Improving Workplace Violence Competence Within a Community-Based Emergency Department

PURPOSE/ BACKGROUND
Workplace violence (WPV) can occur within any industry and is a well-documented phenomenon within emergency departments (EDs).

The purpose of this quality improvement project was to implement a comprehensive WPV program to improve nursing care team members’ competence and confidence when responding to WPV events as well as their perceptions of environmental safety.

METHODOLOGY
A multi-factorial intervention was designed, including an environmental risk assessment utilizing a tool obtained from the Emergency Nurses’ Association (ENA). An additional three-step intervention was executed including a required online, evidence-based computer module; an interactive, didactic session led by members of the nursing education team and security; and simulation scenarios.

RESULTS
The WPV program was successfully completed by 91.5% of the nursing team. Response rates for the pre and post assessments were 60.5% and 51%, respectively.

Statistically significant improvements in competence and confidence were noted with one question regarding the perception of safety being statistically significant. While the aim of this project was a 5% increase in performance as compared to baseline, the changes in mean levels of competence, confidence, and perception of safety were 22.4%, 25.1%, and 8.1%, respectively.

PRACTICE IMPLICATIONS
A multifactorial approach to address WPV competence, confidence, and safety perceptions should be considered in hospital EDs. Conducting this training with other disciplines within the ED would ensure consistent practice and escalation of events by all team members. Advocacy for WPV training with professional organizations of all types should be considered, as WPV events can occur in numerous locations within the healthcare setting.