Nurses Perceptions of the Utilization of the Violence Assessment Tool (VAT) in Northeastern Ontario

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Abstract

Workplace violence (WPV) is an ongoing problem in health care. Most of the cases of WPV are caused by the patients, patients' families, and friends. Violence in hospitals among registered nurses has led to 56% of lost time injuries, and in 2018, Ontario's Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) reported 13% of lost time injuries due to WPV. The Public Services Health and Safety Association (PSHSA) created the Violence Assessment Tool [VAT] to predict the possible risk of violence from patients in acute care settings. Health care workers can use the VAT to assess risk, apply possible control measures and improve their safety. As part of a larger study, the aim of this research is to explore nurses' perceptions of the utilization of the VAT in assessing the potential risk of violence, and to identify any gaps, challenges, or improvements needed in the VAT. An Interpretive Description research design by Sally Thorne ~~in~~ (2016) will be used. The model that will guide this study is the Haddon Matrix framework of workplace violence prevention. The study will involve three focus groups via zoom virtual meetings with 6 to 8 participants per session, and an expected total of 18-24 participants. Focus group interviews will use semi-structured questions to guide the discussion among nurses working in a Northeastern Ontario hospital. Interpretive description data analysis will be guided by Thorne's processes of data analysis. This will be the first study to examine nurses' perceptions of the VAT in Ontario. The findings of this study will help to determine the predictive validity of the VAT and any potential changes that may be needed. The findings of this study could lead to reduced violence and associated costs within the healthcare sector.