

Violence and Harassment in the Workplace

Learning Goals

- Understand what is meant by workplace violence
- Tips for remaining safe
- When should you call a Code White?

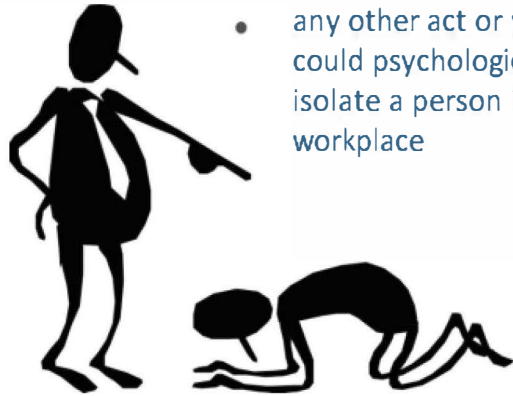
TOH's Violence and Harassment in the Workplace policy defines violence as...

Any act of force or aggression:

- Hitting
- Pinching
- Biting
- Kicking
- Grabbing hair
- Punching
- threats
- Other physical or sexual assault including murder

Psychological violence:

- Abuse (verbal)
- bullying
- mobbing
- ridicule
- any other act or words that could psychologically hurt or isolate a person in the workplace



2.3

Workplace Violence as defined by the Occupational Health and Safety Act [OHSA]

- The exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker.
- An attempt to exercise physical force against a worker that could cause physical injury to the worker.
- A statement or behaviour that is reasonable for the worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace that could cause physical injury to the worker.

2.4

Threats

A threat is a verbal, written or physical intent to harm a person or property. It can be:

Direct:

"I am going to make you pay for what you did to me"

Physically aggressive gestures (raised fist or invasion of personal space)

Conditional:

"If you don't cover for me you will regret it"

Blocking someone's path or exit to imply they must comply or there will be consequences

Veiled/Hidden:

"I can imagine something terrible like that happening here...."

Tone can also indicate malicious intent

2.5

Harassment

Engaging in a course of **vexatious comment** or conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome.

Including...



- bullying
- threats
- intimidation
- verbal abuse
- swearing, insults, or condescending language
- intimidating and offensive jokes or innuendos
- displaying or circulating offensive pictures or materials
- offensive or intimidating phone calls
- psychological & emotional abuse

2.6

Is this bullying?

- Throwing tantrums/yelling or profane gestures
- non-verbal communication or gestures (eye-rolling)
- Giving the “silent treatment” or “icing out”
- Deliberately hindering or sabotaging someone's work by:

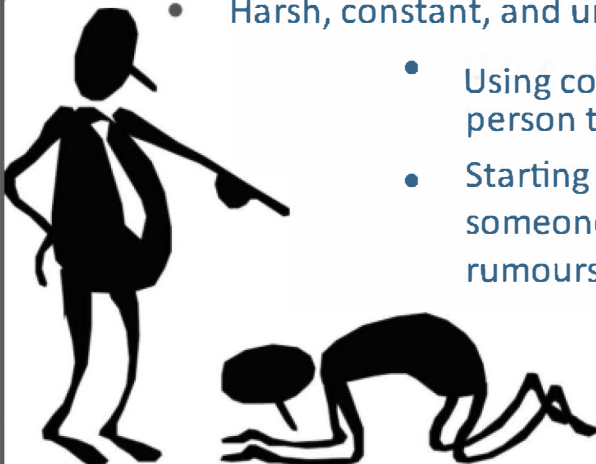
- withholding information
- misdirecting
- giving the wrong information
- failing to perform expected tasks (sign-off, taking calls or collaborating)



2.8

Is this bullying?

