

## PURPOSE

Protecting radiology staff from patient assault is a crucial responsibility of healthcare institutions. While patient violence is relatively uncommon, radiology staff can encounter situations where patients become agitated or aggressive. We discuss various strategies to help protect radiology staff from potential assaults.

## MATERIALS/METHODS

Healthcare workers are at risk for violence, vandalism, and assaults, which can be psychological and/or physical in nature. Physical harm to workers can reduce the quality of care provided and result in loss of staff due to resignations. We discuss a variety of techniques and programs that may be utilized by radiology departments to prevent assaults on the staff. The most important initial focus is to prevent any aggressive behavior from occurring by demonstrating empathy and understanding of patients and their families. This can be achieved by providing safety training for all radiology employees as a top priority.

## RESULTS

- Provide comprehensive training to radiology staff on recognizing and managing volatile situations. Training includes de-escalation, communication, and conflict resolution skills. Educate staff on recognizing signs of agitation, aggression, and/or distress in patients, and how to respond appropriately to prevent the risk of escalation.

## RESULTS CONT.

- Panic buttons, security cameras, and access control systems can be used to enhance staff safety. Ensure security personnel are readily available to respond to emergencies and respond as needed.
- Conduct thorough patient screenings to identify individuals who may pose a risk of aggressive behavior or violence. Assess patients’ mental health status, history of substance abuse, and any known behavioral issues to anticipate potential risks and implement appropriate precautions.
- Design facilities with safety in mind, including well-lit waiting areas, clear signage, and secure entrances and exits. Minimize potential hazards such as obstructed pathways that would add to stressful situations or impede staff in emergencies.
- Provide appropriate PPE such as duress alarms, protective clothing, and self defense tools if necessary. Ensure training in the proper use of PPE and understand how and when to utilize these resources in potentially dangerous situations.
- Establish clear communication protocols for staff to promptly report safety concerns or incidents. Implement a system for communication directly with security personnel or other support staff during emergencies.
- Offer counseling services, assistance programs, and debriefing sessions to staff. Provide ongoing support and resources to help staff cope with the impact of workplace violence.
- Foster collaboration to develop and implement effective strategies for preventing and responding to assaults.



Fig. 1 Strategies to help protect radiology staff

## CONCLUSIONS

Creating a safe environment and providing support staff for radiology personnel is essential to ensure their well-being and enable them to focus on delivering quality patient care. Healthcare institutions can implement training programs to reduce the risk of patient assaults, enhance safety, and ensure the wellbeing of all radiology team members.

## REFERENCES

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