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Key Strategies for Addressing Violence in the Medical Practice

A Risk Management Perspective

March 30, 2023



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Disclosure to Learners

No planner, reviewer, faculty or staff for this activity has any relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies.



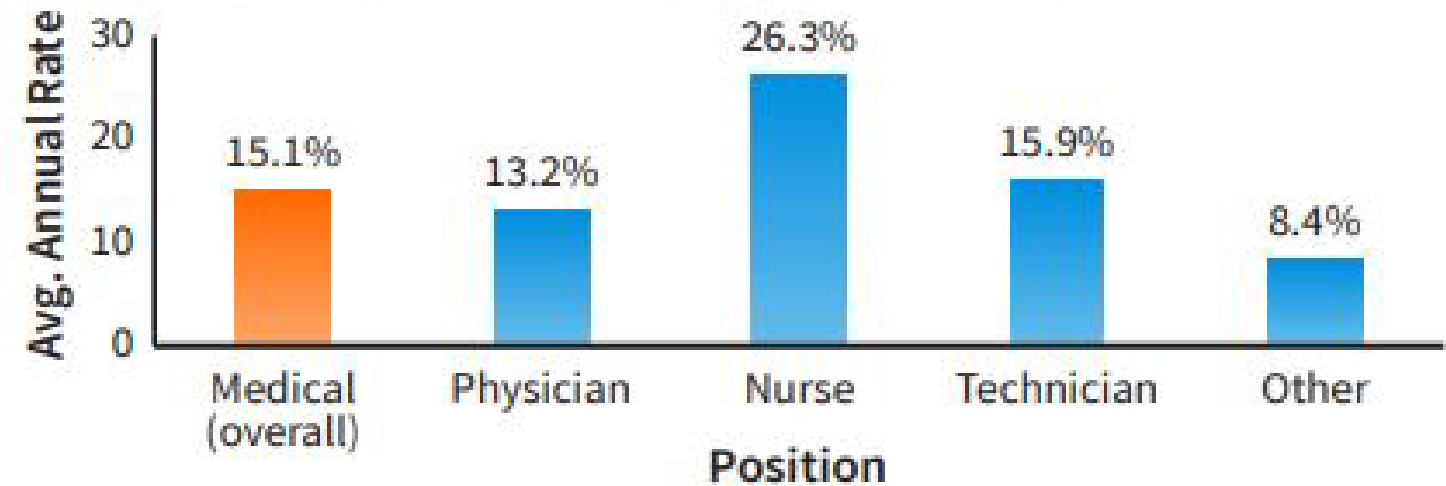
Why it Matters

- Creating a Safe Environment
- Healthcare Violence Statistics
- Liability Reduction



