

# 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

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 (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

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

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