

Accountability Framework

Background

This tool was originally developed for hospitals as part of the Workplace Violence Prevention in Health Care Leadership Table. It has been adapted for long-term care homes to address the needs of the sector.

Long-term care homes are an environment where residents often feel vulnerable and anxious. This can include, for example, aging residents and their caregivers/care partners, individuals experiencing a physical or mental health crisis, those needing addiction support, and residents who have unmet needs they are unable to express. According to the Canadian Institute of Health Information (CIHI) (2015-16), fifty percent of residents with dementia in long-term care exhibit responsive behaviours. Some examples of responsive behaviours include: verbal or physical aggression (striking, self-harm), exit seeking, resistance to personal care, refusal to eat/take medication, etc. These behaviours may be due to a number of factors including an unmet need (e.g. pain, environment (hot/cold), feeling hemmed in, influences of other residents/staff and social history). Despite the fact that an aggressive action stemming from a responsive behaviour may be due to dementia or an unmet need, if it leads to an aggressive action against a worker in a workplace and meets the definition of workplace violence under the Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Act, it is considered workplace violence (herein referred to as workplace violence). Workplace violence in long-term care homes can originate from a number of sources, including from residents and their families and friends or other external people and/or from any employee associated or formerly associated with the workplace.

In order to prevent workplace violence, employers must implement workplace violence policies, measures, procedures and programs, conduct risk assessments and re-assessments for the risks of workplace violence, establish measures and procedures for: summoning immediate assistance when violence occurs or is likely to occur, reporting violent incidents and investigating incidents and complaints of violence, and providing information, education and training to workers so they may recognize and be protected from workplace violence. Employers, typically represented by senior management, hold the greatest responsibility with respect to worker health and safety within health care workplaces such as long term care homes.

CCSA and PSHSA License Agreement

CCSA has adapted these violence and aggression prevention tools and resources and we acknowledge the hard work the PSHSA has done in the development and sharing of these valuable resources for our members in the Alberta Continuing Care Industry. CCSA has adapted these violence and aggression prevention tools and resources and we acknowledge the hard work the PSHSA has done in the development and sharing of these valuable resources for our members in the Alberta Continuing Care Industry.

A Framework for Making Long-Term Care Homes a Safer Workplace Free from Workplace Violence and Harassment

Health care workers have the right to do their jobs in a safe environment free of violence. Long-term care homes that are safer workplaces benefit everyone because a safe environment enables health care workers to better meet the evolving needs of all residents.

The Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Act establishes legal requirements that provide a foundation for the internal responsibility system (IRS). The IRS is a system within an organization in which everyone has a responsibility for workplace health and safety that is appropriate to one's role and function within the organization.

Employers have the greatest responsibility with respect to health and safety in the workplace. The employer, typically represented by senior management, is responsible to take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker and for developing and implementing the workplace occupational health and safety program and ensuring that the IRS is established, promoted, and that it functions successfully; to continually audit, evaluate, and improve the program. Strong leadership by senior executives, managers and supervisors is essential to setting the tone and establishing a corporate culture that nurtures the IRS and safety.

“...healthy and safe work environments for workers are associated with patient safety and service quality”.

Health Quality Ontario, A Framework for Public Reporting on Healthy Work Environments in Ontario Healthcare Settings, 2010

More action is needed to effect and drive change in preventing workplace violence. Preventing and mitigating violence, in the workplace takes a multi-faceted approach. Long-term care home administrators, nurses, other health care workers, along with the broader public, must appreciate and understand that workplace violence is not part of the job, and every effort must be made to prevent it.

Sustaining Workplace Violence and Harassment Which Includes Aggression and Responsive Behaviours Prevention

This framework has been developed to assist organizations in identifying the external and internal support, policy, culture, roles and practices in workplace violence prevention for adoption by Ontario's long-term care homes. This sustainable framework is intended to be adopted and adapted by long-term care homes, to address their needs of the sector

The Importance of Assessing Risk in Each Long-Term Care Home

Preventing workplace violence means assessing the risks of workplace violence that may arise from the nature of the workplace, the type of work or the conditions of work and responding with the appropriate supports (policies, measures and procedures, programs, training, etc.). All of the following can impact risk:

- size of the long-term care home;
- resident acuity and the needs of the resident population;
- communication;
- work flow;
- individual resident risk assessment;
- assignment of an inter-professional team with the necessary skill sets and experience to provide quality resident care and a safe working environment;
- cultural safety and cultural competency
- characteristics of the local community; and
- physical design of long-term care home spaces.

