

Creating a Healthy Work Environment

Dianne Ditmer, PhD, RN, CFN, DABFN, SANE, FACFE

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Workplace Violence

Physical assault, threatening behavior occurring in the workplace:

- **Stabbings**
- **Beatings**
- **Shootings**
- **Rapes**
- **Suicides**

Just The Facts

■ FBI

- 225,000 – 300,000

■ Justice Department

- 1 million

- half unreported

■ National Institute of Occupational Health and Safety

- 20 workers murdered

Just The Facts In Healthcare

■ Nonfatal Assaults

■ Healthcare Providers

■ Hospitals, Clinics, Nursing Homes

■ 160,000 Healthcare Providers

- 70,000 Nurses**

- 24,000 Healthcare Professionals**

- 10,000 Physicians**

(National Crime Victimization Survey; American Nurses Association, 2009, 2011, 2016)

Healthcare Is Risky Business

- **Patients, families, visitors**
- **Gangs, alcohol, drug abusers**
- **Frightened, frustrated**
- **Drugs and money**

2012

38 fatalities

ED nurses

Healthcare Is Risky Business

- **Working alone or isolated**
- **Home healthcare**
 - **38% US households**
- **Parking areas dark, long distance**

(National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, 2016)



**Who is committing these
acts of violence?**

Workplace Violence

Workplace violence is defined as any violent acts, including *physical assaults* ...directed at persons at work or on duty.

Workplace Violence Physical Assault



A horizontal bar chart with two bars. The top bar is purple and represents 'Throwing objects' at 30.5%. The bottom bar is also purple and represents 'Pushing, hitting' at 29.2%. The bars are positioned to the left of their respective percentage values.

■ Throwing objects	30.5%
■ Pushing, hitting	29.2%

Workplace Violence

Any act against employees that creates a hostile work environment and negatively affects the employee, either physically or *psychologically*.

(Workplace Violence Research Institute, 2011)

Workplace Violence

- **Threatening gestures 28.5%**
- **Vandalism 7.4%**
- **Stalking 2.6%**
- **Written Threats**

Workplace Violence

A range of behavior from *verbal abuse*, threats to physical assaults.

Workplace Violence

Verbally Abusive – Disruptive Behavior

- **Verbal threats to inflict bodily harm**
- **Verbal harassment; abusive or offensive language**

Workplace Violence

Verbally Abusive – Disruptive Behavior

- **88.9% staff**
- **74.9% physicians**

■ **Sources**

■ Patient	34.3%
■ Physician	27.5%
■ Peer	22.8%
■ Patient's Family	13.3%
■ Immediate Supervisor	2.0%

(Kowalenko, 2005; Dittmer, 2008, 2011)

Verbally Abusive Behavior Impact on Staff

- **Morale**
- **Job Dissatisfaction**
- **Inhibits Teamwork**
- **Physical Illness**
- **Staff shortage**

Verbally Abusive Behavior

Impact on Staff

Emotional Distress

- **Frustration**
- **Anger**
- **Embarrassed**
- **Crying**

(Ditmer, 2008, 2011)

Verbally Abusive Behavior

Impact on Staff

Physical Illness

20

(NIOSH, 1999; OSHA, 2010)

Verbally Abusive Behavior Impact on Staff Retention

- **Thought about quitting 52.2%**
- **34%**
 - **\$145, 000**
- **60 % in 6 months**
 - **\$88,000**

Verbally Abusive Behavior Clinical Outcomes

- **Accuracy, safety and patient outcomes**
 - **St. Paul Insurance Study**
 - **Malpractice Claims**
 - **Medical Errors**

Disruptive Communication Clinical Outcomes

- **The Joint Commission**
 - **Sentinel Events**
 - **Attributed to disruptive environments**

Red Flags

- **Majority of acts are not random**
- **Warning signs precede acts of violence**

You Have The Power To Break The Cycle of Violence

- **Recognize violent, disruptive behavior**
 - **Physical**
 - **Psychological**
 - **Verbal**
- **Do not believe and do not accept that assault and abuse is just part of the job**
- **Perpetrators and interventions**

Human Behavior

- **Coping, Calm** (Level One)
- **Stress, Overwhelmed, Anxious**
(Level Two)
- **Defensive** (Level Three)
- **Physically Acting Out** (Level Four)
- **Tension Reduction**

(Crisis Prevention Institute, Inc., 2002, 2009, 2011; Mynatt, University of Cincinnati, 2011)

Anxiety

Level Two

- **Change in behavior**

- **Pacing**
- **Clinched fists**
- **Nervous**

- **Early intervention**

- **Acknowledge**
- **Empathy**
- **Actively listen**

Defensive Behavior

Level Three

- **Volatile - Out of control**
- **Pacing turns to shouting**
 - **Abusive language**
 - **Hostile, belligerent**

Response to Defensive Behavior

- **Silence**
- **Professional**
- **Direct, simple limits**
- **S-T-O-P**
- **Distance**

Clinical Response To Defensive Behavior

- **Tools of the trade**

- **PPE**

- **Needles**

Physically Acting Out

Level Four

- **Physical aggression**
- **Complete loss of control**
- **Person may assault**
 - **You**
 - **Others**
 - **Objects**
 - **Themselves**

Response To Physically Acting Out

- **Safety**
- **“Get Out, Shout Out”**
- **“Run, Hide, Fight”**
- **Exits and Objects**
- **Call for help**
 - **Code Violet**
 - **Security or 911**
 - **Panic button**
 - **Fire alarm**

Physical Plant Risk Assessment

■ Building and Room Layout

- Furniture placement**
- Lamps, decorations, pictures**
- IV poles, medical equipment**

■ Isolated Locations

■ Lighting

■ Storage Areas

■ Access to Department

Tension Reduction

■ Perpetrator of Violence

- Security
- Police
- Chaplain

■ Victim of Violence

- Debriefing
 - Physical
 - Emotional
- CISM

CRACKING THE CASE

Creating a Healthy Work Environment

LEVELS OF AWARENESS CASE STUDIES

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Levels of Awareness developed by Jane Mynatt, Director of Social Work, The University Hospital, Cincinnati, OH.