



DATE: 01/07 /2018

## **CENNZ POSITION STATEMENT**

### **ZERO TOLERANCE of VIOLENCE TOWARDS NURSES**

#### **SUMMARY**

The College of Emergency Nurses New Zealand (CENNZ), believes emergency nurses within New Zealand have the right to be treated with respect and to be able to work in a safe and healthy workplace, that is, free from violence, threats and aggression.

#### **CENNZ POSITION: KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is the position of the College of Emergency Nurses - NZNO that:

- A nationally consistent approach of “zero tolerance to violence” in the ED is required.
- The mitigation of violence in the ED requires “zero tolerance” instituted and supported by all nurses and hospital management.
- Each ED must have policies and procedures regarding the management and reporting of acts of violence and threats of violence.
- Clear signage is displayed in waiting rooms and departments advocating “zero tolerance” to violence and acts of aggression.
- Emergency nurses have the right to expectations of privacy, appropriate injury care and the option for debriefing and professional counselling.
- Emergency nurses have the right to education and training related to the prevention, recognition, management and mitigation of violence.
- Means of reporting acts of violence should be readily accessible to all staff and be easy to use.
- There should be on-going national monitoring of violence in ED and research in how it can be addressed and mitigated.
- Reports of violence should be audited regularly to identify areas of concern so timely and appropriate action can be undertaken to address risk and enhance safety.
- An on-going, public commitment to alcohol and drug reduction is required.
- Public education around violence in the emergency department setting is maintained

## BACKGROUND: THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE ISSUE

There is clear and consistent evidence that New Zealand hospital emergency departments (EDs) are environments in which is a high risk for aggression and violence (Gale, Greenwood, Swain; 2014). It is estimated that up to 90% of ED staff have experienced violence in their workplace (Australasian College of Emergency Medicine, 2011).

## RATIONALE FOR CENNZ RECOMMENDATIONS

- Emergency Nurses can be at significant risk of workplace violence.
- The persistence of a culture of acceptance around workplace violence in the ED is a barrier to reducing and preventing incidents of violence in ED.
- All patients, visitors and staff in the emergency department have the right to a safe environment.
- Employers are required to provide a safe working environment as described by the Health and Safety in Employment Act (Work Safe NZ, 2013).
- Emergency nurses have the right and a responsibility to report incidents of violence to their employer and law enforcement without fear.

## CITATIONS

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**POSITION STATEMENT DUE FOR REVIEW: 01/07/21**

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