Preventing Violence In the Workplace

Health care workers face significant risks of job-related violence. While under 20% of all workplace injuries happen to health care workers, they suffer 50% of all workplace assaults.

Patient and work site risk factors

- Working directly with people who have a history of violence, drug or alcohol abuse, gang members, and relatives of patients or clients;
- Transporting patients and clients
- Working alone in a facility or in a patients' home;
- Poor workplace design that may block employees' vision or interfere with their escape from a violent incident;
- Poorly lit corridors, rooms, parking lots and other areas;
- Lack of means of emergency communication;
- Prevalence of firearms, knives and other weapons among patients and their families and friends; and
- Working in neighborhoods with high crime rates.

Organizational risk factors

- Lack of policies and staff training for recognizing and managing escalating hostile and assaultive behaviors;
- Working while understaffed – especially during meal times and visiting hours;
- High worker turnover;
- Inadequate security and mental health personnel on site;
- Long waits for patients or clients and overcrowded, uncomfortable waiting rooms;
- Unrestricted movement of the public in clinics and hospitals; and
- Perception that violence is tolerated and victims will not be able to report the incident to police and/or press charges.

Violence prevention programs

A written program for workplace violence prevention, incorporated into an organization's overall safety and health program, offers an effective approach to reducing or eliminating the risk of violence in the workplace. The building blocks for developing an effective program include:

1. Management commitment and employee participation
2. Worksite analysis
3. Hazard prevention and control
4. Safety and health training
5. Recordkeeping and program evaluation

For a more detailed look at these steps, as well as worksheets for training and recordkeeping, please visit OSHA's website:

https://www.osha.gov/Publications/osha3148.pdf

For more information and additional risk management and prevention tools, visit: **fwcruminsurance.com**

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