

April, 3, 2023

To All Employees:

The issue of violence against healthcare workers has been an increasing problem for several years. However, the last few years have seen an exponential rise in violent acts, both physical and verbal, against healthcare workers. At [Hospital], this has also become our lived experience with notable increases in assaults and violent incidences, especially within the last six months. In the state of Massachusetts abusive instances in healthcare organizations increased from one incident every 57 minutes in 2020 to an incident every 38 minutes in 2022.

This cannot and will not be tolerated. As a hospital, we must provide our employees and patients a safe and healing environment. With that in mind, I wanted to share with you some of the initiatives that we have already began here at [Hospital] as first steps on a journey to stopping these incidences of violence.

1. Workplace Violence Committee

We have established a Workplace Violence Committee that has representation from multiple areas within the hospital. The committee has a wide scope, dealing with both security and workplace violence issues.

2. Addressing Mental Health Needs

With the addition of [New Hire] to our staff, we will have a more comprehensive approach to mental healthcare in our facility. By placing both the in-patient BHU and ED BHU under one experienced leader, we can have a more streamlined approach to treating these patients both safely and effectively. We will also be reviewing how we place patients suffering a mental health crisis, those with abusive tendencies, as well as those recovering from addictive substances. In [New Hire's] developing role, we will also roll out some initiatives to ensure that the mental health of our staff is a top priority.

3. Code of Conduct

The hospital has adopted the Massachusetts Health & Hospital Association's Code of Conduct. This Code of Conduct details the behaviors that will not be tolerated within our facility and also prescribes consequences for violations which may include: being escorted from the hospital and having future, non-emergent access to the hospital limited; reporting all incidences to police authorities, and asking patients to seek their care elsewhere if they cannot abide by this code of conduct.

4. Signage

Our Hospital is a Safe and
Healing Environment.
**AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR
WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**

Our care team has the right to be treated with dignity and respect at all times. Please respect their right to do their jobs without physical or verbal abuse or discrimination of any kind.

We reserve the right to take appropriate measures to address the following behaviors:

- ▶ Disrespectful, aggressive, abusive, or violent behavior.
- ▶ Threatening, discriminatory, bullying, disrespectful, or offensive language.
- ▶ Possession of weapons or firearms.
- ▶ Disruption of other patients' care or experience.
- ▶ Taking photos or videos of patients, visitors, and/or staff without permission.

A COMMUNITY BUILT ON CARE

You will soon see the below signage at strategic entrance points and places throughout the hospital. This will serve as a reminder of our stand as a hospital and the necessity of ensuring that [Hospital] has a Healing Environment at all times.

5. New Security Measures

We are currently involved in a security review of our facilities to ensure that we are providing appropriate security and protection for our staff and patients.

6. Training Opportunities

The Workplace Violence Committee will be reviewing some additional opportunities for de-escalation training for our employees as well as additional safety training for high-risk areas.

7. Alignment with the Massachusetts Hospital Association

In addition to adopting the Code of Conduct, we are working closely with the MHA to address the issues from a regional perspective. This cooperative gives us access to multiple resources as well as some great leaders in the industry who can serve as a wealth of knowledge and support in addressing this crisis.

8. Please Report Any Concerns or Issues

Finally, we are introducing a new email address: stopviolence@[hospital].com. This email is designed for you to offer concerns or suggestions as it relates to decreasing workplace violence. We want to hear from you. This email should not be used to report any urgent security and/or safety events.