

Manual	Administrative Manual	POLICY
Section	Human Resources	
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PREVENTION OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT - POLICY

Policy Statement

Humber River Health (HRH) recognizes the potential for violence and harassment in the workplace. Violence/harassment will not be tolerated at the workplace or during workplace related activities. This policy pertains to all Staff, Physicians and Volunteers (SPV), Medical Learners, Students and contractors/suppliers (herein referred to as “all/everyone”) in the workplace.

An attitude of mutual respect amongst and between health care workers, the recipients of its services and visitors to HRH is fostered and expected. Everyone involved in activities with HRH will be treated and will treat others with dignity and respect. Everyone in the workplace has a role to play in ensuring a safe, healthy, secure and respectful work environment.

Policy

The Board of Directors and all members of the Senior Management team are committed to providing a safe environment, implementing all reasonable precautions to protect everyone from sexual, physical, verbal and psychological abuse, as is reasonably possible. HRH will identify potential sources of workplace violence and harassment to prevent and eliminate threatening, abusive, aggressive and violent behavior. HRH will follow up on each and every incident that threatens the safety of anyone.

HRH is committed to providing support to victims of any criminal act, including assault.

HRH will provide a program that facilitates a system of reporting, as well as investigating and dealing with workplace violence/harassment appropriately. HRH will implement all necessary measures, procedures, and resources to eliminate or control the potential risks of workplace violence/harassment.

HRH pledges to investigate and deal with all incidents and complaints of workplace violence in a fair and timely manner, respecting the privacy of all concerned as much as possible. No one who, in good faith, registers a complaint of abuse or reports incidents of violence/harassment will be subject to reprisal either directly or indirectly.

After investigation, if the claim of violent or harassing behavior is confirmed, HRH will implement

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corrective measures. These may include, but are not limited to: disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, placement, rotation/elective or volunteer services, or suspension of privileges; denial of access to HRH facility information systems; reporting suspected violations of law to the appropriate authorities for criminal prosecution where appropriate.

Information obtained about an incident or complaint of workplace harassment, including identifying information, will not be disclosed unless the disclosure is necessary for the purposes of investigation or taking corrective action with respect to the incident or complaint, or is otherwise required by law.

This policy was written to comply with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and with Accreditation Canada's *Required Organizational Practice for Workplace Violence*. The policy will be posted in prominent areas around the Hospital and reviewed annually, in consultation with the Joint Health and Safety Committee.

Report Incidents Immediately

Reporting by SPV

If an incident of workplace violence or harassment is observed or experienced by SPV, their immediate manager/Chief/designate and Human Resources or Security (ext. 50000) should be immediately contacted, including the use of notification procedures outside of regular business hours.

Reporting by Medical Learners

If an incident of workplace violence or harassment is observed or experienced by Medical Learners, their manager/Chief/designate, Medical Affairs and Security (ext. 50000) should be immediately contacted, including the use of notification procedures outside of regular business hours.

Reporting by Students

If an incident of workplace violence or harassment is observed or experienced by Students, their manager/designate, Professional Practice and Security (ext. 50000) should be immediately contacted, including the use of notification procedures outside of regular business hours.

If necessary, in all instances, activation of Code White is recommended by pushing the personal panic buttons on the ID badge and holding for 2 seconds, pressing an Emergency Call Station button and/or calling 55555.

Processes to document workplace violence or harassment are in place to facilitate the reporting, investigation and follow-up of incidents. Medical Affairs and Professional Practice shall support Medical Learners and Students, respectively, along with the clinical area leadership, in documenting instances of workplace violence or harassment as required. For additional information, see the Hospital's *Flowchart for Responding to Requests to and Mistreatment of Medical Learners and Students by Patients, Families, Visitors and/or Clients*.

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- 1) For cases of Violence, the reporting process will follow the [Accident, Incident, Near Miss Investigation and Reporting Policy](#).

Any SPV, Medical Learner or Student exposed to workplace violence shall report the event to their immediate supervisor/manger and complete a Staff Incident Report. Medical Learners and Students must also report the event to Medical Affairs and Professional Practice, respectively.

