

# Roles and Responsibilities of Board Members

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## Role

Legislation under New Brunswick's *Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act* is designed to ensure employees work in a safe environment free of hazards and liability. Directors must take all reasonable care to ensure the corporation complies with the legislation, applicable orders and requirements from government authorities.

Violence in the workplace falls under the *OHS Act*, and failure to include health and safety as a key business risk in board decisions can have catastrophic results. Health and safety law places duties on organizations. Employers and directors can be personally liable when these duties are breached. Members of the board have both a collective and individual responsibility for health and safety.

Board members should consider the following to assess if the care level in their organization is reasonable:

- The gravity and likelihood harm could result.
- The available alternatives to minimize a possible breach and the potential harm that could result.

The board should set the direction for effective health and safety management. Board members need to establish a health and safety policy that is much more than a document. It should be an integral part of your organization's culture, its values and performance standards.

## Responsibilities

- Review health and safety performance at least once a year
  - Examine whether the health and safety policy reflects the organization's current priorities , plans and targets
  - Examine whether risk management and other health and safety systems have been effectively reported to the board
  - Consider immediate reviews after major shortcomings or incidents
  - Include health and safety and well-being performance in annual report
- Understand the key issues
- Put health and safety regularly on board meeting agendas . Information should include:
  - Performance data, injury reports,work-related absenteeism
  - Updates on targets to improve health and safety and the performance benchmark against others in your sector
- Make board decisions with the organization's health and safety policy in mind.
- Have systems to ensure your organization's risks are assessed and sensible control measures are established and maintained.

# Be informed

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## Violence

It is any incident in which a person is threatened, abused or assaulted, including all forms of physical, verbal, psychological or sexual harassment, bullying, intimidation, threats, robbery or other uninvited disruptive behaviours. Violence can be perpetrated by residents, visitors, workers and individuals who hold no relationship to the nursing home, its residents or the workers. This definition includes violence that arises out of a person's medical condition.

- An international nursing review of workplace violence found that **health-care professionals** are at the **highest risk of being attacked at work**, even when compared to prison guards, police officers, bank personnel or transport workers (Kingma, 2001).
- Nationally, over one-quarter (29%) of nurses who provide direct care reported that they had been physically assaulted by a client in the previous year. Emotional abuse from a client was reported by 44% of nurses (Statistics Canada, 2005 National Survey of the Work and Health of Nurses).
- The **rates in New Brunswick are slightly higher** than the national average, with 30.4% of N.B. nurses reporting being physically assaulted by a client in the past 12 months. Emotional abuse by a patient was reported by 41% of N.B. nurses (Stats Can., 2005 National Survey on the Work and Health of Nurses).
- New Brunswick Nurses Union's (NBNU) recent data suggests nurses in the **long-term care sector experience even higher rates**. In a NBNU poll of 115 nursing home nurses conducted in March 2014, 65% reported they had experienced some form of physical abuse at work in their career and 78% had experienced verbal abuse. (NH telephone town hall, 2015).
- This serious risk to the **safety of nurses is closely linked to patient safety**. Violent experiences among nurses result in higher rates of nurse fatigue, burnout, injury, turnover and absenteeism, which are linked to negative client outcomes (Needleman et al, 2002).

## Violence is not part of the job

Every board member in every nursing home has a duty to educate themselves about the level of violence occurring in their respective nursing homes. Ask questions, be informed and support your managers in putting processes in place to safeguard your workers. It starts with knowing the probability and severity in your home and realizing that violence can never be "just part of the job."

## Conduct Agreement

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read and understand the document above and agree to conduct myself according to these terms.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Roles and Responsibilities of Management

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## Role

Legislation under New Brunswick's Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act is designed to ensure that employees work in a safe environment free of hazards and liability. Managers must take all reasonable care to ensure that standards for practice support the corporation complying with the provincial health and safety legislation.

Violence in the workplace falls under the OHS Act. Health and safety law places duties on organizations. Employers and directors can be personally liable when these duties are breached.

The role of management is to:

- Support and guide employees.
- Develop a plan of action to address and deal with any potential workplace hazard, including workplace violence.
- Ensure employees are trained in proper procedures.

Management should follow the direction set by the board for effective health and safety management. An effective health and safety policy is much more than a document. It should be an integral part of your organization's culture, values and performance standards.

## Responsibilities

- Implement a violence prevention program in the nursing home.
- Educate all nursing home employees on the nursing home workplace violence prevention program.
- Cultivate and promote a collaborative non-violent workplace. Behave in a respectful and non-violent manner when interacting with residents, workers, family members and visitors.
- Ensure identification and investigation of any potential violent verbal or physical situations among the residents, workers, management, volunteer, family members and visitors.
- Provide a secure environment.
- Conduct a monthly safety analysis of the work areas as well as the public areas to identify any potential security risks.
- Ensure a plan of action is in place to address and deal with any potential psychological and/or physical violent situation.
- Follow up on the recommendations put in place and communicate with staff, particularly those impacted by a particular incident.
- Support and guide the employees reporting any violent incident. Be aware of and provide information on resources such as employee support programs (EFAP), community resources, pastoral care, victims' services, etc. Avoid passing judgment. Remember, it is the violent behaviour that is the problem and not the person(s) involved.

