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Healthcare Workplace Violence Prevention Key Insights

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When it comes to physical security, your mission is our mission.

Frank Piscottia CSC
President & CEO of BPS

YEARS OF COMBINED SERVICE	CLIENTS SERVED	YEARS IN BUSINESS	REFERRAL RATE
150+	4746	35	99%

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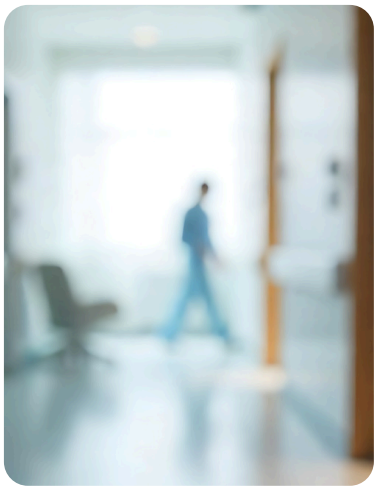
Case in Focus: Tackling Healthcare Workplace Violence

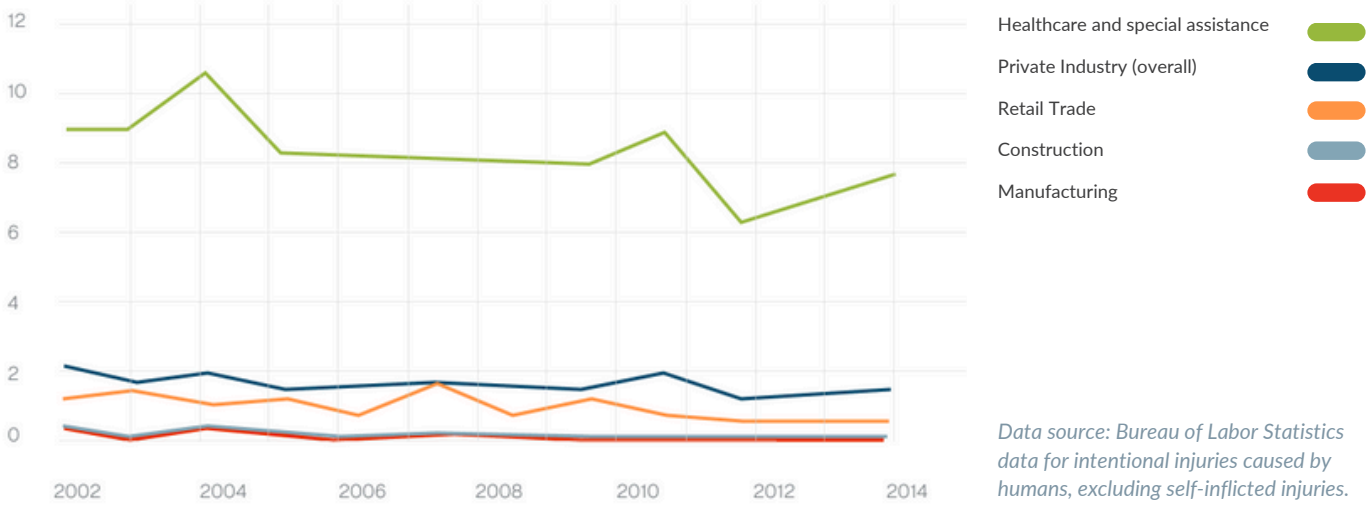
BPS's Facility Assessment Offers Strategic Lessons for Reducing Patient-to-Staff Incidents

A recent BPS case study at a major healthcare facility identified critical strategies to reduce workplace violence (WPV), with a particular focus on patient-to-staff incidents, the most common and challenging form of WPV in the sector. Using evaluation criteria aligned with OSHA, IAHSS, and Joint Commission guidelines, the assessment uncovered systemic gaps and produced practical, facility-wide recommendations that are applicable across a broad range of healthcare settings.



OSHA 3826 Injury Rate Data

Violent Injuries Resulting in Days Away from Work, by Industry 2002-2023



Data source: Bureau of Labor Statistics data for intentional injuries caused by humans, excluding self-inflicted injuries.