If any SPV, Medical Learner or Student experiences an injury as a result of the incident and requires medical attention, they should obtain the required medical attention and must report it to Occupational Health & Safety for timely reporting to WSIB. Medical Learners and Students must also report the incident to Medical Affairs and Professional Practice, respectively. Interventions may include but are not limited to, first aid attention, counseling, debriefing, and community support referrals.

- 2) For cases of Harassment including Sexual Harassment within the workplace the reporting process to will follow:
- i) If incident involves a Patient/Visitor – notify Security if necessary (ext. 50000), complete Quality Risk Management Patient Incident Report (within Meditech) and also a Staff Incident Report if the SPV, Medical Learner or Student feels threatened or if the incident has opportunity to turn violent.
 - ii) If between SPV, Medical Learners or Students, SPV shall notify Human Resources, while Medical Learners and Students are to notify Medical Affairs and Professional Practice, respectively and follow [Anti-Harassment & Anti-Discrimination - Policy](#) options for addressing the concern including informal and formal options to address the alleged breach of policy.
 - iii) If between SPV, Medical Learners or Students and Physician, in addition to the notification requirements in paragraph (ii), notify Medical Affairs in respect of the Physician’s actions and follow the [Anti-Harassment & Anti-Discrimination - Policy](#) options for addressing the concerns including informal and formal options to address the alleged breach of policy.
 - iv) If the direct supervisor/manager of the SPV, Medical Learner or Student is the alleged harasser, the individual has the ability to contact the Human Resources department, Medical Affairs, Professional Practice, as applicable, and/or any other member of management for assistance in the resolution of the complaint or discrimination and harassment and/or contact the union representative.

For all cases of Harassment, please refer to the [Anti-Harassment & Anti-Discrimination - Policy](#) for how incidents or complaints of workplace harassment will be investigated and dealt

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with.

Note: At the discretion of the Director of HR, in consultation with Medical Affairs and Professional Practice, as applicable, when involving a Medical Learner or Student, an independent 3rd party may be utilized to conduct a workplace investigation. Other internal resources who may be called on to assist and/or support the investigation include: Risk Management, Professional Practice, Medical Affairs, Security, JHSC and Occupational Health Safety and Wellness (OHSW).

- 3) For cases of Domestic Violence, it is important to deal with each situation on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the needs of the individual(s) involved. HRH, through Security Services, and OHSW will develop a safety plan with the SPV, Medical Learner or Student to assist in keeping them safe from domestic violence that may occur in the workplace. Communicating on a “need to know” basis will ensure that information about a domestic violence situation is kept confidential or restricted to a minimum number of workers (for example, those who are directly responsible for ensuring the safety of those workers who may be at risk).

Support for Anyone Affected by Workplace Violence/Harassment

Everyone may seek advice from any of the following resources.

- Human Resources
- Medical Affairs
- Security
- Professional Practice
- Joint Health & Safety Committee Representative
- Occupational Health, Safety and Wellness
- Risk Management
- Employee Assistance Program
- Union Representative

Responsibilities

Everyone is responsible for preventing and reporting acts of violence/harassment that threatens or perceives to threaten the work environment. The Director of OHSW has the responsibility to implement and monitor this policy.

Hospital Directors/Managers/Supervisors will:

- ensure everyone is aware of this policy and HRH’s Prevention of Workplace Violence and Harassment Program
- model respectful behaviour towards other individuals
- notify all SPV, Medical Learners and/or Students of any potential risk of violence (e.g. previous history of violence)
- conduct annual risk assessments to ascertain the risk of workplace violence and to provide a safe work environment
- take appropriate action if there is reason to believe that violence/harassment exists

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- ensure that measures are put in place to assist those who, in good faith, report workplace violence/harassment or act as witnesses, so that they are free from reprisal or further violence
- investigate and respond to all incidents of workplace violence or harassment in a timely manner
- allow those involved in an incident a safe and secure place near a workstation, if available
- arrange for appropriate medical treatment, as required
- provide or access support mechanisms in the event of or witness to an incident, including offer to contact Employee Assistance Program to consult on and/or arrange for an on-site visit
- document the action that has been or will be taken to prevent a recurrence of the incident
- the manager of the SPV, Medical Learner or Student, in consultation with Medical Affairs and Professional Practice where the incident involves a Medical Learner or Student, respectively, will arrange an operational debriefing / critiquing session with relevant stakeholders to determine how the incident was handled, identify deficiencies and provide corrective solutions
- advise patient(s) or family member(s) on the Concerns & Compliments process for appealing a flagging symbol
- the manager of the SPV, Medical Learner or Student, in consultation with Medical Affairs and Professional Practice where the incident involves a Medical Learner or Student, respectively, will meet with the accused to communicate expectations relating to inappropriate behaviours and inform all necessary individuals, SPV, family members, etc. of updated safety measures and expectations
- participate in formal root cause analysis and safety plan meetings with respective stakeholders