Risk can originate in functions, such as the process of transitioning residents within the long-term care home or within the system, and it can also arise in situations, such as delivering difficult news to residents and family members.

When conducting a risk assessment and determining the control of hazards, the precautionary principle should be considered.

Employers are required under the OHS Act to help prevent workplace harassment and violence and address incidents when they do occur. According to the Alberta OHS Code, Part 27: "An employer must develop and implement a violence prevention plan that includes a violence prevention policy and violence prevention procedures." The same clause is stated for harassment prevention plans. In complying with this requirement in the OHS Act, it is good practice during the decision-making process to consider the precautionary principle.

Every long-term care employer should:

- Ensure CEO/Board/Owners/Senior Leadership/Management Companies have a commitment to workplace violence which includes, aggression and responsive behaviours, prevention as part of the long-term care home's strategic plan;
- Set milestones for improvement and report progress to the board of directors and senior leadership, to the JHSC or Health and Safety Representative (HSR), and to all workers;
- Conduct surveys and other assessments to benchmark improvement in the workplace violence prevention program and the reduction of risk;
- Complete assessments of risk and analysis of hazards that engage staff at all levels;
- In consultation with the JHSC or HSR and/or workplace violence prevention committee, develop policies, measures, procedures and training to reduce risk, ensure that workers are trained on them, and that they are implemented and evaluated for effectiveness and revised to close any gaps;
- Engage and educate the public (residents and families, family/resident councils, and resident advocates) in their role in workplace violence, prevention and long-term care home expectations for a workplace that is free from workplace violence
- Require and encourage reporting of incidents, near misses, and hazards;
- Analyze data collected through incident reporting, inspections, investigations and root cause analyses to close gaps where risks are present;
- Provide the commensurate level of training to workers that is relevant to their work at all levels and for members of the board of directors and senior leadership; and
- Engage other health care organizations at the local level to share practices and plans to reduce workplace violence

Identifying Hazards and Levels of Risk

The goal of identifying hazards and risks that contribute to workplace violence incidents is so that adequate safety measures and procedures are provided to enhance worker safety.

It is important not to blame any group of residents or workers, or to place undue responsibility on any group of workers to reduce workplace violence.

Hazard — is a source of potential harm to a worker.

Risk Factors — are a circumstance or characteristic that may increase the likelihood that violence may occur, particularly if triggers are also present. Examples might include a history of aggressive and responsive behaviour, a history of substance abuse, economic stressors, or certain mental health disorders. It is important to note that risk factors do not make violence a certainty as many people with risk factors will not demonstrate violent behaviour. Other factors may include the workplace physical environment, a surge in the resident population or resident acuity, staffing shortages due to sick calls etc.

Triggers — are a circumstance or element that may provoke or negatively impact resident behaviour by increasing the likelihood of a violent, aggressive, response or reaction. Triggers can precipitate these reactions. Examples might include undertreated pain, being too hot or too cold, loud alarms, care to a sensitive part of the body, reminders of previous bad experiences, requests that can't be accommodated or behaviours of residents or visitors in close proximity.

Further information on risks and triggers are detailed in a supplemental document created through the Workplace Violence Prevention in Health care Leadership Table, refer to the Triggers and Care Planning Tool.

Higher-Risk Areas in the Long-Term Care Home

Long-term care homes must assess their own environments to identify high risk areas so that specialized supports (e.g. protective services, protocols, one-to-one support etc.) can be deployed to prevent and respond to workplace incidents. Each long-term care home must individually identify physical places and situations where time and resources need to be invested into workplace violence prevention, commensurate with the level of risk, to protect workers and residents. Environments that are frequently considered high-risk include:

- Tub room/bathroom
- Bedside
- Behavioural support units, or other specialized units
- Secure Units
- Resident Dining Rooms
- Kitchen (sharp objects/heat sources)
- Anywhere that personal care is provided
- Other resident home areas

Lower-Risk Areas in the Long-Term Care Home

Common areas of the long-term care home, such as lobbies and other public spaces are not usually the areas where workplace violence and incidents occur; however, there is no place in a long-term care home setting that represents zero risk of workplace violence. Everyone working within the long-term care home should have a minimum level of training in preventing and responding to workplace violence.