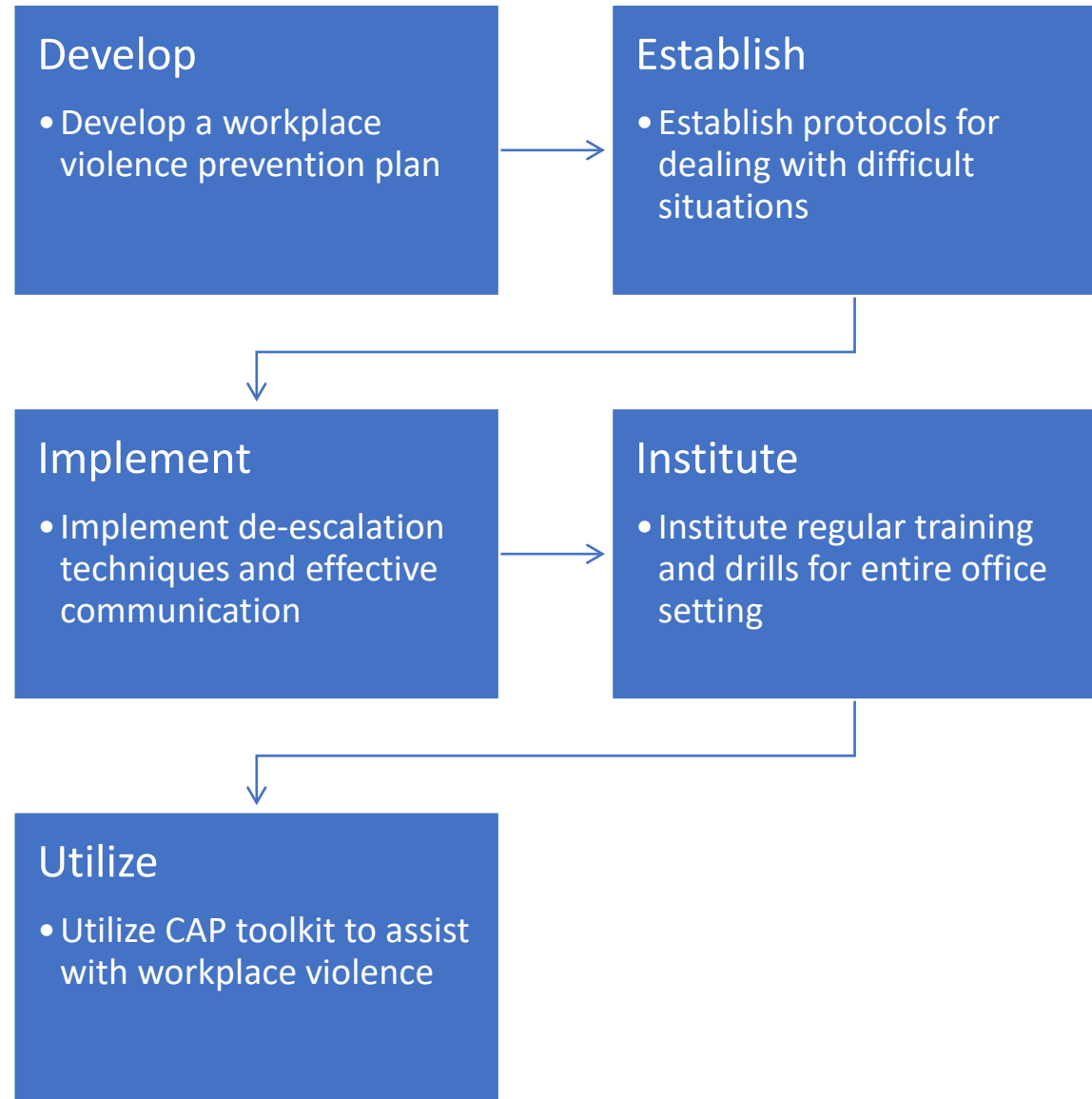
Why it Matters

Figure. Average Annual Rate of Nonfatal Medical Workplace Violence per 1,000 Workers, Age 16 or Older, 2015 to 2019



Source: Harrell et al.

Objectives



Policy Development

- Violence Prevention: Prohibited Conduct
- Reporting/Escalation of Incidents
- Investigation of Incidents
- Risk Mitigation Strategies
- Protocols
- Plan Review and Update
- Training



Physical and Verbal Violence Against Healthcare Staff

Action Recommendations

Healthcare organizations should prioritize protecting their workforce against workplace violence, from other staff as well as from patients and visitors.

Culture, Leadership, and Governance

- Charge organizational leaders with assessing the risk of workplace violence and providing resources (e.g., time, staffing, training) to reduce such events.
- Formalize a workplace violence program utilizing an oversight committee that monitors related metrics.
- Establish a zero-tolerance policy that extends to all who come into contact with organizational personnel.
- Set an organizational tone that any violence against healthcare workers is unacceptable.
- Encourage reporting of physical and/or verbal abuse from patients, including suspicious behavior.
- Enforce the code of conduct with a strong, consistent response.
- Establish and support compliant processes that permit clinicians to terminate patient relationships.
- Reduce environmental factors that can foster violent events, such as insufficient lighting and unrestricted building access.

