

Violence in the Office Practice Setting

Preparation and Response



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Objectives

This educational activity will support your ability to:

- Identify and respond to violence in the office practice setting
- Develop processes that support physical safety measures in the office practice setting
- Implement strategies to promote patient safety, protect healthcare workers, and minimize your risks for a medical professional liability claim

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Current Landscape



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Have you ever been involved in any of the following types workplace violence?

- A. Patient on healthcare worker 38%
- B. Worker on worker 10%
- C. Domestic violence 10%
- D. None of the above 53%

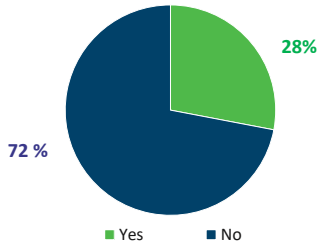
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Do you have an established workplace violence prevention plan?



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What types of preventive measures do you plan on implementing in your practice?

- A. Create a workplace violence prevention plan
- B. Update your physical security measures
- C. Provide updated and ongoing staff training

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Workplace Violence

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Workplace Violence

Healthcare Workforce

- 22 Million workers in healthcare industry
- Largest and fastest growing sectors
- Represents 14% of all U.S. workers

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncjrs/nij/docs/2021/04/who-are-our-health-care-workers.html>, Accessed 6/23/2022

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Workplace Violence

Research

- Majority performed hospital setting
 - Estimated one billion clinic visits/per year
- Literature review clinic setting
 - Quantitative and qualitative
 - Focus on patient/family violence in physician office setting

Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health, Sept. 2020, 17(18), 6547; <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17186547>, Accessed 6/23/2022

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Workplace Violence

Research

- Types of Workplace Violence
 - Criminal intent
 - Customer/patient and client/healthcare worker
 - Worker to worker
 - Domestic
 - Ideological

10 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6230222/>
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Polling Question #1

Have you ever been involved in any of the following types workplace violence incidents?

- A. Patient on healthcare worker
- B. Worker on worker
- C. Domestic violence
- D. None of the above

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Workplace Violence

Research

- Occupational groups
 - Physicians
 - Nurses
 - Receptionists
 - Technicians

12 W. J. Davidson, Res. Public Health, Sept. 2020, 17(9), 6247. <https://doi.org/10.3390/17096247>
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Workplace Violence

Research

- Contributing and contextual factors
 - Misunderstandings staff & perpetrator
 - Unmet service needs
 - Communication barriers

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Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health, Sept. 2020, 17(18), 6547; <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17186547>; Accessed 6/23/2022.
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Workplace Violence

Research

- Clinic factors
 - Over crowding & long waits
 - Lack of security
 - Lack of protective measures

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Workplace Violence

Research

- Contributing patient factors
 - Lack of knowledge about their health condition
 - Mental illness diagnosis
 - Drug use
 - Request for medical leave

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Workplace Violence

Other contributing factors

- Disgruntled employee
- Conflict with co-worker
- Staff member with personal problems

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Violence in Healthcare

Routine Activities Theory

- Criminological theory focusing on conditions that must exist for crime to occur
- Assumes an offender's motivation to commit a crime
- Asks how physical conditions may be changed to reduce likelihood that a crime will occur

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Violence in Healthcare



19 Cohen, L.E. & Felson, M. (1979). Social change and crime rate trends: A routine activity approach. *American Sociological Review*, 44(4), 588-608.
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Violence in Healthcare

Routine Activities Theory

- Guardianship = any measure, human or environmental, that deters motivated offender from accomplishing crime
- Measures that increase guardianship may decrease chance of violence
- “Places” can be guardians

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Workplace Violence: A category of its own

Plan & Response Resources:

- **ASHRM**: Workplace Violence Toolkit
- **OSHA**: Healthcare Workplace Violence

“Workplace violence (WPV) is a recognized hazard in the healthcare industry. WPV is any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening disruptive behavior that occurs at the work site. ...WPV ranges from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and even homicide.”

ASHRM Toolkit <https://www.ashrm.org/ohsa/969w/25/c/ashrm/Workplace-Violence-Toolkit.pdf>, Accessed 04/18/2022
<https://www.osha.gov/healthcare/workplace-violence>, Accessed 04/18/2022

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Workplace Violence Prevention



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Polling Question #2

Do you have an established workplace violence prevention plan?

