
Hospital Violence: How to React



According to a recent article published in *StatNews*, hospital violence is on the rise. The article suggests that there is a need for healthcare leaders to prevent this without compromising the open and healing environment of hospitals and by developing effective strategies that are more than just a reaction to individual incidents.

There is no doubt that conflicts between doctors and patients and their family members have increased dramatically. Patient-on-clinician violence is also on the rise as reported by federal statistics. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that approximately 75 percent of 26,000 workplace injuries due to workplace assault in 2013 took place in the healthcare and social services sectors. Injuries due to violence almost doubled among nurses and nurse assistants from 2012 to 2014. Federal statistics record an average of 50 attacks of violence against doctors, nurses and other healthcare providers each day in the U.S.

There are several institutions and agencies that have developed innovative anti-violence strategies. These include the Veterans Health Administration that has implemented a large-scale anti-violence initiative teaching healthcare workers four levels of behavioural-management training and communication skills to better handle situations with a high risk of verbal abuse. Similarly, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration have also undertaken similar initiatives to prevent violence.

The article points out that it is imperative to understand the reasons behind the violence. While some attacks may be planned, there is also a possibility that an attacker may turn violent spontaneously because of a mental illness, drugs or some unexpected and upsetting news. It is thus important for healthcare workers to understand this distinction.

In a separate article in *StatNews*, it was reported that individual incidents of violence against nurses are often shrugged off and even though nurses remain at high risk of assault than doctors, they are generally discouraged from pressing charges against their attackers. Due to this lack of attention on such attacks, nurses also feel it's a waste of time to report such incidents.

The Minneapolis Star Tribune reports that in light of recent incidents, hospitals across the state are now assessing their security protocols. Some have even created their own police departments.

Source: [StatNews](#).

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Published on : Sun, 29 Nov 2015