Improving Employee Safety through De-escalation Training

PURPOSE
It is the duty of employers to create an atmosphere free from harm, which includes workplace violence. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) - The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) (2017), workplace violence includes physical assault and/or threats directed toward persons while at work. According to the MD Anderson Safety Intelligence (SI) System reports, the incidents requiring police intervention due to aggression towards staff from patients/family members doubled between fiscal year 2015 (eight incidents) and fiscal year 2016 (16 incidents).

BACKGROUND
Identification of the three clinical units to receive the de-escalation training was completed through evaluation of SI reports requiring police department presence. The education component developed from the Crisis Prevention Institution (CPI) comprised a one-hour de-escalation training that included role-playing for staff in high-risk areas in the hospital. A pre/post education survey was utilized to evaluate the effectiveness of the training and was reinforced utilizing role playing.

METHODOLOGY
Identification of the three clinical units to receive the de-escalation training was completed through evaluation of SI reports requiring police department presence. The education component developed from the Crisis Prevention Institution (CPI) comprised a one-hour de-escalation training that included role-playing for staff in high-risk areas in the hospital. A pre/post education survey was utilized to evaluate the effectiveness of the training and was reinforced utilizing role playing.

RESULTS
The de-escalation training intervention with role-playing overall improved the participants’ knowledge base but had no noted influence on the number of patient/family interactions that escalated enough to merit the involvement of the police department.

IMPLICATIONS
Many staff identified that patient/family aggression is part of their job. Reasons that made aggression acceptable included brain tumors, steroid, and the stress of dealing with a cancer diagnosis. Hospital leadership needs to focus on changing the perception that aggression at work is acceptable and focus on staff training to improve safety.