

Workplace Violence in Emergency Departments

Prevalence of Workplace Violence in Health Care/Emergency Departments

Workers in the **health care** sector make up about



50%
of all victims of
workplace assault.¹

From 2002–2013, serious incidents
of **workplace
violence** were
4x
more common for workers in
the **health care** sector than for
all other workers in the U.S.



Studies show that
emergency nurses
and other personnel
in the ED experience
a **violent event** about

once every 2 months.²



ED workers are exposed to **significant rates** of **physical**
and **verbal abuse**. Under-reporting of workplace violence
in the ED is common and contributes to the difficulty in
accurately tracking violence.^{5,6}

100%

of emergency
nurses reported
verbal assault and



82%

reported **physical
assault** in the past year.

Emergency nurses have the **highest
rate of physical assaults** of all nurses.^{3,4}



Impact of Workplace Violence on Nurses, Patients and U.S. Health Care System

Emergency nurses are more
likely to experience **acute
stress** than other nurses.



1/3 of emergency nurses reported they
had considered **leaving** the profession
due to **workplace violence**.⁷

94%

of emergency nurses surveyed reported at least **one
post-traumatic stress disorder symptom**, with **17%**
scoring high enough to be considered **probable for PTSD**.⁸



The estimated **cost
of workplace
violence** in health care is

\$4.2



billion annually.⁹

1. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), US Department of Labor osha.gov

2. Kowalenko T et al. Prospective study of violence against ED workers. (2013). American Journal of Emergency Medicine – 31 (1), 197-205

3. Crilly, Chaboyer & Creedy, Violence toward emergency nurses by patients (2004). Accident and Emergency Nursing

4. May & Grubbs, The extent, nature, and precipitating factors of nurse assault among three groups of registered nurses in a regional medical center (2002). Journal of Emergency Nursing

5. Taylor & Rew, A systematic review of the literature: workplace violence in the emergency department (2011). Journal of Clinical Nursing

6. Gacki-Smith et al. Violence against nurses working in US emergency departments (2009). Journal of Nursing Administration

7. Gacki-Smith et al. Violence against nurses working in US emergency departments (2009). Journal of Nursing Administration

8. Gates, Gillespie & Succop. Violence against nurses and its impact on stress and productivity (2011). Nursing Economics

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