# Be informed

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## Violence

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- An international nursing review of workplace violence found that **health-care professionals** are at the **highest risk of being attacked at work**, even when compared to prison guards, police officers, bank personnel, or transport workers (Kingma, 2001).
- Nationally, over one-quarter (29%) of nurses who provide direct care reported that they had been physically assaulted by a client in the previous year. Emotional abuse from a client was reported by 44% of nurses (Statistics Canada, 2005 National Survey of the Work and Health of Nurses).
- The **rates in New Brunswick are slightly higher** than the national average with 30.4% of N.B. nurses reporting being physically assaulted by a client in the past 12 months. Emotional abuse by a patient was reported by 41% of N.B. nurses (Stats Can., 2005 National Survey on the Work and Health of Nurses).
- New Brunswick Nurses Union (NBNU) recent data suggests **nurses in the long-term care sector experience even higher rates**. In NBNU poll of 115 nursing home nurses in March of 2014, 65% reported they had experienced some form of physical abuse at work in the past year and 78% had experienced verbal abuse. (NH telephone town hall).
- This serious risk to the **safety of nurses is closely linked to patient safety**. Violence experiences among nurses result in higher rates of fatigue, burnout, injury, turnover and absenteeism which are linked to negative client outcomes (Needleman et al, 2002).

## Violence is Not Part of the Job

Every manager in every nursing home has a duty to educate themselves about the level of violence occurring in their respective nursing homes. Ask questions, be informed, and put processes in place to safeguard your workers. It starts with knowing the probability and severity in your home and realizing that violence can never be "just part of the job".

## Conduct Agreement

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Roles and Responsibilities of Workers

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## Role

Legislation under New Brunswick's *Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act* is designed to ensure that employees work in a safe environment free of hazards and liability. Violence in the workplace is considered a workplace hazard under the *OHS Act*.

The role of employees is to:

- Follow workplace plans of action to address and deal with any potential workplace hazard, including workplace violence.
- Participate in training offered by the employer, including workplace violence prevention training.

Employees should follow the direction set by management for effective health and safety management. An effective health and safety policy is much more than a document. It should be an integral part of your organization's culture, its values and performance standards.

## Responsibilities

- Become familiar with workplace violence prevention policies and programs.
- Seek out and participate in any training/awareness opportunities in the workplace.
- Cultivate and promote a collaborative non-violent work place. Behave in a respectful and non-violent manner when interacting with residents, co-workers, management, family members and visitors.
- Identify, assess and report any actual or potential violent verbal or physical situations among residents, workers, management, volunteer, family members and visitors.
- Follow plans of action to address and deal with any potential psychological and/or physical violent situation. Include care plans and/or history of violence in a resident's file. Document and share any knowledge of such plans (for example, information regarding possible triggers of violence and de-escalation strategies) with other staff or volunteers working with residents.
- After a violent incident (in addition to reporting the incident), seek medical attention, Employee/Family Assistance Programs or other counseling if required. Provide non-judgmental support to co-workers, residents, volunteers, family members or other visitors involved. Remember, it is the violent behaviour that is the problem and not the person(s) involved.

# Be informed

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## Violence

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- This serious risk to the **safety of nurses is closely linked to patient safety**. Violent experiences among nurses result in higher rates of nurse fatigue, burnout, injury, turnover and absenteeism, which are linked to negative client outcomes (Needleman et al, 2002).

## Violence is not part of the job

Every worker in every nursing home has a duty to educate themselves about the level of violence occurring in their respective nursing homes. Ask questions, be informed and follow processes in place to safeguard yourself and others. It starts with knowing the probability and severity in your nursing home and realizing that violence can never be "just part of the job."

## Conduct Agreement

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Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Roles and Responsibilities of Residents and Their Sponsors

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## Role

Your nursing home is committed to providing safe quality care to its residents and a safe working environment for all employees. This mission includes measures to prevent violence against or between residents, families, workers, management or visitors to the home.

As residents and sponsors, you have a role to play in ensuring a violence-free environment. The role of residents and sponsors is to:

- Understand the behaviour expectations of the home and your responsibilities.
- Conduct yourself according to those responsibilities.

## Responsibilities

- Contribute to a non-violent home environment by behaving in a respectful and non-violent manner when interacting with other residents, workers, management, family members and visitors.
- Inform your family members, friends and others who will be visiting you that any form of violence will not be tolerated in your home. Let them know that those who behave aggressively may be asked to leave and, in serious cases, the police may be called and/or the person may be permanently banned from the home.
- Report to a trusted staff member or management any actual or potential violent verbal or physical situations among the residents, workers, management, volunteer, family members and visitors.
- After a violent incident (in addition to reporting the incident), seek medical attention, counseling or other support, if required. If you are involved in a violent incident, either as an aggressor or the victim, try to remain non-judgmental of both yourself and other(s) involved. Remember, it is the violent behaviour that is the problem and not the person(s).

# Be informed

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## Violence

It is any incident in which a person is threatened, abused or assaulted, including all forms of physical, verbal, psychological or sexual harassment, bullying, intimidation, threats, robbery or other uninvited disruptive behaviours. Violence can be perpetrated by residents, visitors, workers and individuals who hold no relationship to the nursing home, its residents or the workers. This definition includes violence that arises out of the medical condition for which the person seeks care.

## Conduct Agreement

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read and understand the document above and agree to conduct myself according to these terms.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_