The Goal: What a Safe Environment Free from Workplace Violence Can Look and Feel Like

- Each long-term care home's strategic plan, expectations and achievements on prevention of all types of workplace violence is known to the members of the board of directors, owners, management companies, supervisors, managers, and to all workers.
- A culture is created that encourages and supports reporting, and includes an understanding that reporting keeps everyone safer. Incidents and hazards are reported without reprisal, and supervisors act and investigate those reports, both to support workers involved, and to prevent injury and illness and mitigate the risk of future incidents.
- Everyone, from members of the board of directors' owners to residents and their families, understand their rights, responsibilities, and the employer expectations for a workplace that is safe and free from workplace violence.
- Workers at all levels feel supported and engaged, they feel confident in asking for help when needed and help is provided when asked.
- Training is provided so that health care workers, and their supervisors, have the knowledge they need to protect themselves and other workers (the training matrix provides a comprehensive guide to employers on training needs).
- Care plans and flagging systems that identify risk of violent behaviour, include resident triggers, responsive behaviours and prevention, response and mitigation strategies, Inter-professional healthcare teams work together to keep each other safe by sharing this information and implementing the documented strategies that will protect workers and residents.
- The long-term care home is continually learning and evaluating the policies, programs, measures and procedures and training that work, and strive to improve in areas where workplace violence persists.
- The long-term care home engages other healthcare facilities in sharing practices and plans that keep workers and residents safe, and work together, locally, to close gaps.
- The long-term care home promotes open collaboration and the sharing of information with JHSC/HSR and unions for the purpose of promoting trust and to encourage positive change among workers groups.

Activities and Practices that Create a Culture of Safety and Violence Prevention

Understanding Rights, Roles and Responsibilities Under the OHS Act

The long-term care home's CEO, members of the board, owners, management companies and senior leadership have ultimate responsibility to protect workers from workplace violence. They must also engage with residents and the broader community to contribute to preventing workplace violence. Creating safer

long-term care home working environments is a collaborative effort. This means healthcare workers understand their right to a safe violence free workplace, one where every effort is made to prevent violence.

Asking for Help

Workers must know and trust that they can ask for, and receive help when they identify a hazard and/or feel threatened. The long-term care homes' policies, measures and procedures should clearly articulate protocols that supervisors implement and monitor and that workers follow when there is a potential or actual risk or incident of workplace violence. All workers should be trained at regular intervals on these policies, measures and procedures and any revisions to them.

The policies, measures and procedures could include escalating the issue to a supervisor or manager, alerting security, if present in the home and in their absence trained persons providing security functions within the long-term care home, or contacting police, if necessary. ALL personnel must also appreciate that they have the right to ask for help from police if a violent situation requires those additional resources.

Success Story: Peel Region Malton Village: Butterfly Model and Hotel Dieu Grace Healthcare

Peel Region Malton Village's Butterfly Model of Dementia Care believes that all behaviours in people living with dementia result from an unmet need or are due to something in the environment that causes anxiety or irritation. Having staff engage with people living with dementia through activity, conversation or meaningful occupation reduces boredom and increases feelings of well-being. When people are happy and busy they are less likely to engage in negative interactions including violent behaviours. Butterfly homes are filled with the stuff of people's lives - books, music, kitchen items and baby dolls. Some are involved in activities that support the running of the home such as dusting, sweeping, preparing food, washing dishes and making beds. The key to success in this model is staff engaging with the person during the activity. Through this model we have seen a reduction in violence, which includes aggression and responsive behaviours in the home, a reduction in staff sick time and a reduction in WSIB claims related to workplace violence.

The HDGH acute care example demonstrates the importance of staff stories of violence being crucial to the Board and CEO/Administrators taking action and in long-term care this is equally as important.