Human Resources will:

- provide interpretation on the policy and program
- determine the scope of the harassment investigation given the nature and seriousness of the alleged conduct
- notify the union
- offer advice on appropriate options for dealing with a situation, and referring to other resources as appropriate
- provide advice and support managers in taking appropriate investigative action
- follow up on the results of harassment investigation findings to ensure that appropriate action has been taken
- ensure that harassment incidents are tracked, trended and analyzed
- provide in writing to the worker who has allegedly experienced workplace harassment and the alleged harasser, if he or she is a worker of the employer, the results of the investigation and any corrective action that has been taken or that will be taken as a result of the investigation
- work with Medical Affairs and Professional Practice, as appropriate, where the incident involves a Medical Learner or Student, respectively.

Medical Affairs or Professional Practice will:

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- Notify the affiliated school of any Medical Learner/ Student involved in the incident as required.

Security will:

- provide consultation and assistance to SPV, Medical Learners and/or Students experiencing violence/harassment
- document any threats or incidents of violence/harassment in the workplace
- respond and intervene to emergency calls concerning safety in the workplace, such as code white
- work closely with appropriate law enforcement agencies
- provide escorts to parking lots
- assist in development of a personal workplace safety plan
- issue formal trespass notices
- ensure that incidents are reported for tracking, trending and analysis and shared with OHS
- participate in formal root cause analysis meetings with key stakeholders as necessary

Occupational Health and Safety Department will:

- complete an annual review of the policy and provide recommendations for improvement where required
- assist managers with investigating, arranging debriefing sessions and/or counseling through EAP
- provide the necessary medical care and facilitate community support referrals
- respond to received concerns related to workplace violence/harassment and communicate these to the appropriate manager/supervisor
- confirm that a Staff Incident Report is completed
- ensure that incidents are reported for tracking, trending and analysis
- notify the JHSC of incidents of workplace violence
- provide necessary resources and educational tools (e.g. De-escalation tip cards, educational brochure “Contributing to a Safer Hospital Workplace: It’s Everyone’s Responsibility”, Flagging Symbol posters)
- schedule formal root cause analysis meetings with appropriate stakeholders

Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee will:

- monitor reports of incidents of workplace violence to identify trends and make recommendations to reduce workplace violence/harassment
- recommend corrective measures for the improvement of the health and safety of SPV, Medical Learners and Students
- participate in the review of the policy

SPV, Medical Learners, Students and Contractors/Suppliers will:

- act in accordance with HRH’s Code of Conduct/Code of Conduct Medical/Dental Staff

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- in the event of a violence/harassment incident, activate all appropriate internal responses
- report all incidents of violence in the workplace using the Staff Incident Reporting System. This would include violence either witnessed or experienced
- complete reporting/documentation as appropriate
- participate in training and education related to workplace violence/harassment
- co-operate with any efforts to investigate and resolve matters arising out of this policy
- when interacting with clients/members of the public, introduce yourself, your role and what activities you will be engaging in, how long it should take, etc. (AIDET)

Accountability / Responsibility

As described in this policy.

Definitions

Medical Learners: Includes medical students, residents, fellows and dental and midwifery students.

Students: Includes individuals involved in any non-medical learner student program for all disciplines, except those considered Medical Learners.

Workplace Harassment:

Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. [OHSA, Section 1. (1)] Bullying is a form of harassment that means to hurt, intimidate, overbear or persecute.

