

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION

7014

It is the policy of Bullhook Community Health Center that violence, physical or verbal, in this facility is not permitted or tolerated.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) defines workplace violence as “violent acts (including physical assaults and threats of assaults) directed toward persons at work or on duty.” Health-care workers face a significant risk of job-related violence. Nurses and aides suffer the most assaults resulting in injury. Incidents of violent acts or threatening situations are likely to be underreported, perhaps in part due to the persistent perception within the health-care industry that assaults are part of the job or that reporting will not benefit the staff. Although most health-care workplace assaults take place in residential settings, the risk of occurrence in the outpatient setting has increased due to:

1. The prevalence of handguns and other weapons among patients, families, or friends.
2. The increasing number of acute and chronic mentally ill patients being released from hospitals without follow-up care (these patients have the right to refuse medicine and can no longer be hospitalized involuntarily unless they pose an immediate threat to themselves or others).
3. Factors such as the unrestricted movement of the public in clinics and long waits in clinic areas that lead to client frustration over an inability to obtain needed services promptly.
4. The increasing presence of gang members and drug or alcohol abusers.
5. Isolated work with clients during examinations and treatments.
6. Lack of staff training in recognizing and managing escalating hostile and assaultive behavior.

TRAINING:

Bullhook Community Health Center staff members will receive annual training on recognizing and managing escalating hostile and assaultive behavior, risk factors that cause or contribute to assaults, ways to protect oneself and coworkers, policies and procedures for reporting incidents.

SECURITY:

Bullhook Community Health Center will maintain a comfortable waiting area designed to minimize stress.

Staff will inform waiting clients of the reasons for any lengthy wait time.

Staff members with visual contact to the lobby will note any patient demonstrating unusual stress or agitation and address the situation according to the training provided.