HDGH's "Prevention of Workplace Violence Policy", first written in 2006 and updated regularly, is considered a best practice in the area of workplace violence. Highlights include:

- Staff stories, (similar to resident stories being shared at the Quality Committee and presented to the Board of Directors). Workplace violence prevention stories are shared with the Workplace Excellence Committee of the Board, which ensures that Governors are attuned to the importance of safety in the hospital.
- A Safety Officer proactively works with management on workplace violence prevention. The Safety Officer encourages incident reporting and follow up, ensuring corrective actions are taken to address concerns moving forward. A key function in this role is the reporting of trends and risks through the human resources leadership team directly to the CEO and executive leadership team.

Responding and Protecting

Emergency code policies, measures and procedures, and training on these and other workplace violence measures and procedures must be provided to all workers. Mock and tabletop exercises should be conducted regularly to reinforce training and maintain skills. Personal safety response devices are used in some long-term care homes by workers facility wide or in designated departments to initiate an emergency code in a timely, efficient and effective manner. Protective services/Security/other assigned personnel e.g. management should be trained to respond professionally and quickly in times of need. Smaller long-term care homes may not have these measures in place and will need to plan and ensure based on a risk assessment, that they have appropriate measures and procedures in place for summoning immediate and effective assistance when violence occurs or is likely to occur.

Enhancing Communication

Long-term care homes must place a strong focus on identifying risk and improving communication between health care workers so that information is shared regarding residents who are exhibiting responsive behaviours or have a history of violent behaviour. Every care plan should include an assessment of risk of violence and violent behaviours and the strategies to protect workers, prevent a resident from being triggered and de-escalation techniques that can calm the resident once triggered. The risk and protective prevention strategies should be:

- clearly communicated to all workers who can be expected to encounter the resident;
- flagged; and
- documented, so that, upon discharge and readmission, the information can assist the employer, supervisors, and workers in care planning and developing preventive safety measures that protect workers and residents.

Communication also includes engaging residents and families in their role in preventing workplace violence. This means that the long-term care home's expectations and policies should be posted via signage or other means, and residents and their families should feel safe and be encouraged to describe known triggers, history

of violent behaviors which includes responsive behaviours, and suggested interventions to healthcare workers without fear of retribution or refusal of treatment.

Success Story: Michael-Garron Hospital

Although this is an acute care example the lessons learned from Michael Garron Hospital can be transferred to long-term care and a model for many best practices on a variety of violence prevention measures. The OHSA and the Health Care Residential Facilities Regulation applies equally to Hospitals and Long-Term Care Homes.

Michael Garron Hospital and the Ontario Nurses' Association had a successful collaboration on workplace violence prevention. Key features of the program include:

- Leadership's demonstrated commitment
- Zero-tolerance signage
- Comprehensive front-line staff training
- Increased reporting and follow through on investigations
- Senior management engagement of front-line staff post-incident to ensure that essential post-incident care is being provided
- Preventive facility-wide risk assessments
- Improved communication technologies (e.g. personal panic alarms linked to security) and emergency notification
- Identification of violent behavior, flagging those patients into a system for preventive purposes and development of plans of care for patients with violent behaviors and safety measures for workers
- Clear policies, measures and procedures and training developed in consultation with JHSC and WPV Workplace violence committee mandate and accountability for workplace violence

The hospital regularly shares its program, policies and approaches, and advocates for workplace violence prevention in hospitals.

Developing Care Plans for Residents with History and Risk of Violent Behaviours

A care plan is a set of actions and approaches designed to optimize the quality and safety of care, and continuity of care among various providers. It may be diagnosis-specific, risk-specific or resident -specific.

For example, a care plan might stress the need for care to be provided by two healthcare workers, where appropriate, limit loud noise or other triggers, be conducted at certain times of day, or with the use of an interpreter.

For more information on care plans, please refer to supplemental document created through the Workplace Violence Prevention in Health care Leadership Table, Triggers and Care Planning in Workplace Violence Prevention.