- A. Yes
- B. No

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Workplace Violence Prevention

Before an incident occurs

- Develop a plan
- Create leadership buy-in
- Talk with local police or security
- Other appropriate resources

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Workplace Violence Prevention

Environmental factors

- Increased stress levels
- Current/past pandemic
- Weapons in community
- Response system

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Workplace Violence Prevention

Organizational factors

- Inadequate security
- Screen employees with background checks
- Lack of training
- Lower staff levels
- Conduct staff evaluations

Cultural sensitivity

- Unconscious bias

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Workplace Violence Prevention

Clinical factors

- Pain
- Substance abuse
- Cognitive impairment
- Anger
- Mental/psychiatric diagnosis

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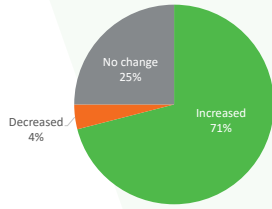
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Current Environment

% Change in number of disruptive patients

71% of medical practices reported an increase in disruptive patients in 2021.

MGMA Stat poll, January 4, 2022



MGMA STAT - JANUARY 5, 2022 Are in-office and pandemic denial from unruly patients the new normal? [https://www.mgma.com/files/files-static/files-in-office-and-pandemic-denial-from-unruly-pat](https://www.mgma.com/files/files-static/files-in-office-and-pandemic-denial-from-unruly-pat.pdf) [accessed 04/18/2022]

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Workplace Violence Prevention

Guardianship with physical security measures may include:

- Video cameras, silent alarms, panic buttons
- Locks on entrances
- Risk assessment of premises
- Screening of patients/visitors/vendors
- Defined exit route free of obstructions

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Workplace Violence Prevention

Staff Training

- Recognize behavioral signs
- Communication of potential threat
- Approach patients and maintain distance
- De-escalation techniques
 - Remain calm and respectful
 - Agree rather than argue
 - Do not raise your voice

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Workplace Violence Prevention

Staff Training

- Report concerns/unusual behavior
 - Easy to access reporting forms
- Preparation & Response to active shooter
 - Call 911
 - Identification of nearby exits
- Remain aware
 - Discharge of patient

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Workplace Violence Prevention

Frequent flyers

- Rate of recidivism extremely high
 - Presentation to ED discharged w/o follow-up
 - New episode
 - Follow-up imperative
- Risk assessment toolbox
 - Intake forms/assessments
 - Appropriate response training/conduct drill

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Risk Reduction Strategies



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Risk Reduction Strategies

- Organization & employee involvement
- Leadership commitment to adequate resources and support
- Security measures
 - Cameras, alarms, locked doors, lighting, mirrors at blind corners
- Workplace analysis
 - Know area crime statistics
 - Physical assessment of entrances, ramps, campus

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Risk Reduction Strategies

Hazard reduction

- Signage
- Written policies/procedures
 - Definitions of violence
 - Strict prohibition of certain conduct w/examples
 - Personnel responsibilities
 - Reporting mechanisms

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Risk Reduction Strategies

Post event

- Debriefing 24-72 hours
- Employee Assistance Program
- Evaluate preventative measures
- Refresh training and drills as appropriate

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Risk Reduction Strategies

Training most effective tool

- Recognition of potentially violent situations
- Strategies to defuse anger or aggression
- Taking other patients to safe place
- Moving disruptive patients away from others
- Avoid confrontation and retreat as appropriate

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Risk Reduction Strategies

Record keeping

- Document violence prevention efforts
- Encourage incident reporting
 - What is seen, heard
 - Treatment remedies

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Risk Reduction Strategies

Communication with media and law enforcement

- Designate spokesperson
 - Direct all inquires and interview requests
 - Update contact information and back up numbers regularly
- Preserve and maintain chain of evidence
 - Illegal firearms, drugs, witness, and victim statements
 - Follow HIPAA privacy regulations

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Risk Reduction Strategies

Ongoing monitoring of prevention strategies

- Analyze incident reports and patient complaints
 - Risk of violence
- Comprehensive approach
 - Communication techniques w/patients
- Appropriate follow-up

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Polling Question # 3

What types of preventive measures do you plan on implementing in your practice?

- A. Create a workplace violence prevention plan
- B. Update your physical security measures
- C. Provide updated and ongoing staff training
- D. None of the above

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Resources

- Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI)
 - www.crisisprevention.com
- OSHA – Guidelines for Preventing Workplace Violence for Healthcare and Social Service Workers
 - www.osha.gov/Publications/osa3148.pdf
- CDC
 - www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/violence

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If you are with a group that is viewing the webinar together, a link to the evaluation and credit attestation survey will be provided to the registrant in a follow-up email. Please forward the email to the group.
2. Complete the entire post-webinar survey.
3. When asked, be sure to enter your complete name as you would like it to appear on your CME certificate. (e.g., Mary A. Smith, M.D.)

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