Before a side rail is utilized, a number of issues should be considered and addressed, such as:

What is the intended and functional purpose of the side rail?

- *Side rails have proven to be ineffective at keeping adult bed occupants from rolling or falling out of bed.*
- *Side rails are never to be used as a form of restraint - if they prevent the bed occupant from independently exiting the bed...they are acting as a restraint.*
- *The potential for serious injury is more likely to be related to a fall from a bed with raised side rails when the resident attempts to climb over, around, between, or through the rails, than from a bed without side rails in use.*
- *Side rails can be an effective device to assist with repositioning while in the bed or as an aid to getting into or out of the bed.*

Is the assisted living resident a safe "match" for a side rail?

- *The population at risk for entrapment are clients who are frail or elderly or those who have conditions such as agitation, delirium, confusion, pain, uncontrolled body movement, hypoxia, fecal impaction, and acute urinary retention that cause them to move about the bed or try to exit from the bed.*
- *Initial and ongoing evaluation and monitoring of the client and side rail should occur.*

Will the side rail be installed, utilized, and maintained in accordance to the manufacturer's recommendations?

- *Side rails must be designed to work with the bed "system", including the side rail, bed frame, and mattress.*
- *Loose or "wobbly" side rails should not be used.*
- *Side rails designed for youth or children are not meant to be used with adults and should not be used.*

Does the side rail being considered meet or exceed the FDA's dimensional guidance to reduce entrapments?

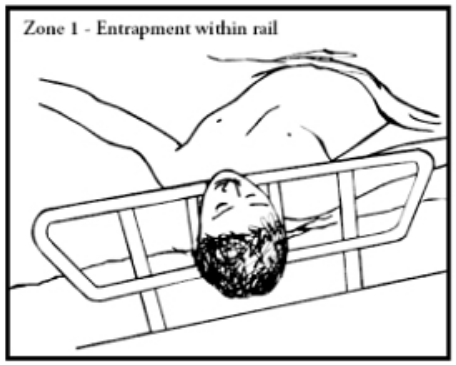
- *The Minnesota Department of Health has determined that in order to meet accepted health, medical, and nursing standards of practice, side rails known to be used by a client of a licensed home care provider must meet the FDA's dimensional guidance.*
- *To meet the FDA's dimensional guidance, each designated space in zones 1-3 must not exceed 4 3/4 inches and zone 4 must not exceed 2 3/8 inches (see front for zone pictorial).*
- *Many (not all) rental beds are sent with side rails that do not meet the FDA's dimensional guidance to reduce entrapment.*
- *When the design and use of a side rail is unsafe; strangulation, suffocation, bodily injury, or death can occur when clients or parts of their bodies are caught between side rails or between the side rails and mattresses. Refer to the drawings to the right.*

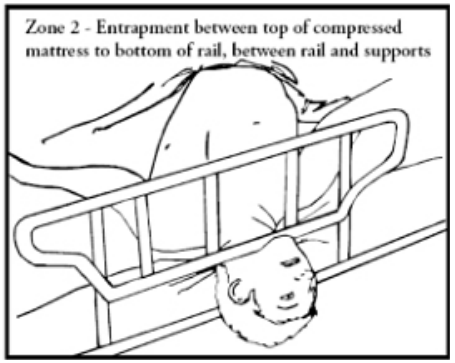
Based on the responses to these questions, an evaluation should be conducted to assess the relative risk of using the side rail compared with not using it for each individual resident.

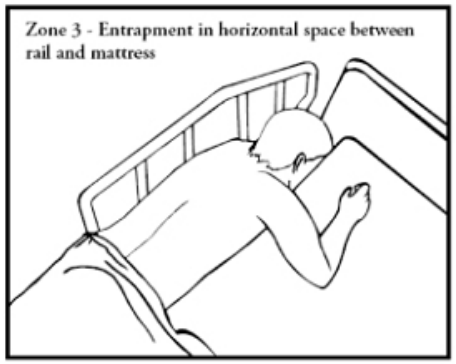
Residents and their family members should be educated about possible side rail danger to enable them to make an informed decision; including options for reducing the risks of side rail use.

