

Mitigating healthcare workplace violence: the importance of nurse partnerships

Matthew F. Powers¹, Kathleen E. Carlson²

1 Emergency Nurses Association 915 Lee Street Des Plaines, IL 60016 matt.powers@ena.org

2 Emergency Nurses Association 915 Lee Street Des Plaines, IL 60016 kathie.carlson@ena.org

Violence in the workplace is a serious safety issue for hospitals. According to research by the Emergency Nurses Association (ENA), the emergency department is among the most dangerous work settings in health care for nurses because of violence from patients and visitors. Workplace violence is not confined to physical assault but also includes emotional or verbal abuse, threatening, bullying or coercive behavior, including between colleagues. Leadership from ENA and the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) are concerned that efforts to mitigate incidents of workplace violence are inadequate. To address the issue AONE and ENA convened a “Day of Dialogue” to create guidelines and resources to assist nurse leaders in systematically addressing measures to decrease and control violence in the workplace.

During an intense two-day session, ENA and AONE staff and board members reviewed current processes for addressing violence and defined steps needed to create an environment where both staff, patients and families would feel safe. Eight guiding principles and five priorities were defined and distributed to their association members.

Violence in the workplace is not just a USA issue. AT the 2015 International Council of Nurses, participants shared their stories of workplace violence with us, validating in many ways that violence can and does occur in any international healthcare environment. The ENA- AONE project demonstrates two associations collaborating on a critical issue facing all patient care settings. The principles and priorities have global implication. This session will provide an overview of the issue, findings of research conducted in the USA, how a Day of Dialogue is conducted, and the principles and priorities to mitigate violence. These should apply to any healthcare environment that experiences violence in the workplace setting.