- “Hazing” rituals that isolate or intimidate new hires before accepting them into the team
- Isolating a person from their co-workers (socially or physically) and/or encouraging others to turn against another
- Harsh, constant, and unjust criticism of an individual
- Using confidential information about a person to humiliate privately or publicly
- Starting damaging rumours or gossip about someone or failing to stop the rumours/gossip



2.9

Bullying defined

- repeated and persistent negative acts
 - in person
 - by phone
 - by electronic means (email, blogs, etc.)
- towards one or more individuals
- may involve a real or perceived power imbalance
- creating a hostile work environment
- mobbing involves several individuals systematically “ganging up” or terrorizing another

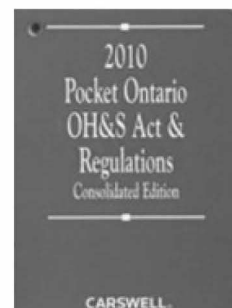
2.10

The Ottawa Hospital's Responsibilities

The *Occupational Health & Safety Act* (OH&SA) was amended in June 2010 to strengthen protection for workers from workplace violence and harassment.

- Sec. 25(2):
 - *Take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker.*
- Workplace violence / harassment may include:
 - Physical violence
 - Threats
 - Harassment
 - Domestic violence

2.11



Violence - Warning signs

While some signs are obvious like...

- Voice raised in anger
- Clenching fists
- Throwing or hitting inanimate objects

Other signs may be more subtle.

- Pacing - can be a sign of agitation
- Change of tone
- Excessive swearing

2.12

Factors in Health Care that increase the risk of being exposed to Violence or Harassment.

- Working alone (isolated, night shifts, home visits)
- Dealing with clients with potential for violent or unpredictable behaviour:
 - Mental health issues
 - Dementia or neurological conditions
 - Effects of medications or underlying medical conditions
- Delivering serious health information
- Working in highly stressful or emotional situations with clients
- Long wait times, work overload, crowded conditions
- Handling drugs (e.g. narcotics)

2.13

Events that may trigger violent behaviour

- Death of a loved one or other form of loss such as a relationship, job, home situation, etc.)
- A failure or disappointment (work-related or personal)
- Conflict at work (including bullying)
- Personal health issues (dealing with uncertainty)
- Multiple stressors

2.14

Responding to Violent Situations

- Listen and remain calm.
- Focus on the other person (show genuine interest).
- Clarify your understanding.
- Be professional and respectful.
- Use relaxed body language.
- Be aware of your message delivery and tone.
- Allow personal space.
- Position yourself at a right angle - not directly in front.
- Keep your exit path clear.

2.16

When should you call a Code White?

- An individual's violent behaviour puts him/herself or others at risk of harm
- A patient is acting out and may require physical restraint
- Your safety or the safety of a co-worker is being threatened
- The situation has escalated to the point that you cannot control it alone

2.19

Code White

Call Locating at:

- | | |
|--------------------|--------|
| • Civic | 1-5555 |
| • General | 7-5555 |
| • Riverside | 8-5555 |
| • Irving Greenburg | 2-3333 |

