INCIVILITY IN NURSING

CHARGE NURSE EDUCATION

INCIVILITY

- Affects 37% of US workers and 26-77% of nurses.
- 12% witnessed bullying
- 45% had their health affected due to stress from bullying
- 3% file lawsuits related to bullying
- 40% experience but never complain
- Cost is estimated at $11,582 per nurse per year
- Nurses, midwives and physicians who are younger and less experienced were more likely to experience bullying

WHAT IS WORKPLACE BULLYING

- “Repeated and unreasonable behavior directed towards a worker of a group of workers that creates a risk to health and safety"
- Workplace bullying is the umbrella term for most types of workplace aggression and violence from emotional abuse, physical violence, and the threat of violence
- Horizontal violence – co-worker
- Lateral violence - supervisor
- Incivility
- Occurs when individuals perceive that they are the target of negative actions from one or more persons over time.

REPORTED SYMPTOMS

- Victims of WPB report physical, emotional, and psychological symptoms such as:
- Severe anxiety
- Sleep disruption
- Feelings of trauma
- Helplessness
- Powerlessness
- Silence
- Anger
- Clinical depression
- PTSD

WHO

- Provider or management bullying a nurse
- Nurse bullying another nurse
- Nurse bullying a patient
- Patient bullying a nurse
- Nursing faculty bullying a student

BULLYING IS ON A CONTINUUM

Subtle behaviors: eye rolling, arm crossing, walking away

Overt Expressions: bullying, taunting, and intimidation

EFFECTS

- Reduced productivity
- Increase desire to leave the profession
- Job strain
- Burnout

ANA RECOMMENDED INTERVENTIONS TO ADDRESS INCIVILITY AND BULLYING IN THE WORKPLACE

- It is the responsibility of both the employer and the individual nurse to promote a safe and healthy work environment.
- Three levels of Prevention
  - Primary – involves education and other measures to identify and reduce vulnerabilities in order to prevent workplace violence from occurring.
  - Secondary – Reduce harm once an incident of workplace violence has begun.
  - Tertiary – Reduce consequences associated with an event.

ANA RECOMMENDED INTERVENTIONS TO ADDRESS INCIVILITY IN THE WORKPLACE

Primary Prevention recommendations for Registered Nurses

- RNs must make a commitment to and accept responsibility for establishing and promoting healthy interpersonal relationships with one another and with all members of the health care team.
- RNs must be cognizant of their own interactions, including actions taken and not taken and communication with others. Nurses should insist on and participate in effective communication, diversity and inclusiveness, and conflict negotiation and resolution training offered by their employer, by an academic program, or through continuing education courses.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REGISTERED NURSES (CON'T)

- RNs should consider co-creating norms for a civil workplace.
- RNs are responsible to themselves and to others for becoming familiar with their employer's incivility and bullying prevention policies and procedures, along with professional and institutional codes of conduct. If no policies exist, RNs are obligated to participate in the development of relevant policies.
- RNs should establish an agreed-upon code word or signal to seek support when feeling threatened.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REGISTERED NURSES (CON'T)

- RNs should practice using suggested predetermined phrases or cognitive rehearsal of responses so they can be prepared to deflect incivility and bullying.
- RNs both individually and through their professional demeanor to help reinforce civility and positive norms. Civility best practices include the following:
  - Use clear communication verbally, nonverbally, and in writing (including social media).
  - Treat others with respect, dignity, collegiality, and kindness.
  - Consider how personal words and actions affect others.
  - Avoid gossip and spreading rumors.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REGISTERED NURSES:
CIVILITY BEST PRACTICES (CON'T)

- Rely on facts and not conjecture.
- Collaborate and share information where appropriate.
- Offer assistance when needed, and, if refused, accept refusal gracefully.
- Take responsibility or be accountable for one's own actions.
- Recognize that abuse of power or authority is never acceptable.
- Speak directly to the person with whom one has an issue.
- Demonstrate openness to other points of view, perspectives, and experiences, and ideas.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REGISTERED NURSES:
CIVILITY BEST PRACTICES (CON'T)

- Be polite and respectful, and apologize when indicated.
- Encourage, support, and mentor others, including new nurses and experienced nurses.
- Listen to others with interest and respect.

PRIMARY PREVENTION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

- Employers must ensure that the organizational vision, mission, philosophy, and shared values are closely aligned with a culture of respect and safety.
- Employers must orient new employees to existing organizational policy and procedures.
- Employers must establish a zero-tolerance policy regarding incivility and bullying. All cases of bullying are treated in the same manner, regardless of who is involved.
- Employers must provide a mechanism for RNs to seek support when feeling threatened.
- Employers must orient employees to strategies available for conflict resolution and respectful communication.

PRIMARY PREVENTION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

- Employers must make available education sessions that define incivility and bullying, introduce prevention strategies, discuss the organization's zero tolerance policy, and detail the consequences of not following the policy.
- Academic nursing leaders and nursing faculty prepare nursing students to foster both a culture of civility and a health workplace.
- Nursing curricula should include interprofessional communication: crisis theory, identification, and intervention; and conflict negotiation and resolution.

SECONDARY PREVENTION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REGISTERED NURSES

- When RNs experience incivility and bullying, they can respond directly to the perpetrator, or they can see out guidance and support through the appropriate channels. Perpetrators should be addressed privately.
- RNs are encouraged to use pre-established code words or other mechanisms to seek support when they feel threatened.
- RNs who observe what they believe to be incivility or bullying should consider letting the perpetrators know the their actions are not consistent with established policies.

SECONDARY PREVENTION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

- Leaders from all levels need to support efforts to prevent further instances and any repercussions of incivility and bullying.
- Organizations should use measures to assess for the type and level of bullying and develop action plans that address the problem.
- Employers should offer stress management and stress reduction strategies to employees who experience incivility and bullying.

SECONDARY PREVENTION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

- Employers should implement measures to reduce both fatigue among employees and incivility associated with fatigue.
- Employers should offer training that enhances employees' psychological hardiness and resilience.

TERTIARY PREVENTION FOR REGISTERED NURSES

- Report the event asap.
- Keep a detailed written account of the incident.
- Obtain support through peers, employee assistance program, counseling, legal counsel, activate security system, if injured – consider workers' comp claim.
- Provide support to colleagues who have experienced incivility or bullying.
- Recognize one's own actions taken and not taken as they relate to incivility and bullying. Includes reflection, apologize, initiate change.

TERTIARY PREVENTION FOR EMPLOYERS

- Activate reporting system.
- Ensure detailed reports are submitted and maintained.
- Designate a neutral representative to meet with involved individuals.
- Consider establishing evidence-based practice committees to identify solutions.
- Establish performance improvement plans.
- Transparency for all involved.
- No tolerance for retaliation.
- Check in with the person who reported the incident to ensure instances of incivility and bullying has stopped and no retaliation has occurred.