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The use of seclusion for psychiatric inpatients: legal and ethical argumentation

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Aggression and violence toward self and/or others are common behaviors among psychiatric inpatients. Seclusion is the most controversial intervention to control those behaviors. The use of seclusion is one of the most decisive decisions, but it has many legal and ethical arguments. Legally, many policies and laws in various countries support the use of seclusion for aggressive patients in psychiatric settings. While, the use of seclusion is approved in mental health services, many patients' rights are violated. Ethically, seclusion is used exclusively to prevent expected harm. Therefore, the use of seclusion for that purpose will not violate patients' autonomy and human dignity. Conversely, it is argued that nurses have to respect and preserve human dignity; those are interfering with seclusion. From proponents and opponents' point of views, despite that the use of seclusion is a controversial intervention; it remains commonly used for psychiatric inpatients to prevent aggression and violence.

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