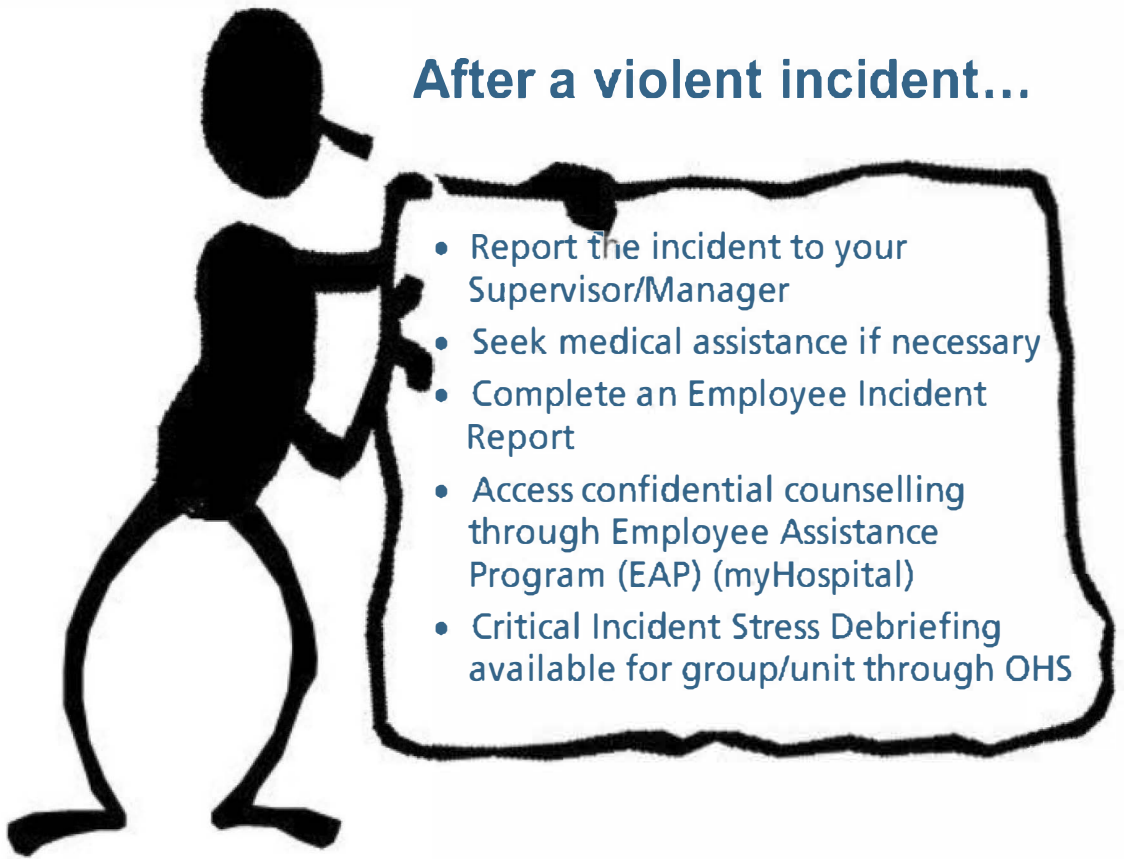


Inform them of your location

Remain in a safe place until the Code White team arrives.

2.20

After a violent incident...



2.22

If you think you are being harassed...

- Review Code of Conduct policy for the informal & formal complaint processes
- Report the circumstances to your Supervisor or Human Resources as appropriate
- Record the relevant information
- Access confidential counselling through EAP

2.23

Outcomes

Incidents involving Patients & Family Members:

- He/she may be removed from the premises by Security Services.
- He/she may have their future access to hospital property restricted.
- If a police investigation finds that charges are warranted, they may be subject to legal action through the courts (pressing charges).

(Refer to the Appendix in the Violence Policy for further information on legal action)

2.24

Outcomes

Incidents involving other Staff:

- The Code of Conduct & Discipline Policy apply
- Persons involved are offered counselling through EAP
- The person found responsible for the violence, bullying or harassment is subject to disciplinary action (including possible termination of employment)

2.25

Resources

People

• Occupational Health & Safety at:	Civic	14161
	General	78391
	Riverside	88250

Training:

- CPI Non-Violence Crisis Intervention Training - Enroll through ELM

Information:

Fact Sheets can be found on:

Myhospital/Employee Services/Staff Safety/Safety Fact Sheets

- Violence Fact Sheet
- Violence Prevention for Non-Clinical Staff
- Violence Prevention Program
- Workplace Harassment

Policies:

- Violence and Harassment in the Workplace policy #245
- Code of Conduct policy #362

2.26

Learning Objective Review

We hope you...

- Have a better understanding of workplace violence, harassment and bullying.
- Remember the tips for remaining safe.
- Be aware and don't delay in calling a Code White.

2.27

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4.1

Policies & Procedures

Français

Find Policies or Procedures on my Hospital under the 'Policies and Procedures' tab.

- Violence in the Workplace policy
- Code of Conduct policy

TOH Today TOH At A Glance **Policies and Procedures** TOH Teams Employee Services

Policies and Procedures

Policy Search

Restrict to:

- ☐ Ambulatory Care
- ☐ Care of the Elderly
- ☐ Corporate Administration
- ☐ Diagnostic Imaging
- ☒ Point of Care Testing
- ☐ Speech-Language Pathology

Use the search box to find the policy you are interested in.

You can limit your search to specific types of policies. Choose "Corporate-Administration" for policies related to Violence and Harassment Prevention

4.2

The End