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Key Drivers Considered

Healthcare Frameworks:

OSHA General Duty Clause, Joint Commission, NIOSH, IAHSS Guidelines (09.01, 09.03).

Common General Frameworks

State laws on WPV prevention (e.g., California, New York), ASIS International.

WPV Assessment Framework

The study evaluated and graded the following:

- Leadership commitment
- Employee involvement
- WPV prevention policy
- Threat assessment and management
- Training programs
- Risk assessment and hazard control
- Record keeping and annual review

Existing WPV Prevention Program Maturity Level	Color Code
Excellent, Best in Class	
Meets Objective	
Needs improvement	
Needs Significant Improvement	
Missing	

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Key Findings and Recommendations

Policy

- **Zero Tolerance Limitations:** Strict policies are challenging due to healthcare's operational, legal (e.g., EMTALA), and ethical constraints. Flexible, consequence-based policies are more effective.

Training

- **Comprehensive Coverage:** Include managers and licensed practitioners in WPV training, mandatory for Joint Commission compliance.
- **Tailored Programs:** Deliver multi-tiered training reflecting role-specific risks, with specialized training for behavioral emergency and threat assessment teams.

Risk Assessment:

- **Behavioral Continuum:** Define behaviors and align consequence outcomes to four offender types:
  1. Type 1: No legitimate HCF relationship (e.g., robbers, trespassers).
  2. Type 2: Patients or visitors turning violent during care.
  3. Type 3: Current/past employees or contractors threatening staff or HCF.
  4. Type 4: Domestic violence impacting the workplace.
- **Incident Severity:** Assign consequence values and consider in all risk analyses to differentiate verbal abuse from physical assaults for targeted prevention.
- **Nurse Retention:** High turnover due to safety concerns is costly. Measure financial risks to justify mitigation strategies.
- **Bedside Injuries**: Analyze incidents and implement specialized training. This is a key area of focus.

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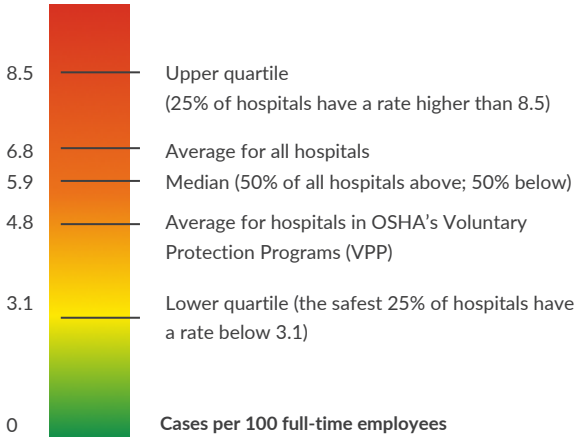
Record Keeping and Metrics

- **Data Integration:** Streamline disparate WPV data sources for accurate assessment and planning.
- **Metrics:** Use Total Case Incident Rate (TCIR) and Days Away, Restricted, or Transferred (DART) to measure injury rates per 100 employees. High scores signal potentially elevated WPV risks.

Compare your Score: TCIR in U.S. Hospitals'



Conclusion

Effective WPV prevention requires a robust, tailored framework. A professional gap assessment uncovers vulnerabilities, reduces injuries, lowers turnover, and protects brand reputation. Engaging an independent healthcare security consultant ensures comprehensive, actionable strategies to enhance staff safety and compliance.

Everyone must do their part to keep themselves and others safe.

Safeguarding your workplace against violence is an ongoing commitment that we can achieve together.

At BPS, we partner with organizations to create and maintain secure work environments through vigilance, education, and expert guidance.

Our Expertise

Since 1990, hundreds of national and international organizations have relied on BPS to keep their people, assets and information safe. With a **Net Promoter Score (NPS)** of **96%**, you can place your trust in us.

We help **Security** and **Environmental Health and Safety** professionals navigate their most critical challenges by offering data-driven solutions that span multiple industries and applications.

Get in touch

Don't wait for a tragedy to occur. Take proactive steps to safeguard your workplace and employees. Reach out to BPS and let us help you build a culture of safety and security.

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