UNDERSTAND AND MANAGE INTRAPROFESSIONAL AGGRESSION

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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.
• 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).
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).
It’s estimated that only one-fifth of cases of workplace aggression are officially reported \( \text{(ICN, 1999).} \)

**Contributing factors:**

- **Restructuring of health-care system** \( \text{(Doran et al., 2004; Laschinger \& Wong, 2007; Mayrand-Leclerc et al., 2006).} \)

- **Work environment of nursing managers** \( \text{(Paliadelis et al., 2007; Thorpe \& Loo, 2003; Westerberg \& Armelius, 2000).} \)
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
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.
Data Analysis

Guided by:
• Morse (1994)
• Paillé (1994)
Findings

Five themes identified:

1. Perceptions
2. Emotions
3. Aggression
4. Management
5. Power
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
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
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
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.**
4. Management (cont’d)

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

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


References


References (cont’d)


References (cont’d)


Thank You

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