



## *Just the Facts...*

### *Medical Safety and Security Workplace Violence Hazard Prevention and Control*

Hazard prevention and control includes engineering, administrative, and work practice controls that will safeguard workers from workplace violence. Selection of controls should be based on the potential for and sources of workplace violence. For example, if customers/clients usually wait for long periods for services, organizations should consider using violence prevention controls such as providing comfortable waiting areas, keeping customers informed on their status, increasing staffing during busy periods, and training workers to recognize and respond to potentially violent customers/clients.

#### *Engineering Controls*

Engineering controls remove the hazard(s) from the workplace or create a barrier between workers and the hazard(s). Care should be taken to avoid engineering controls that increase frustration for workers, patients/clients, and visitors since this may defeat their purpose. The following list contains some of engineering controls that can help safeguard workers from workplace violence.

- ◆ visual and audible alarm systems and panic buttons
- ◆ intrusion detection systems
- ◆ metal detectors
- ◆ closed-circuit video cameras
- ◆ cellular phones, beepers, radios, or hand-held alarms (in accordance with the hospital's electromagnetic interference (EMI) policy)
- ◆ two-way mirrors
- ◆ curved mirrors at hallway intersections or concealed areas
- ◆ bullet-resistant, shatter-proof glass
- ◆ deep service counters
- ◆ safe rooms for workers
- ◆ "time-out" or seclusion areas for potentially violent patients and visitors
- ◆ card-key access systems
- ◆ panic bar doors locked from the outside only
- ◆ adequate lighting, inside and outside the facility
- ◆ facility and work area design and landscaping that eliminates potential for entrapment and concealment
- ◆ adequate number of accessible exits (in accordance with the National Fire Protection Association's fire codes)
- ◆ separate, lockable staff bathrooms

#### *Administrative and Work Practice Controls*

Administrative and work practice controls affect the way jobs or tasks are completed. The following list contains examples of administrative and work practice controls that can help reduce the potential for workplace violence.

- ◆ a workplace violence policy that clearly states acceptable standards of behavior
- ◆ procedures to periodically identify and assess risk of violence in the workplace
- ◆ liaison with local law enforcement
- ◆ trained security staff
- ◆ procedures to communicate and respond to workplace violence emergencies
- ◆ procedures for intervention and restraint
- ◆ procedures to report and investigate workplace violence incidents
- ◆ procedures for physical and psychological care for victims and witnesses
- ◆ procedures for obtaining legal assistance for victims of workplace violence
- ◆ worker, patient, and visitor identification systems
- ◆ staffing plans that prevent working alone

- ◆ designated and enforced visiting hours
- ◆ key control program
- ◆ weapons policy
- ◆ security escort/buddy system programs
- ◆ safety and health training program
- ◆ comfortable patient waiting areas
- ◆ policy to keep patients informed when appointment schedules are delayed
- ◆ maintenance program for engineering controls
- ◆ Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)
- ◆ screening pre-employment references
- ◆ controlled access to pharmacies, cashier's office, mechanical rooms, unused areas, etc.

***References:***

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