Management that complete supervisory responsibilities, including training, counselling, performance management and disciplinary action is not considered harassment. [OHSA, Section 1. (1)]

Workplace Sexual Harassment:

- Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expressions, where the course of comment or conduct is known or ought reasonably to be known that the comment, conduct, solicitation or advance is unwelcome. [OHSA, Section 1. (1)]
- Between staff and management personnel: Making a sexual solicitation or advance where the person making the solicitation or advance is in position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement to the worker and the person knows or ought reasonably to know that the solicitation or advance is unwelcome. [OHSA, Section 1. (1)]

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Workplace violence:

- a) The exercise of, or threat of, physical force by a person against a worker in a workplace that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker. [OHSA, Section 1. (1)]
- b) An attempt to exercise physical force against a worker in a workplace that could cause physical injury to the worker. [OHSA, Section 1. (1)]

Domestic Violence: A pattern of behaviour used by one person to gain power and control over another person with whom he/she has, or has had, an intimate relationship. This pattern of behaviour may include physical violence, sexual, emotional, and psychological intimidation, verbal abuse, stalking, and using electronic devices to harass and control. [http://www.women.gov.on.ca/owd/english/ending-violence/stop-domestic-abuse.shtml]

AIDET: Acknowledge, Introduce, Duration, Explanation, Thank You

Four classifications of workplace violence [OSACH 2006]:

Type 1: (Criminal intent) Perpetrator has no relationship to the workplace.

Type 2: (Patient) A patient, visitor or family member of a patient at the workplace becomes violent toward a worker or another patient.

Type 3: (Worker to Worker) Perpetrator is a worker or past worker of the workplace.

Type 4: (Personal Relationship) Perpetrator has a relationship with a worker e.g. domestic violence.

Specific workplace violence categories associated with workplace violence include, for reporting purposes:

- Physical Violence: any unnecessary action that results in bodily harm, discomfort, or injury caused by another person.
- Psychological / Verbal: any act which provokes fear or diminishes the individual's dignity or self-worth; intentionally inflicting psychological trauma on another person. This may include, but is not limited to any comments known, or that ought to be known, to be unwelcome, offensive, threatening, or degrading to another person.
- Sexual Abuse: Any unwelcome sexual activity between two or more individuals.

Documentation

Occupational Health, Safety and Wellness [Staff Incident report](#)

Established incident reporting, trending and analysis processes (QRM Meditech Module - Risk Management)

Domestic Violence [Worker Safety Plan](#) Template

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Infection Prevention and Control Considerations

All patients will be cared for using Infection Prevention and Control Routine Practices and Additional Precautions as outlined in **Provincial Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee (PIDAC): Routine Practices and Additional Precautions**, Ministry of Health and Long-term Care, as per HRH policy. All staff will perform Hand Hygiene as per HRH guideline.

References

Flowchart for Responding to Requests to and Mistreatment of Medical Learners and Students by Patients, Families, Visitors and/or Clients.

Code of Conduct: [Code of Conduct - Policy](#)

Code of conduct, Medical/Dental Staff

Actual or Potential Violence Code

White

Workplace Violence Prevention – Risk Assessment and Flagging of Patients Who Pose Risk of Potential or Actual Violence -

Procedure Individuals Involved in Violent Situations

Employees Who Have Been

Assaulted Communication with

Police Interpersonal Conflict

Resolution

AIDET Communication, Studor Group Canada©

Mediation Process, Internal

Anti-Harassment & Anti-

Discrimination Concerns &

Compliments Policy

User Reference Humber River Hospital Policies and Guidelines on Violence Prevention in the Workplace

Accreditation Standard/Criteria:

The Occupational Health and Safety Act, Ministry of Labour,

Bill 168 Ontario Human Rights Code

Accreditation Canada Required Organizational Practice Workplace Violence Prevention, 2017

