

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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DATE EFFECTIVE: 8 Feb 09

CROSS REFERENCE: A. BoDs Mtg Feb 09
B. BoDs Mtg May 08
C. Canada Occupational Health and Safety Regs of Canada Labour Code Part II
D. Workplace Health & Safety Act of Ontario

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Rev. May 2012

ISSUED BY: Board of Directors
CATEGORY: ADMINISTRATION
SUBJECT: WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

POSITION: It is the Position of the Association in that Medical Radiation Practitioners (MRPs) have the right to work in a violence free environment and that employers are responsible to provide that environment.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS: The Association recognizes workplace violence to include both physical and psychological acts of abuse.

Workplace violence includes, in the view of the Association:

- Physical assault by patients - physicians and other verbal and physical assault by co-workers, visitors and other healthcare providers
- Verbal abuse by patients, their family and friends
- Harassment by employees at any level in the organization the MRT works for
- Bullying by employees at any level in the organization the MRT works for
- Wilful neglect by superiors or unreasonable monitoring of work related to the skills and experience of the MRP
- Unjust criticism, humiliating, false, rude or abusive statements by peers or superiors

Every workplace should have a Violence Prevention Program in place that is comprehensive including policies, procedures and guidelines and their relative monitoring, evaluation and validation processes and tools. This Program should encourage a culture of reporting violent incidents, and provide training and education for MRTs in violence prevention, de-escalation strategies and general managing of violent behaviour. Further, the Program should address the area of domestic abuse, which, when it occurs impacts negatively on the effectiveness of the MRP and patient care.

DISCUSSION:

The Federal and Ontario Governments have recognized the issue of workplace violence and in cooperation with the Workplace Insurance and Safety Board (WISB) and the Ontario Safety Association for Community & Healthcare (OSACH) have deemed that workplace violence is unacceptable.

It should be understood that domestic violence/abuse also has an impact on the workplace which was of particular note during the Coroner's Inquest in the Dupont/Daniel case in Windsor.

MRTs should refuse to work alone and especially on evening and night shifts if they believe they are in danger concerning a potential violent incident unless there is assurance of security being present.

Bullying has surfaced as a frequent act concerning workplace violence. This includes: social isolation, rumours, personal attacks on an MRP's private life or their personal attributes, excessive criticism, verbal aggression, withholding information and withholding job responsibilities. In a time of dependency on healthcare providers, especially MRPs, allowing workplace violence will lead to further healthcare system challenges due to the negative effect on MRPs. These negative effects include: lowering of job satisfaction, psychosomatic symptoms, physical illness, post-traumatic stress, mental illness (depression, etc.), and the potential for permanent disability.

The Association believes employers are responsible for the workplace environment with specific responsibilities for employers, managers and supervisors. Further, MRPs have responsibilities as well to:

- Not commence or participate in any workplace violence
- Ensure that they are aware of the safety procedures, measures and personal security resources in their place of work
- Make the appropriate individuals aware of a situation involving domestic abuse
- Promptly report each incident
- Document each episode
- Use the facilities Employee Assurance Plan (EAP) if they have one
- Seek medical attention if required
- Inform your solicitor
- Be aware of the safety procedures and measures available in the work setting