

Executive Summary: MHA's Approach to Workplace Violence Mitigation



MHA's S.A.F.E.R. initiative provides a framework for a coordinated effort to create safe environments to deliver quality care. Recognizing the prevalence of workplace violence in hospitals, a task force was established in spring 2017 to identify and synthesize the contributing factors.

Based on task force guidance, MHA's workplace violence mitigation efforts have focused on the following three areas — advocacy, partnerships and evidence-based practice.

ADVOCACY

- The divergent missions of CMS and OSHA place health care providers in a difficult position to comply with both agency's regulatory requirements. Recognizing this, in fall 2018, Senators Roy Blunt (R-Mo.) and Jerry Moran (R-Kan.) introduced language about safety in health care facilities in DHHS' appropriations bill requiring a collaborative report to provide protections and support safe care environments for health workers, patients, families and visitors. MHA staff await the report that was due for publication March 25, 2019.
- Advocacy efforts continue for balanced regulatory surveys, with MHA staff drawing attention to CMS surveyors requiring staff terminations to satisfy plans of correction, and the inappropriate requirements to implement clinical hold policies and staffing to licensed bed capacity. CMS has responded favorably to our comments, and we continue to monitor and solicit feedback from member hospitals about challenges and improvements on these topics.
- MHA staff continue to educate stakeholders, including county prosecutors, that hospital personnel were added to the definition of "special victim" in Section 565.002, RSMo, thereby enhancing the penalties for assault of hospital staff.

PARTNERSHIPS

- Since late 2017, MHA has met quarterly with state agency directors to address challenges and discuss best practices for collaborations related to health care worker safety.
- MHA fosters strong partnerships between Missouri hospitals and their local Crisis Intervention Team councils to facilitate consistent messaging and shared resources. The CIT councils promote and support collaborative efforts to create and sustain more effective interactions among law enforcement, behavioral health professionals, and individuals in crisis and their families.
- Patient-facing resources are available to help hospitals communicate appropriate and expected behavior in care settings while demonstrating support for their workforce. The Healing Happens Here resources can be co-branded and used in both print and digital platforms throughout the facility.

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

- At the request of members, MHA maintains a repository on www.mhanet.com of current policies, procedures and resources related to workplace safety to validate existing approaches and identify best practices. Members are encouraged to share additional policies as they are developed.
- To provide clarity and scope, and to establish parameters for data collection, the S.A.F.E.R. initiative task force finalized a statewide definition of workplace violence in health care settings. Beginning Jan. 1, 2019, MHA began collecting data related to workplace violence to quantify the prevalence of these incidents.
- With expressed permission, MHA adopted the Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems' "Workplace Violence in Hospitals: A Toolkit for Prevention and Management" as our framework to guide improvement efforts.

NEXT STEPS:

With the comprehensive toolkit available to members and preliminary results available from the statewide data collection initiative, MHA staff will work with hospital security and safety leaders to establish outcome measures for program evaluation.

