



CNA Webinar Series: Progress in Practice

UNDERSTAND AND MANAGE INTRAPROFESSIONAL AGGRESSION

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**CANADIAN
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Webinar Objectives

- Explore factors that can facilitate or impede workplace aggression.
- Describe strategies nurse managers can use to deal with workplace violence and aggression.





The Issue

- Issue of workplace aggression in health care is well documented (di Martino, 2003; Farrell et al., 2006; Hesketh et al., 2003; Jansen et al., 2005).
- Yet, workplace aggression continues to be identified as a serious problem (QWQHC, 2007; Shields & Wilkins, 2006).
- Intra-staff aggression has been found to be more disturbing to the victim than any other type of aggression (Farrell, 1997, 2001).
- Nursing managers were identified as playing a central role in workplace aggression management (Alexander et al., 2004).





Literature Review

Facts About Workplace Aggression in Health Care

- Insidious and complex problem “rooted in social, economic, organizational and cultural factors” (ILO et al., 2002).
- Health-care workers are 16 times more likely to experience aggression at work than any other type of worker (Gates & Kroeger, 2002; Kingma, 2001).
- Nurses are second highest for risk of aggression, just after police officers (LeBlanc & Kelloway, 2002).





Literature Review (cont'd)

It's estimated that only one-fifth of cases of workplace aggression are officially reported (ICN, 1999).

Contributing factors:

- **Restructuring of health-care system** (Doran et al., 2004; Laschinger & Wong, 2007; Mayrand-Leclerc et al., 2006).
- **Work environment of nursing managers** (Paliadelis et al., 2007; Thorpe & Loo, 2003; Westerberg & Armelius, 2000).





The Study

Research Design

Critical ethnography (Carspecken, 1996)

Setting

Two distinct organizations:

- a multi-site university affiliated psychiatric facility (2 sites)
- a community hospital (acute care)

Sampling

Convenience sample:

- 19 nursing managers and directors
- 4 key informants





The Study (cont'd)

Data Collection

Data collected from several sources:

- interviews
- mute evidence
- observation of physical environment
- field notes

Ethical Considerations

Ethics approval from three Research Ethics Boards.





The Study (cont'd)

Data Analysis

Guided by:

- Morse (1994)
- Paillé (1994)





Findings

Five themes identified:

1. Perceptions
2. Emotions
3. Aggression
4. Management
5. Power





Findings (cont'd)

1. Perceptions

- Intent:
 - awareness: emotional
 - awareness: physical

- Differences:
 - in educational preparation
 - in practice
 - in management style
 - in roles and responsibility

- Representation:
 - expectations
 - assumptions
 - taking it personally





Findings (cont'd)

2. Emotions

- Fear
- Frustration
- Mistrust





Findings (cont'd)

3. Aggression

- Etiology
 - Perceived root cause

- Environments
 - Physical
 - Social/cultural
 - changes and new initiatives
 - workload
 - work design
 - manager's visibility
 - cuts and budgets
 - unit culture, the individual





Findings (cont'd)

4. Management

“Managing workplace aggression is like tending a garden. If you weed it once a week, you’ll have a nice garden. If you turn your back on it for a month and come back, it will be infested.”

—Study participant





Findings (cont'd)

4. Management (cont'd)

- Modus operandi
 - Has victim spoken with perpetrator?
 - If not, why not? (Does manager need to be involved?)
 - Fact finding:
 - Should try to keep process as informal as possible.
 - Is third party involvement needed?
 - Provide copy of organizational aggression policy or code of conduct.
 - Letter to file and follow-up with employees.

*** Timing is key when addressing the issue. ***





Findings (cont'd)

4. Management (cont'd)

- Actors
 - Individuals
 - Peers
 - Managers
 - Human Resources Department
 - Unions

- Responsibility and Accountability
 - Standards of Practice
 - Code of Ethics





Findings (cont'd)

5. Power

- Hierarchy
- Agenda





Implications for Nursing

Practice

- Discuss issue of role conflict, role ambiguity and staff mix.
- Allow time to develop friendships.
- Remind health-care professional of obligations and responsibilities under their professional license.

Education

- Develop skills in:
 - effective communication
 - dealing with difficult people
 - managing professional relationships
 - team work and assertive communication





Implications for Nursing (cont'd)

Administration

- Develop strategies related to hiring process.
- Ensure perception of fairness.
- Support managers to ensure a physical presence on the units.

Research

- Investigate whether pro-active management of intra/inter professional aggression do in fact decrease instances of aggression.
- Explore issue of responsibility and accountability.





Upcoming International Conference

Third International Violence in the Health Sector
conference:

***Violence in the Health Sector:
Synergies Driving Local Action***

October 24-26, 2012

Vancouver, British Columbia





CNA Related Resources

- Canadian Nurses Association & Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions. (2008). *Workplace violence*. [Joint Position Statement]. Ottawa: Authors. Available from http://www.cna-aiic.ca/CNA/documents/pdf/publications/JPS95_Workplace_Violence_e.pdf
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Thank You

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