Assessing the Incidence rate of Violence against Emergency Department Staff

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Abstract

Introduction: The tense environment of the emergency department (ED) exposes the staff of this department to risks resulting from physical and verbal confrontations and attacks, which can affect not only the staff’s job satisfaction and safety but also the process and quality of care and service provided for the patients. Methods: In this descriptive cross-sectional study, using a questionnaire, all the staff members working in the EDs of Imam Khomeini and Golestan Hospitals, Ahvaz, Iran, were questioned regarding encountering verbal and physical violence from March to September 2017. Data were then gathered and analyzed via SPSS software version 20. Results: In the studied EDs, 132 staff were employed in different categories and 100% of them participated in the study, of whom 58% were male. The mean age of the participants in the study was 31.7 ± 5.8 (rang from 21 to 56) years old. Among them, 78.1% of the studied individuals had faced verbal violence at least once and the mean incidence rate of verbal violence in the studied 6 months was 34.8 times in each month. 17.4% of the ED staff had faced physical violence with the mean incidence rate of 7.31% times per month in the studied 6 months. 17% of ED staff members reported feeling highly safe, 61% felt moderately safe, and 12% felt a low level of safety, and 10% did not feel safe at all. Conclusion: Considering the results of the present study, the rate of violence incidence is high in the EDs of Imam Khomeini and Golestan Hospitals, Ahvaz, Iran, and this has raised concerns among the staff members of these EDs. In addition, in this study, violence has been mostly on the part of patients’ companions.

Keywords: Emergency Service, Hospital; Violence; Hospitals; Safety; Medical Staff, Hospital