

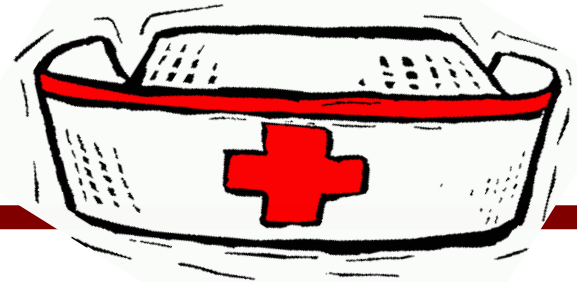
Workplace Injury and Illness Among Registered Nurses



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Problem Statement



- It is well documented that Registered Nurses (RNs) experience many workplace hazards: **moving/handling patients, using needles, exposure to bodily fluids and workplace violence**
- RNs experience one the of the highest rates of occupational injuries/illnesses and have the fifth highest incident rate of reported musculoskeletal disorders.
- Despite increased health and safety legislation and advances in engineering and technology nurses continue to be injured on the job.



Service Employees International Union (SEIU) 121RN

- Serves 8,000 registered nurse members in 19 medical facilities throughout Southern California.
- Is one of few nursing unions that has a Health and Safety Director.
- Successfully petitioned for a new Cal/OSHA workplace violence prevention standard.

Objectives

- Learn about occupational hazards RNs face and the illnesses and injuries they experience.
- Learn about Cal/OSHA standards
- Analyzing existing injury and illness data and applying comparisons to what is provided with current Cal/OSHA standards.
- Collect new data on how these injuries and illnesses can be prevented.



Methods

1. Assess 3 different hospitals

- Collect data and analyze Cal/Osha 300 Logs
- Compared facilities' policies and standards to Cal/OSHA standards

2. Identify trends to help create a questionnaire

3. Workplace Violence Interviews



Injury and Illness Data Collection

Year	All Cases	Sprains (mainly back/shoulder)	Contusions	Needlestick/ Blood borne	WPV
2010	75	41	6	16	9
2011	35	27	1	2	2
2012	49	26	8	2	5
2013	71	26	11	13	5
2014	5	2	0	0	0
Total	235	122	26	33	21

Questionnaire

- Types of injuries/illnesses experienced?
- What are the **direct and underlying factors** that contributed to incidence?
- How could the incidences have been **prevented**?

Results

- **16 completed questionnaires to date**
(10 reported experiencing injuries/illness)
- 13 Female, 3 Male RNs, Age Range 40-60

23 individual incidences

- **Workplace violence: 9**
- **Bodily Fluids: 6**
- **Needle/Sharps: 4**
- **Patient Transfers: 3**
- **Other: 1**



Results: Workplace Violence

- **40%** of the total incidences were workplace violence
 - **5/9** were verbal, emotional, sexual abuse by co-worker and supervisor
 - **3/9** were verbal and physical abuse by patient's family (2 knife threats)

Results: Needlestick/Sharps Injury

- Safety guard activation failure
- Unsafe disposal of needles
- All received training & were aware of post exposure precautions, but only $\frac{1}{2}$ receive post exposure testing
- Preventative solutions:
 - guarded needles
 - communication with co-worker
 - easier access to disposal



Results: Moving/Patient Handling

- Back and shoulder sprains
- Heavy lifting
- Preventative Solutions:
 - Nurses should not transfer patients alone
 - Increase communication among nurses
 - Less cramped workplace

Nurses' experiences

- long shifts
- fast paced
- understaffing, often *alone*
- employers **blame RNs**
- normalizing hazards
 - “it is just *part of the job*”
- lack of awareness on Cal/Osha 300 logs



Workplace Violence Standard



California Healthcare Worker
**Safe Care
Standard Campaign**



***“we are suppose to care for our patients.
We make excuses for them and why they
hurt us”***

Challenges from Questionnaire

- Recruitment and Participation
- Incomplete Submissions
 - missing data
 - unclear details on the event
 - few suggestions of preventative solutions

Overall Successes

- Further increasing awareness of health and safety for the members
- Comprehensive questionnaire that will continue to be used
- Data used to help support the ongoing development of the new workplace violence standard.



Give Back! Self-Report Injury Post Cards

ILLNESS & INJURY
REPORT CARD



RETURN CARD TO
YOUR STEWARD/REP

Dear Steward/Representative,

I recently experience/witnessed an illness/injury at:

_____ on __ / __ / __. The illness/injury is
facility & unit name mm dd yyyy

related to: moving a patient needlestick puncture

bodily fluid exposure workplace violence other

I reported the incident to my supervisor

Please contact me at: _____
your phone number or email address

You have the right to a workplace that is free from recognized hazards that potentially cause death or serious physical harm

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