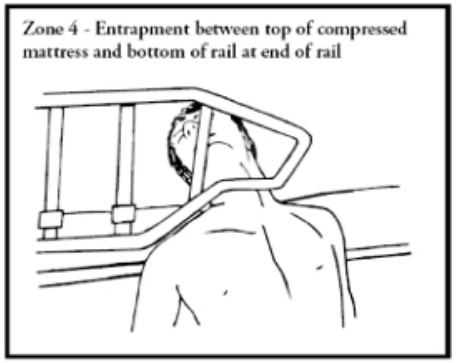
The resident's right to participate in care planning and make choices should be balanced with the assisted living's a responsibility to provide care according to an individual assessment, professional standards of care, and any applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

Drawings of Side Rail Entrapments









Between January 1, 1985 and January 1, 2013, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) received 901 incidents of patients caught, trapped, entangled, or strangled in hospital-type beds. The reports included 531 deaths, 151 nonfatal injuries, and 220 cases where staff needed to intervene to prevent injuries.

Most patients were frail, elderly or confused.

Not all clients are at risk for side rail entrapment, and not all side rails and bed systems pose a risk of entrapment.

Side rails can prove very useful in certain limited situations. However, side rails can also function as a form of restraint, create a danger of the client falling to the floor from a greater height, create an entrapment danger, and even be a cause of death.

In response to continued reports of patient entrapments and deaths, the FDA, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Health Canada's Medical Devices Bureau and representatives from national health care organizations and provider groups, patient advocacy groups, and medical bed and equipment manufacturers, formed a working group in 1999 known as the Hospital Bed Safety Workgroup (HBSW).

Using retrospective studies of side rail related deaths, the HBSW identified 7 potential entrapment zones in hospital beds and published side rail design dimensional guidance for bed manufacturers to minimize entrapments.

Unfortunately, many side rails in use around the world do not meet the recommended dimensional guidance, and entrapment injuries and deaths continue to occur.

This brochure was developed by Care Providers of Minnesota, a trade association representing assisted living facilities.

Care Providers of Minnesota

The intended purpose of this brochure includes:

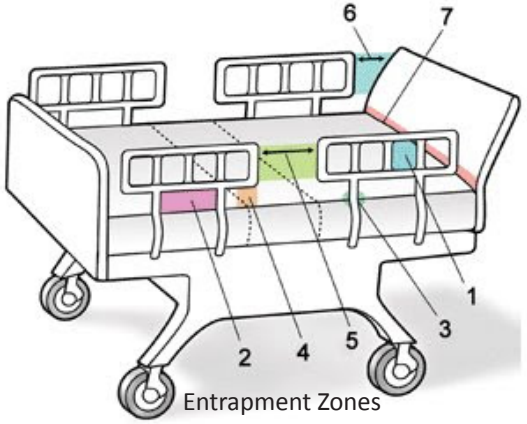
- Elimination of preventable entrapments and injuries caused by the unsafe use of side rails
- Elimination of preventable deaths caused by the unsafe use of side rails
- Elimination of side rails acting as restraints
- Provide education to providers and consumers regarding side rail safety
- Provide a tool for assisted living facilities to use in educating residents and resident's representatives about the risks and benefits of side rails
- Decrease the frequency of side rail related assisted living deficiencies issued by the Minnesota Department of Health regarding side rail use

This brochure was provided by:

For more information:
http://www.fda.gov/medicaldevices/productsandmedicalprocedures/generalhospitaldevicesandsupplies/hospitalbeds/default.htm

2021

Using Bed Side Rails in Assisted Living Facilities



Entrapment Zones

Each year many assisted living residents and family members of residents request that a side rail be attached to a resident's bed. The basis of the request is generally to prevent a fall from the bed, provide assistance with transferring in or out of the bed, or providing assistance with repositioning while in the bed.

This brochure is designed to help assisted living facilities and their residents better understand the potential risks and benefits resulting from the use of side rails.