

**ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO PHYSICAL AND PHARMACOLOGICAL RESTRAINTS IN PEOPLE WITH ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE**

**“TO UNTIE THE ELDERLY AND THE PATIENTS WITH ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE” PROGRAMME**



**Abstract:**

A group of professionals, under the promotion and sponsorship of the Spanish Confederation of Older People's Organizations - CEOMA, soon understood that the phenomenon of the use of restraints is complex as it's not only a professional movement, but a cultural change and attitudes of the whole society, and that to achieve that eradicating such practices, would require time and work in various fronts. We have worked in legal aspects, in social awareness, technical and professional aspects, and in the achievement of centres free of restraints, which have already become a national benchmark.

“To Untie the Elderly and the patients with Alzheimer's disease” Programme was born in 2003, motivated by the evidence that emerged in the scientific literature, comparing several countries in the use of physical restraints. A group of professionals felt interest, and we set to work to have more knowledge of the phenomenon of fasteners. Thus, the “To Untie” Programme was born, under the umbrella of a national association of Elderly Persons (Spanish Confederation of Older People's Organizations - CEOMA) to promote social actions as well.

A “centre free of restraints” is a centre in which no physical restraint is used, understood as physical restraint: limitation of a person's freedom of movement, or physical activity, or normal access to any part of its body, with any external physical method applied on or adjacent to it, from which it cannot easily be released.

The programme is an agglutinative initiative of wills, knowledge, experiences and facts aimed at getting older people to live free of any kind of subjection.

**Programme Activities:**

- Investigation; Divulgateion; Training.
- Search and test alternatives to restraints.
- Elaboration of guidelines and protocols (for families, falls, behavior problems in dementia, use of handrails, etc.).
- Design of organizational models and advice to centres.
- Ethical and legal references for the use and non-use of restraints.

“To Untie the Elderly and the patients with Alzheimer's disease” Programme has been active for 14 years in eradicating the use of restraints in the context of caring for dependent elderly people, having conducted multiple interventions to support centres, training in restraints and related factors, training for prevention of legal risks in residences, as well as has advised for the development of legal rules in the subject of subjections. It has been publicly recognized with several prizes, among which the Prince of Viana International Prize of Attention to Dependence in 2010 is worth mentioning. Its only dependence on the Spanish Confederation of Older People's Organizations turns it into a totally independent programme, which only looks at the interests of older people, thus getting high credibility within society.

**ARGUMENT FOR ZERO TOLERANCE TO THE USE OF RESTRAINTS IN RESIDENCES**

Accepting some tolerance to restraints prevents its the total elimination, while still being it possible

It can be concluded that zero tolerance is the engine of improvement that pushes the changes that are seen later. Acquiring an attitude of zero tolerance requires facing the challenges posed by older people every day, with more knowledge, better strategies, and more creativity.

It is predictable a future scenario in which the fact of not using restraints ceases to be something especially meritorious, and this system of accreditation will lose its reason for being.

From the first data we know about the use of restraints, there has been a continuous and gradual reduction, going from a prevalence of 21.6% in 2010 to a prevalence of 12.8% nowadays, which means an overall reduction of 40%. We believe that the influence of our programme has been decisive for this evolution.