

A photograph of a hospital building with the word "HOSPITAL" in large, raised, metallic letters on the facade. The sky is clear and blue.

Workplace Violence in Healthcare: How to Stop the Madness

BY IDENTIFYING, ASSESSING, MANAGING AND MONITORING PATIENTS AND STAFF EXHIBITING ‘BEHAVIORS OF CONCERN,’ INCIDENTS CAN BE MITIGATED LONG BEFORE THEY POSE A THREAT OF VIOLENCE TO THEMSELVES OR OTHERS.

People do not just snap. There are warning signs, red flags, cues, signals – but often they are not considered to be of a serious nature, so they are not reported. Whether violence or cyberbullying, warning signs and indicators exist. Missing recognition of behaviors of concern or failing to listen to what is being said empowers escalation to violence. Preventing a gun from entering the workplace and thwarting an act of violence *before* one occurs is a critical intelligence planning responsibility for every company. The earlier a problem is detected, the less impact it will have.

In today's world, hospitals are fortunate to have specific methodologies, best practices and technology as a tool that they can incorporate to assist in the process of mitigating or eliminating violent threats. These approaches and best practices, when utilized with appropriate planning, training and exercises, can significantly improve the safety and security of an entire facility.

MONITORING, ASSESSING AND REACTING TO BEHAVIORS OF CONCERN- KEY COMPONENTS

Awareness comes from training employees and staff to identify “behaviors of concern” and to be aware of policies that state what behaviors are not tolerated.

Insight into the pulse of the facility by creating an Intelligence Network will identify trends and issues. By creating a culture of “see something, say something,” vital information can be obtained.

Analysis of information and incidents in their entirety can create a total picture; where looking at incidents singularly may overlook the bigger issues.

Consistency of methodologies and threat assessments ensure that all incidents are thoroughly investigated, issues addressed and monitored by appropriately trained teams.

Improvement comes with monitoring trends and cases and implementing changes.



INTEGRATED SOLUTIONS

The aim of every health care facility should be to create a culture where safety from violence is a common goal of both employees and leadership. To achieve such a culture, warning signs must be recognized and understood; everyone must know how to report behaviors of concern; there must be procedures in place to investigate when there are concerns; and trained employees must know when to conduct a behavioral risk assessment and possess the necessary resources. To make your facility and the staff and patients within safe, your program must focus on preventing the act of violence in the first instance. The **Firestorm Workplace Violence Prevention Program** has four core dimensions:

Dimension 1 - Behavioral Risk Threat Assessment (BERTHA™) Framework and Plan – Assists in identifying, assessing, and managing individuals who exhibit warning signs and behaviors of concern.

- **Awareness Training** - All supervisors and staff trained on identifying ‘behaviors of concern’
- **Intelligence Network** – Collecting information and creating a culture of ‘see something, say something’ through anonymous reporting, incident reporting, monitoring of social media and collecting other key metrics
- **Central Repository** – The ability to identify trends and see the entire picture comes with seeing all incidents and behaviors in a central location
- **BERTHA™ Plan** – A trained Threat Assessment Team is put in place to conduct investigations, threat assessments and develop case action plans and monitoring based on information from the intelligence network and the repository

Dimension 2 - Related HR Policies and Procedures – Workplace violence, hostile workplace, bullying and weapons policies, combined with appropriate disciplinary and termination procedures help mitigate violence and establish a base.

Dimension 3 - Emergency Response Protocols and Plan– Guide patients, staff and internal Emergency Response Teams in their actions in the face of a threat of violence, (e.g. lockdown, flee/hide/fight).

Dimension 4 - Security Planning – Effective security is a combination of good facility management, information technology and the latest security best practices.

Contact us for complete and integrated solutions:

- **BERTHA™ Framework & Plan**
- **TipNow™ Anonymous Reporting**
- **Predictive Actionable Intelligence (social media monitoring)**
- **Security Site Assessments**
- **Emergency Response Protocols & Plans**
- **Tabletop & Full Functional Exercises**
- **Crisis Management Plans, Crisis Communication Protocols, Crisis Management Consultation**