Creating Relationships with Residents and Families

Workplace violence which includes aggression including responsive behaviours (VARB) prevention planning should include steps to make residents and families aware of the long-term care home's violence prevention policies and program including measures and procedures. This can be done in various ways, such as brochures, posters, or in one-on-one conversation at intake or admitting points or following an incident. Long-term care home employers should also be communicating risks associated with workplace violence, which includes, aggression and responsive behaviours and stressing the benefits of preventing workplace violence for the resident and workers. Residents and families should also be engaged in controlling risks to the greatest extent possible by helping workers identify and understand triggers, behaviours and safety measures that can prevent triggering violence in the resident.

Even in times of crisis, families need to understand the consequences of their actions. They are a part of the solution in resolving issues and concerns to prevent workplace violence. Residents, family members and visitors should also understand that preventing violence in the long-term care home is for their protection, as well. The goal is to make the environment safe for all. Communication processes are key to establishing and protecting everyone's health and safety.

Comprehensive Training and Education

A training matrix has been developed for the long-term care sector with the intention to guide employers in providing the most comprehensive training based on workers', supervisors', doctors', members' of the board of directors and others' risk of exposure to workplace violence in their organization. The matrix includes suggested training for workers, supervisors etc. based on their occupation and potential exposure to risk.

All staff, including management, should also be thoroughly trained on the long-term care home's policies, measures and procedures, the goals of the long-term care home with respect to workplace violence prevention, be able to identify gaps in the measures and procedures and alert the employer of those gaps for constant program improvement, hazard/risk identification, investigation and the support structure for reporting and supervisor/employer follow up when a report is received or a hazard is identified.

Senior management, members of the board of directors' employers, supervisors and workers should be trained on their accountabilities, responsibilities/duties, functions and rights through laws and regulations.

Reporting

Consistent reporting provides insights, creating a more accurate picture of incidents, trends, and gaps in the policies, measures and procedures. These results should be reported to the senior management team and the board of directors. Reporting makes everyone safer. A set of suggested data collection methods and metrics were developed through the Workplace Violence Prevention in Health Care Leadership Table (refer to a set of Organizational and Provincial indicators LTC tool)

Reviewing, Investigation and Following Through

Reporting provides the details and circumstances of a violent incident. Reviews and investigations should examine the factors that contributed to the incident (i.e. the root causes) and offer insights on how violent

situations can be avoided in the future. The report tells what happened, and the review/investigation should determine what more needs to be done. Reviews and investigations should include consequences experienced by workers who were victims of violence, and that a proper post-incident support was provided. Follow-up should include an investigation that includes a root cause analysis, among other components, identify whether training and training program content is adequate to give workers the skills to protect themselves, determine if communication and response was adequate, and if the work environment or practices within the unit or system wide contributed to the incident of violence and then make the necessary changes. The investigation and root cause analysis should examine factors such as incomplete risk assessment and inadequate program measures and procedures that did not allow adequate means for workers to protect themselves and/or system issues beyond the workplace that may also have contributed to the risk (e.g. lack of transfer of information about a history of violent, aggressive, responsive behaviours from a receiving facility).

Monitoring Progress

A long-term care home can only determine the effectiveness of their prevention activities when implementation and progress is monitored. Long-term care homes should examine incident reporting, investigation and inspection reports etc., and track broader outcomes of the prevention program or survey workers about their recent experiences. It is also important to do unannounced audits of the effective implementation of a measure and procedure. It is important to question the relationship between reductions or increases in aggressive incidents and the policies, measures and procedures, and training that have been implemented to determine what is working well, and the areas where more work is needed.

Identifying Gaps

Gaps in workplace violence prevention plans and the programs, and measures and procedures can be identified by analyzing incidents including investigations, root cause analysis, inspection reports, and JHSC or HSR recommendations. Analysis could reveal high-risk factors that are not being addressed, such as resident population, communication of conditions or triggers, physical risk factors of the building, isolated locations or areas with previous security problems, surge in residents with a history of violent behaviour which includes, aggressive and responsive behaviours, and staffing complement to address those surges.

Identifying gaps is an ongoing process. Long-term care homes experience continual changes from renovations and expansion to the creation of new clinical programs, and worker turnover/shortage/vacancy. Workplace violence prevention programs, policies, measures and procedures, and training must keep pace.

