



January 27, 2025

Jay Anderson, Chief Operating Officer, The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center
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Mr. Anderson,

Over the last three years, OSUNO has continued to advocate for a workplace free from violence. While work groups and committees are finding some solutions, the Medical Center continues to fail to protect the safety of our members, patients, and visitors. The current response to a December incident in the Emergency Department (ED) where a patient retained a loaded firearm in their coat for nearly an hour is indicative of the Medical Center's shortcomings. We commend the supportive response our members who were affected by the incident received by ED managers as well as their timely responses to both the Assignment Despite Objection (ADO) that was filed and discussions with OSUNO in multiple committees. However, Medical Center executive leaders are unwilling to take the necessary steps to prevent a future incident where a patient retains a deadly weapon after arrival to the Medical Center. Because of this, we have filed a complaint with PERRP for violations of the agency's General Duty Clause. The following is what was submitted:

Employees at Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center continue to be subjected to instances of workplace violence from patients and visitors. A 2023 PERRP complaint and inspection (Visit #1109363) revealed exposure to hazards of workplace violence including assault. The employer has failed to remedy the hazard in the Emergency Department (ED) as was recommended by PERRP in 2023. Therefore, employees remain vulnerable to acts of violence without adequate safeguards, support, or response. On July 7, 2023, Becker's Hospital Review released an article outlining the 5 hospitals with the longest and shortest ED visit times. OSUWMC topped the list of longest visit times with a median average visit time of 476 minutes. When Registered Nurses filed "Assignment Despite Objection" due to the increased risk of workplace violence when ED patients incur an 8 hour wait to receive care, their concerns led to no actionable change from the executives. The employer continues to fail to screen incoming ED patients and visitors, which recently led to an incident on 12/27/24 where a patient was allowed to bypass the metal detectors upon

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arriving to the ED. Due to the excessive delays to care, this patient became violent, making verbal death threats to nurses and others. The employer failed to send security to the ED for nearly an hour. At this time, and only after security placed the patient in a 4-point restraint, the patient was searched, and a loaded firearm was found in their coat. We request an immediate investigation. As a federal contractor that receives federal money in the form of Medicare and Medicaid, among other things, the Medical Center should be held to federal standards for employee safety when the State fails to adequately protect its own citizens.

We intend to continue to work with the Medical Center to find solutions to end workplace violence to keep our patients and staff safe. However, we call on the Medical Center to provide safeguards and resources for nurses who need them now. We cannot accept our nurses fearing for their physical safety, while facing imminent physical and emotional harm with no real resources to keep them safe. I cannot look them in the eye and tell them the organization's current response to workplace violence is adequate or acceptable and neither should you.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of all nurses, health professionals, patients, and those affected by violence in our hospitals.

Sincerely,

Amy Pompeii RN-BC

OSUNO President