Violence and Aggression experienced by New Zealand Nurses

Jinny Willis, Sue Gasquoine, Sandra Richardson, Paula Grainger
New Zealand Nurses Organisation
Tōpūtanga Tapuhi Kaitiaki o Aotearoa

NZNO is the leading professional nursing association and union for nurses in Aotearoa New Zealand, representing 51,000 nurses, midwives, students, kaimahi hauora and health workers on professional and employment matters.
Background

• Violence and aggression against nurses is common in health care settings but national data for New Zealand is lacking

• Significant climate of under-reporting; hospital reporting systems do not give an accurate rates
Aims

To determine the prevalence of violence and aggression against New Zealand nurses.
Methods

• Web based questionnaire – Survey Monkey Pro
• A random 10% sample of members of NZNO were invited to participate (n=4846)
• Responses from n=1436 (response rate = 29.6%)
• Results collated and comments coded thematically
Questions

• Experience of physical assault, verbal assault and sexual innuendo perpetrated by patients/service users or relatives
• Frequency of experience
• Impact and response
• Reporting of incident
• Satisfaction with outcome
The Respondents

Characteristics of the members who participated in the survey
Ethnicity of Respondents

- NZ Māori: 19.9%
- NZ European: 64.4%
- Other European: 5.9%
- Total Pacific: 6.6%
- Total Asian: 11.4%
- Other: 3.9%
Verbal, physical or sexual abuse or threat in past 12 months

- Verbal abuse or threats from a patient or accompanying person: 637
- Physical assault or threat from a patient or accompanying person: 260
- Sexual innuendo, abuse or threat from a patient or accompanying person: 215
Frequency of Verbal Abuse, Physical Threat or Sexual Innuendo

- **Verbal abuse or threats from a patient:**
  - Daily: 7%
  - Weekly: 16%
  - Monthly: 13%
  - A few times a year: 43%

- **Verbal abuse or threats from a patient's accompanying person:**
  - Daily: 3%
  - Weekly: 10%
  - Monthly: 12%
  - A few times a year: 43%

- **Physical assault or threat from a patient:**
  - Daily: 3%
  - Weekly: 6%
  - Monthly: 6%
  - A few times a year: 31%

- **Physical assault or threat from a patient's accompanying person:**
  - Daily: 1%
  - Weekly: 2%
  - Monthly: 2%
  - A few times a year: 21%

- **Sexual innuendo, abuse or threat from a patient:**
  - Daily: 2%
  - Weekly: 4%
  - Monthly: 7%
  - A few times a year: 30%

- **Sexual innuendo, abuse or threat from a patient's accompanying person:**
  - Daily: 1%
  - Weekly: 1%
  - Monthly: 3%
  - A few times a year: 14%
Frequency of Verbal, Physical or Sexual Abuse or Threat

- Verbal abuse or threats from a patient or accompanying person: 680
- Physical assault or threat from a patient or accompanying person: 370
- Sexual innuendo, abuse or threat from a patient or accompanying person: 336

- Daily: Red
- Weekly: Dark blue
- Monthly: Yellow
- A few times a year: Green
### Verbal Assault from Patients or Accompanying Persons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Daily All (%)</th>
<th>Daily ED (%)</th>
<th>Daily MH (%)</th>
<th>Daily ARC (%)</th>
<th>Weekly All (%)</th>
<th>Weekly ED (%)</th>
<th>Weekly MH (%)</th>
<th>Weekly ARC (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patient</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient's relative, friend or accompanying person</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>32.6</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.nzno.org.nz
PHYSICAL ASSAULT OR THREAT FROM PATIENTS OR ACCOMPANYING PERSONS

Percentage

- **Weekly ALL**
  - Patient: 5.6%
  - Patient's relative, friend or accompanying person: 2.3%

- **Weekly ED**
  - Patient: 10.5%
  - Patient's relative, friend or accompanying person: 11.9%

- **Weekly MH**
  - Patient: 20.5%
  - Patient's relative, friend or accompanying person: 2.9%

- **Weekly ARC**
  - Patient: 11.7%
SEXUAL INNUENDO, ABUSE OR THREAT FROM PATIENTS OR ACCOMPANYING PERSONS

- **WEEKLY ALL**
  - Sexual innuendo, abuse or threat from a patient: 3.8%
  - Sexual innuendo, abuse or threat from a patient's accompanying person: 1.3%

- **WEEKLY ED**
  - Sexual innuendo, abuse or threat from a patient: 13.2%
  - Sexual innuendo, abuse or threat from a patient's accompanying person: 4.5%

- **WEEKLY MH**
  - Sexual innuendo, abuse or threat from a patient: 11.1%
  - Sexual innuendo, abuse or threat from a patient's accompanying person: 2.2%

- **WEEKLY ARC**
  - Sexual innuendo, abuse or threat from a patient: 3.8%
## Violence and Aggression by World Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>World Region</th>
<th>Physical Violence</th>
<th>Verbal Violence</th>
<th>Sexual Harassment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n=74 566)</td>
<td>43.0 (3.1-94.0)</td>
<td>69.4 (19.9-100)</td>
<td>38.7 (7.6-68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n=7792)</td>
<td>27.3 (3.1-84.0)</td>
<td>50.4 (17.2-91.5)</td>
<td>21.6 (0.7-56.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n=55 353)</td>
<td>35.0 (3.0-100.0)</td>
<td>59.5 (5.0-100.0)</td>
<td>16.2 (1.2-38.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n=13 469)</td>
<td>22.4 (0.5-74.9)</td>
<td>78.5 (38.9-100.0)</td>
<td>22.4 (2.0-53.3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data are mean % (range)

Spector et al, 2013
SUMMARY

- Violence and aggression against nurses in New Zealand is common.
- The prevalence of violence and aggression reflects that in other English speaking countries.
- These data represent a baseline allowing for tracking the impact of any interventions established.
REFERENCES

Discussion