Setting Clear Policies and Accountability

Effective workplace violence prevention programs are supported by a clear organizational policy and workplace violence must be present in the long-term care home's strategic plan. Policies must be developed in collaboration with JHSCs or HSRs, frontline workers, unions, and partners in the long-term care home setting. Once created, the policy must be communicated in language that is accessible, understandable, and engages all parties. The presence of a clear, unambiguous, and action-oriented policy lets everyone know that management is committed to reducing violence in the workplace.

The Roles that Contribute to a Safe Working Environment

Long-Term Care Board Member

Almost all long-term care homes in Alberta are governed by a board of directors that are responsible for the long-term care home's operations and for determining the long-term care home's priorities in addressing resident needs in the community. Boards can play a vital role by providing the stewardship necessary to ensure that long-term care homes offer the best resident care possible while ensuring a safe environment for everyone with strong workplace violence prevention programs, policies, measures and procedures, and training.

Key Contribution: Becoming aware of the importance of workplace violence prevention and expecting the CEO/Administrator, and Director of Nursing to lead the Board's direction into action in their organization.

Responsibilities: Monitoring progress; setting clear policies, measures and procedures, training, and accountability.

Administrator and Leadership Team

The CEO/Administrator and leadership team should be driving responsibility for workplace violence prevention, delegating responsibility, monitoring progress, and driving for continual improvement.

The employer, typically represented by senior management, has the greatest responsibilities with respect to health and safety in the workplace under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and is responsible for taking every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker. The employer is responsible for ensuring that the IRS is established, promoted, and that it functions successfully. A strong IRS is an important element of a strong health and safety culture in a workplace. A strong health and safety culture shows respect for the people in the workplace.

Key Contribution: Taking every precaution reasonable in the circumstance for the protection of the worker; identifying a healthy and safe work environment as a strategic priority; reporting progress to members of the board and all staff.

Responsibilities: Addressing identified gaps in policies, programs, physical environments, etc.; compliance with law; conducting a workplace violence risk assessment, developing an adequate workplace violence prevention policy and program along with measures and procedures (e.g. a system to identify and track residents with a history of violent behaviour which includes aggressive and responsive behaviours, who may be at risk for violence, and tracks triggers, behaviours and safety measures for residents and workers); providing adequate training programs; and monitoring and communicating progress.

Supervisor/Managers

Supervisors are responsible for making workers fully aware of the hazards that may be encountered on the job or in the workplace, ensuring that they work safely, responding to any of the hazards brought to their attention, including taking every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker.

The supervisor ensures policies on workplace violence prevention are applied to the work area, and coordinates responsive actions to violent situations when help is needed. This includes ensuring effective communication procedures, which could include response procedures to alarm systems, if applicable, and when a worker summons immediate assistance. A workplace violence risk assessment as well as a needs assessment should be completed by the long-term care home to determine the devices required. Long-term care homes may also refer to CCSA [Personal Safety Response System toolkit](#).

Key Contribution: Taking every precaution reasonable in the circumstance for the protection of the worker; providing required information to workers in order to stay protected from physical injury.

Responsibilities: Identifying gaps; monitoring progress; comprehensive training; reviewing and following through; conducting assessments; implementing action plans; implementing and enforcing employer policies, measures and procedures; and requiring workers to take the training provided.

All Health Care Workers Providing Direct Care (RN, RPN, NP, MD, allied health worker, etc.)

Health care workers delivering direct care to residents are often the primary point of contact for families, in various long-term care home settings where the potential for workplace violence which includes aggression and responsive behaviours exists. Preventing and mitigating workplace violence are essential skills to have. Health care workers need to be protected by their employer and empowered to build confidence in their ability to manage potentially violent situations. Training requirements for health care workers in high and low-risk environments is detailed in the training matrix.

Key Contribution: Understanding the resident and the care plan; knowing and practicing all the skills taught and needed to build strong therapeutic alliances with each resident; following procedures and policies to protect everyone during delivery of care; communicating when needed to mitigate hazards; identifying residents at risk of violence and developing plans of care for residents with violent behaviours; creating relationships with residents and families.

Responsibilities: taking adequate training in health and safety including violence prevention and mitigation; reporting hazards in the workplace and ask for help when needed; working safely and following safe work practices; using the required personal protective equipment for the job at hand; participating in health and safety programs established for the workplace; enhance communication; and understand rights including the right to refuse unsafe work.