Patient and Family Engagement

- Set realistic expectations by clearly communicating patient and visitor codes of conduct.
- Educate patients, families, and the community about the impact of workplace violence.

Workforce Safety

- Utilize a behavioral emergency response team of trained individuals; ensure that employees know when and how to activate this team.

- Use panic alarms in free-standing facilities.
- Develop a postincident response that ensures the mental, emotional, and physical safety of impacted employees and provides additional support and resources when needed.

Learning System

- Review reported incidents and create improvement plans to address identified system failures.
- Offer training for prevention, early recognition, management, and de-escalation of violent situations through simulation drills involving various violent scenarios.
- Build relationships with local law enforcement and organizational security and involve them in simulated drills.

Sources: AHA/IAHSS; AMA; ANA; CMS; ECRI; Joint Commission; OSHA "Workplace"

ECRI Resources

Patient Violence ([Health System Risk Management](#) [available without login])

Ask ECRI: Patient Violence: Zero Tolerance and Patients with Underlying Conditions ([Health System Risk Management](#), [Aging Services Risk Management](#))

Self-Assessment Questionnaire: Workplace Violence ([Ambulatory Care Risk Management](#))

Security in the Ambulatory Setting: Dealing with Disruptive Patients and Visitors ([ECRI and the ISMP PSO](#))

Behavioral Rapid Response Team for Acute Care Medical Units ([ECRI and the ISMP PSO](#))

Resource Collection: Safety and Security ([Ambulatory Care Risk Management](#))

Some ECRI resources are publicly available. To obtain other ECRI reports, contact us by telephone at (610) 825-6000, ext. 5891, or by email at clientservices@ecri.org



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Conflict Resolution Strategies



Sources of Conflict in Day-to-Day Office Practice

- Scheduling
- Payment
- Office visit efficiency
- Misunderstanding communication between stakeholders
- Address unrealistic expectations from patients



Conflict Definition

- Serious disagreement or argument between different stakeholders
- Competing or opposing action of incompatibles
- One or more desired outcome by different stakeholders



Conflict Resolution Approaches



Selecting the Right Approach

- How important is your desired outcome in the big picture?
- What is the impact if your desired outcome is not achieved?
- What is the impact of being assertive on all stakeholders?
- Does a collaborative or cooperative solution exist?



Communication Techniques

- Listen effectively
- Identify specific point of disagreements
- Express your needs effectively
- View conflict as opportunity for growth
- Focus on specific issues
- Do not generalize
- Communicate effectively to de-escalate situation



Communication Technique: STOMP

- S-Stop
- T-Think
- O-Options
- M-Make decision
- P-Proceed



Communication Technique: General

- Consider worst case scenario
- Resist the trap
- Think and take a step back
- Speak calmly and respectfully
- Engage the right way



Communication Technique: General Cont.

- Acknowledge the other stakeholders' points
- Take deep breath
- Understand the frustration from the other stakeholders
- Always have option to walk away from conflict
- Address problems in professional and caring manner





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Active Shooter Protocols



“I’m so scared”: 911 recordings reveal fear and urgency of those trapped in Uvalde elementary school



3 people killed at Michigan State University; gunman dead



At least 4 dead, multiple people injured in shooting at Tulsa, Oklahoma, medical building: Police

