

New toolkit helps physicians and clinicians assess and manage violence risk

Communication@viha.ca , Communications and Stakeholder Engagement

Monday, January 22, 2018



Physicians and health care staff are dedicated to providing the best care possible to all people. Unfortunately, sometimes they face violence from the people they are trying to help. Violent behavior is a challenging part of healthcare – particularly in mental health, substance use, medical and emergency settings. According to a recent Medscape survey^[1], nearly all clinicians have experienced verbal abuse and 40% have been physically assaulted. However, only 30% reported participating in adequate training in how to cope with workplace violence.

Training and prevention are key to help improve the situation for both patients and health care providers. This is why Dr Laura Chapman and Island Health’s Dr Tracey Nigro undertook their Quality and Innovation project in 2015 with the help of Deborah McKnight.

Dr Chapman explains why she became involved in the project, “We heard about the challenges physicians faced around violence and thought - we can help them”.

“As compassionate physicians, we are committed to helping our patients and one of the ways we can do that is to equip our physicians with the tools they need to keep the workplace safe. There are many factors involved in workplace violence, but this initiative is a key step towards addressing our collective concerns.” Dr. Matt Chow, psychiatrist and SSC Co-chair, Doctors of BC

Funded by the Specialist Services Committee, the team worked with physicians and Island Health staff to develop a Toolkit for Improving Risk Assessment and Management of Violence.

Designed for the clinical setting, the evidence-based toolkit is intended to meet the needs of physicians and other clinicians. There are other existing materials to help prevent violence in health care however, few are directed towards physicians. This toolkit was developed to augment and extend those.

“The toolkit will broaden the perspective of the existing materials” said Dr Chapman, “physicians and patients will benefit from more effective, meaningful assessments about behaviour to prevent violence. This training is intended to help physicians help patients be safer in the community as well”.



Improving Risk Assessment and Management of Violence
Online Course

The toolkit is available as an E-learning course accredited for family physicians and specialists and can be accessed at no charge at: <https://ubccpd.ca/course/iramv>

[1] Ault A. Majority of Clinicians Experience Verbal Abuse, Intimidation. *Medscape*, September 29, 2017. Accessed January 15, 2018.