



January 23, 2017

**To:** All Physicians

**CC:** Senior Executive Team, Executive Medical Directors, Chiefs of Staff, Health Service Administrators

**From:** Dr. Alan Stewart, Vice-President Medicine and Quality

**Re: WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION FOR PHYSICIANS**

Violence in the workplace is of increasing concern. In the past few months several physicians have been attacked by patients in a variety of settings and many more are at risk daily. I am writing to assure you that *the provision of a safe workplace for our Medical Staff is of utmost priority*. The Executive Medical Directors and Senior Executive Team are actively taking steps to address this important issue. The information below is provided to inform you of local and provincial activities related to violence prevention:

On November 2016, Interior Health received an Inspection Report and Corporate Order from WorkSafeBC, the provincial agency with legal authority to set and enforce occupational health and safety standards. This outlines the expected completion of a number of health and safety requirements specific to violence prevention by March 30, 2017. Ongoing IH approaches to reducing workplace violence include: workplace Violence Risk Assessments, enforcement of Workplace Violence policies and procedures, violence prevention training for high risk staff, updating Code White procedures, training of supervisors and managers, expedient completion of incident investigations and implementation of corrective actions.

In addition, Medical Affairs has been working with IH Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) to minimize the risk of workplace violence towards our Medical Staff. As directed by HAMAC, Dr Peggy Yakimov, Executive Medical Director, has assumed responsibility to develop a Medical Staff Violence Prevention Strategy. This entails working closely with IH physicians and physician leaders, Medical Advisory Committees, WHS and liaison with Doctors of BC. The objective is production of educational tools and processes that will benefit Medical Staff.

**Violence Prevention Education** - Education is the cornerstone of a multi-faceted approach for violence prevention. Through the Corporate Order, WorkSafe BC has mandated violence prevention training for all high risk 'workers' which includes medical staff. This training includes the use of e-learning modules and hands-on classroom training. Identified high risk areas are Emergency, Mental Health and Residential Care. Our approach is in alignment with the Doctors of BC statement that *"meaningful physician input and involvement in the development, implementation, and assessment of initiatives aimed at preventing violence in healthcare"* <sup>1</sup> is necessary. Thus, in order to address the unique circumstances of physicians, most of whom are not employees, we are meeting with medical staff to seek advice on the use of e-learning modules and hands-on classroom training. Further information will be forthcoming regarding access, compensation and CME accreditation for this education.

**Reporting** - To facilitate timely investigation of concerning incidents, we ask that you report any incidents of concern to your Chief of Staff, Site Administrator and/or Executive Medical Director.

In closing, please accept my thanks for your continued commitment to providing patient-centred care, under often trying circumstances. I look forward to our work together towards reducing workplace violence and enhancing workplace safety.

Feel free to contact me directly with any questions or concerns: [alan.stewart@interiorhealth.ca](mailto:alan.stewart@interiorhealth.ca) or cell: 7782141459.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

1. <https://www.doctorsofbc.ca/health-human-resources/preventing-violence-healthcare>
2. <http://insidenet.interiorhealth.ca/empHealth/injuryprev/Pages/violenceintervention.aspx>