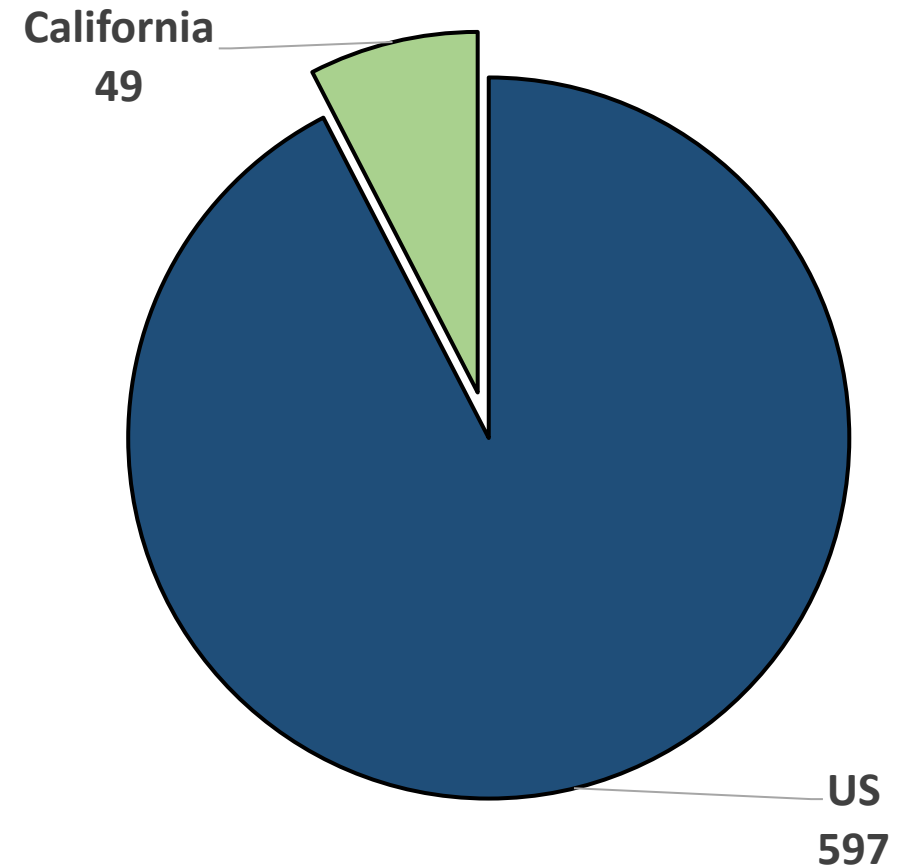
11th victim dies after Monterey Park shooting as police explore motive theories



Active Shooter: What Does the Data Tell Us?

- In 2022, 646 reported mass shootings were reported in the United States
- 7% (n = 49) of the 2022 total reported mass shootings occurred in California
- The data reveals our new “normal” and the importance of preparedness

2022 Reported Mass Shootings



Active Shooter Protocol: Immediate Actions

RUN:

1. Run away from the shooter and the sound of shots as fast as you can
2. Leave your belongings behind
3. Do not wait for others to follow
4. Keep your hands visible



HIDE:

1. Hide in an area out of the active shooter's view
2. Block entry to your hiding place by barricading doors
3. Lock doors if able
4. Turn off lights
5. Silence your cell phone



FIGHT:

1. As a last resort and only when your life is in imminent danger do whatever it takes to survive
2. Throw items
3. Work as a team



CALL 911 WHEN IT IS SAFE TO DO SO!

Active Shooter Protocol: Police Arrival

Remain	Remain calm and follow officers' instructions
Raise	Immediately raise hands and spread fingers
Keep	Keep hands visible at all times
Avoid	Avoid making quick movements towards officers
Do not stop	Do not stop to ask officers for help or directions



Active Shooter Protocol: Reunification

- News about the incident will travel fast
- Family/friends of employees will likely present on site
- Identify a reunification point that is away from the hot zone



Active Shooter Protocol: Other Tips

- Bag of essentials to provide to law enforcement
- Lockdown kits (e.g. water, food, communication devices)
- Tourniquets
- Facility census
- Communication to employees and patients





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Resources



Toolkit

- Workplace Violence Assessment Tool
- Policy Template
- Training Videos
- De-escalation (Crisis Institute Guide)
- Vendors: Security Assessments/Training





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Questions



Thank You



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