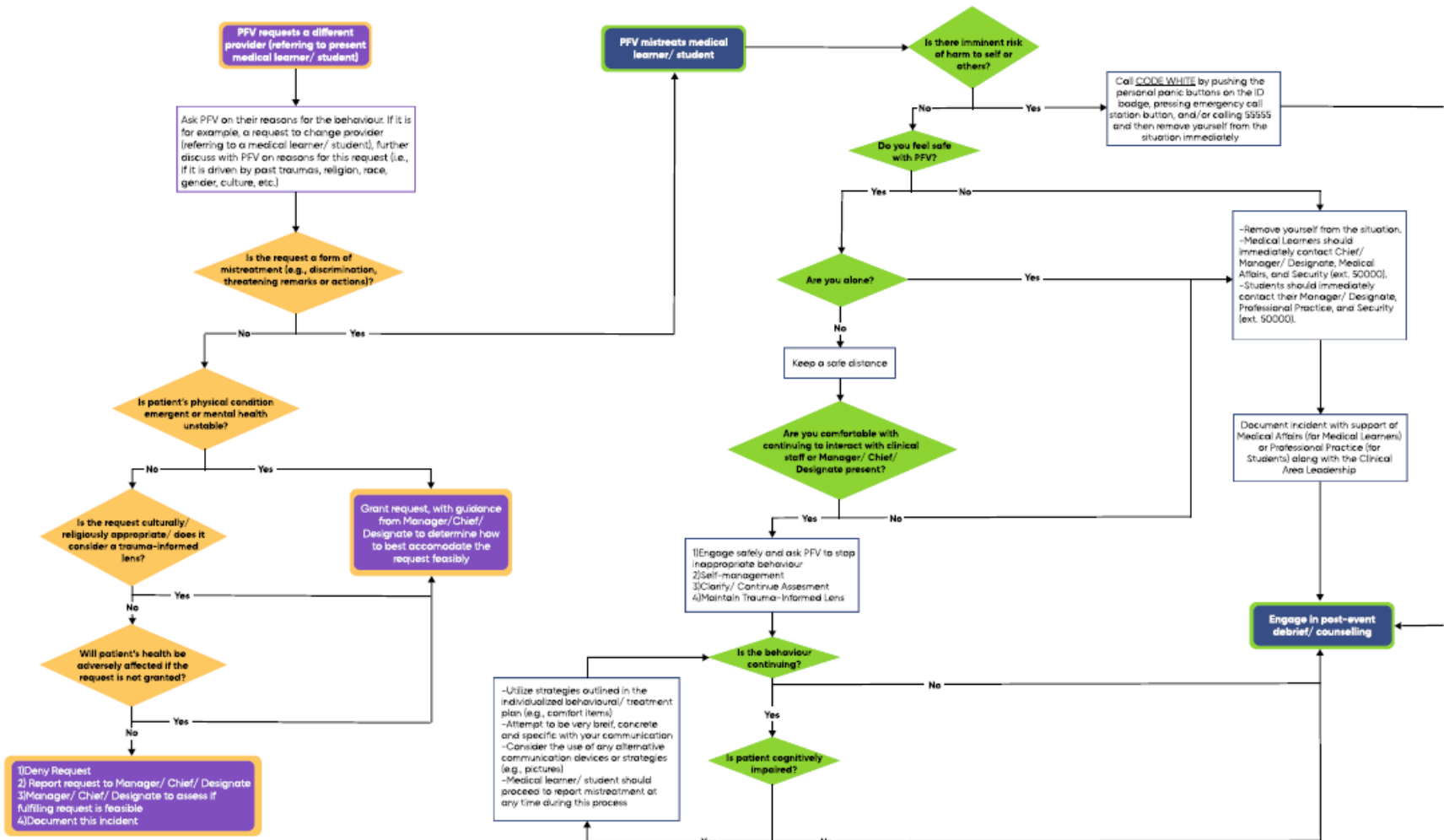
APPENDIX A

Flowchart for Responding to Requests to and Mistreatment of Medical Learners and Students by Patients, Families, Visitors, and/or Clients



Medical Learner = medical students/ residents/ fellows
 Students = Individuals involved in any non-medical learner programs
 PFV = Patients/ Families/ Visitors

Note: This flow chart was adapted from UHN's *Addressing Caregiver Preference Requests Guidelines* and the Mayo Clinic's *Algorithm for Response to Inappropriate Patient or Visitor Behaviour or Request for Specific Clinician Flow Chart*



-Medical learners/students will be supported throughout this process by the Manager/Chief/ Designate and by Professional Practice (for students) and Medical Affairs (for Medical Learners).
 -If you go through this flow chart without resolution, please escalate to the Chief of Staff and/or CEO.