The OHS Act gives workers three important rights:

1. The right to know about hazards in their work and get information, supervision and instruction to protect their health and safety on the job.
2. The right to participate individually or as a health and safety representative or a worker member of a joint health and safety committee.
3. The right to refuse work that they believe is dangerous to their health and safety or that of any other worker in the workplace. In specified circumstances, the right to refuse unsafe work is limited for health care workers and persons employed in certain workplaces like long-term care homes.

Exposure to Risk: Dependent upon whether or not the health care worker is providing care in a high-risk area; however, direct contact with residents or families is a part of delivering health care, and as such, there will always be an elevated risk that the employer must protect workers from.

All Clinical Care Support Workers (Housekeeper, Maintenance, Laundry, Dietary, Resident Care Clerk, Etc.)

Although clinical care support workers such as housekeeping, janitorial, dietary etc. may not be in direct contact with residents, in the same manner as health care workers providing direct care, those that work in high-risk areas will have similar risks, responsibilities, and contributions.

Key Contribution: Self-protection; following procedures and policies to protect everyone during delivery of care; communicating when needed to prevent and mitigate hazards/risks.

Worker Responsibilities Include: Understanding rights and responsibilities; asking for help; enhancing communication; reporting hazards in the workplace; working safely and following safe work practices; using the required personal protective equipment for the job at hand; participating in health and safety programs and training established for the workplace.

All workers have the same rights under OHS Act as listed above.

Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) or Health and Safety Representative (HSR)

A Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) is composed of worker and employer representatives. Together, they should be mutually committed to improving health and safety conditions in the workplace. The health and safety representative (HSR) in workplaces with 5 to 19 workers, is designated by the employer after consultation with the union where the workplace is unionized.

The JHSC or HSR has various powers, including:

1. The receipt, consideration and disposition of concerns respecting the health and safety of workers;
2. Identifying actual and potential hazards in the workplace;
3. Obtaining information from the employer relating to health and safety in the workplace;
4. Ensuring that inspections are being conducted and reviewing completed inspection reports;
5. Recommending health and safety improvements in the workplace;
6. Receiving and reviewing OHS information from the employer; and
7. Accompanying inspectors during visits in the workplace.

All JHSC members or HSRs should be available to encourage workers to report health and safety concerns/hazards, and to assist where necessary. They can discuss issues and recommend solutions; and to provide input into existing and proposed workplace health and safety programs..

For further details on the JHSC or HSR, please refer to:

<https://ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/download/sample/598>

Key Contribution: The JHSC or HSR is a monitoring and advisory body that helps to stimulate or raise awareness of health and safety issues in the workplace; recognizes and identifies workplace hazards and risks and develops recommendations for the employer to address these risks (including workplace violence policies, measures and procedures and training).

Responsibilities: Holds regular meetings and review completed inspection reports, make written recommendations to the employer for the improvement of the health and safety of workers.

External Enablers

External enablers are those who work in policy, research and regulatory roles which influence and enable successful workplace violence prevention in long-term care homes. This includes provincial ministries of Health, Labour, Community Safety and Correctional Service, Training, Colleges and Universities, Children and Youth Services, in addition to Health Quality Council Alberta, Local Health Services, health and safety associations, research institutes, professional associations, unions, employer associations, and advocates.

Key Contribution: External enablers contribute to safer workplaces by ensuring that policies and regulations at the provincial level are not creating obstacles to workplace violence prevention in long-term care homes. This can mean playing a role in safer resident transfers, improving data collection on workplace violence providing leadership on policies and best practices, producing research and disseminating that knowledge.

Responsibilities: Conducting external policy research to enable success; comprehensive training; monitoring progress; and identifying gaps. The Ministry of Labour's primary role is to set, communicate, and enforce workplace occupational health and safety laws and standards while encouraging greater workplace self-reliance.

Employers and other workplace parties are reminded that it is their obligation to comply with all of the requirements of the OHS Act, regulation and code at all times. Guidance on specific issues related to legislation should be sought from appropriate legal counsel or people with expertise in occupational health and safety.

The following webpages provide useful information:

<https://www.alberta.ca/workplace-harassment-violence.aspx>

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