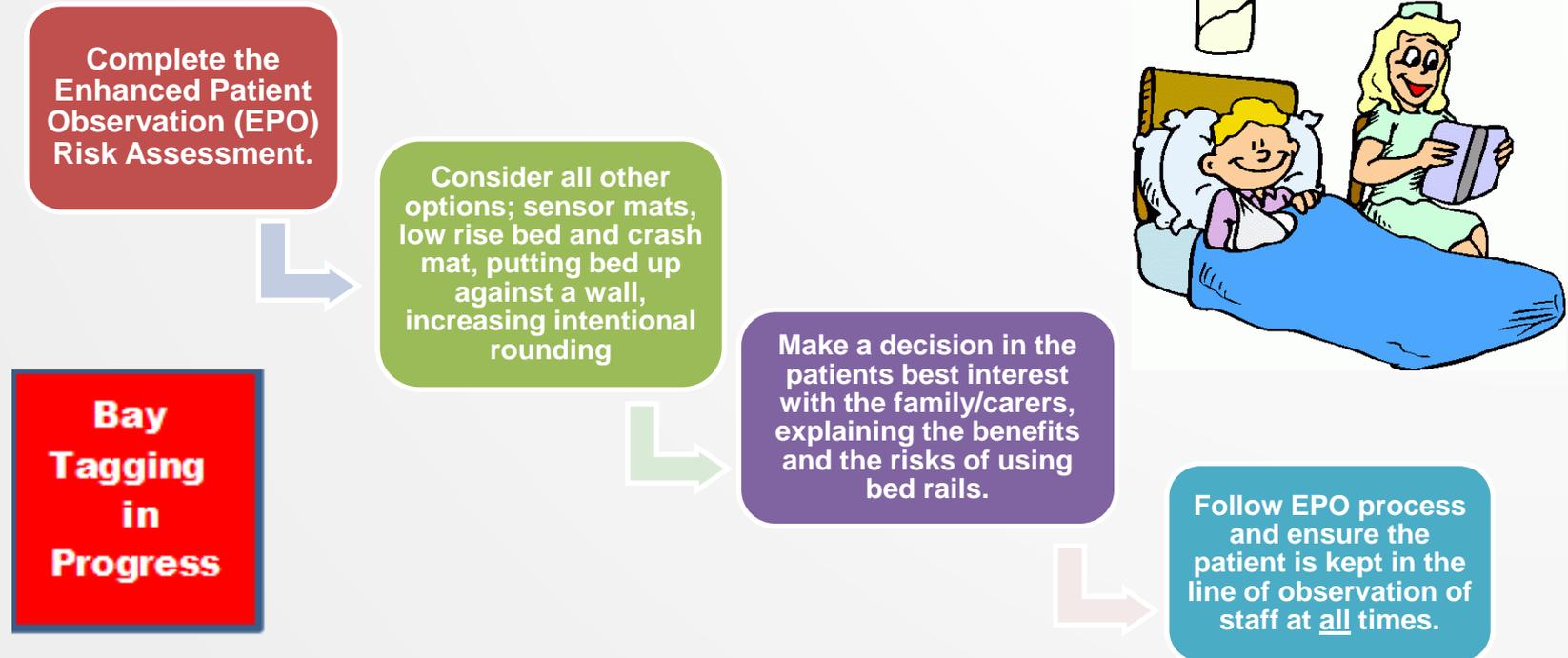
Decision specific "Can patient understand the safe use of bed rails"





## If the Patient lacks capacity to understand how to use bed rails.....

and in your clinical judgement the patient requires bed rails to stop them slipping, sliding, rolling of the bed then you need a safe plan of care in place to minimise risk of harm whilst using bed rails.....





## The use of bed rails can cause more risk to the patient.....

Bed rails must be integrated and comply with MHRA Guidance 2021, if they don't, they must be removed and replaced – contact Porters to do this.

More patients fall from the bed using bed rails than without bed rails.

If patients do not understand how to use bed rails, they will try and climb out of them, round them or over them resulting in higher risk and more severe harm.

Patients can trap head and limbs in bed rails.

Patients can try to get through any gaps in bed rails especially if they are confused or have a cognitive impairment.

# Risks to be aware of....

Gap at bottom of bed rail,  
most common place  
patients climb out of the  
bed around bed rails.

Gap in the middle of bed  
patients may try and climb out  
of bed / fall through gap.

Knee brace elevated comes  
level with the top of the bed rail  
and patients can slide their legs  
over and cause them to fall or  
climb out of bed.

