PIII-53: A Systematic Review of the Literature: Workplace Violence in the Emergency Department

Author List:
Presenting Author: Jessica L. Taylor
Additional Author: 

Presenting Author: Jessica L Taylor
Address: 1700 Red River
Austin, Texas 78701
United States
Ph: 512-785-7760
Fax: 
Email: jessica_leigh_taylor@yahoo.com
Institution: University of Texas at Austin

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Abstract:

Introduction: Purpose and Aims: To summarize the literature on workplace violence in the emergency department and identify characteristics of intervention studies that form the basis for guiding best-practices in the clinical setting. Research Question: What are the characteristics and findings of studies conducted from January 2004 to June 2009 on workplace violence in the emergency department? Due to a multitude of factors, emergency departments are prone to increased levels of workplace violence. Workplace violence has numerous negative financial, emotional, and organizational consequences. Although there have been numerous published studies documenting workplace violence in the emergency department, there has not been a clear consensus in the clinical setting as to what are the best practices for mitigating workplace violence.

Method(s): Systematic literature review of the literature. Databases searched included MEDLINE, PUBMED, PSYCInfo, and Dissertations and Theses Full Text Database. Search terms included workplace violence, emergency department, aggression, violence, and emergency. Articles included must be original research, primary focus on workplace violence and emergency department, published in English, conducted in North America, Australia, or Europe, with full research report accessible.

Results: 16 studies met inclusion for review. There was a paucity of intervention studies within the literature. The vast majority of studies focused on incidence rates of workplace violence over varying lengths of time and effects on staff. The major themes that emerged from the literature included characterization and description of actual incidents of violence, under-reporting of violence, barriers/attitudes toward reporting, subjective predisposing factors, safety at work.
**Discussion & Conclusions:** Incidence rates of workplace violence in the emergency department have been documented and established in numerous published studies. The majority of studies reviewed were descriptive and focused on events of workplace violence or retrospective accounts of participant experiences. Future study in this area must move beyond basic descriptive studies. Due to the lack of intervention studies, few practice-guiding implications can be gained from this body of research.

**Abstract History:**
This abstract has not been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.

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**Submitted by:**
jessica_leigh_taylor@yahoo.com