

VIOLENCE AGAINST EMERGENCY CARE STAFF IN BASRA HOSPITALS

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Emergency care service is one of the professions affected by workplace violence. It is not a new phenomenon but in recent years, much greater emphasis has been placed on the problem. Despite the fact that the problem is under attention worldwide, little is known about it in emergency departments in Iraqi hospitals.

Aim: This descriptive cross-sectional study aims at investigating the problem of violence against emergency care staff in Basra hospitals.

Method: The study was conducted in a cross-sectional methodology setting targeting the emergency care staff in Basra hospitals to elicit doctor and paramedical staff's responses of experience to workplace violence. The study involved 198 staff members. This was divided by the 6 hospitals of Basra City. At each of the six emergency departments, the sample from targeted population was convenience one. A pre-structured questionnaire was translated with a very limited modification and used.

Results: About 48.7% of the respondents had faced verbal violence, 24.6% faced physical violence, and 13.6% had faced hospital-property damage/ theft. Most victims did not take an action after the end of the violence incidents. About 62.8% of respondent victims do not/rarely think about violence when they do not mean to, and most of them (89.8%) do not/rarely have dreams about violence. About half of the victims do not to remove the subject from memory and a approximately similar percentage of them do not talk about violence, while third of them avoid letting themselves get upset when they think about/being reminded of violence incidents.

Conclusions: In emergency departments of Basra hospitals, verbal violence/ intimidation is the most common, followed by physical violence, and the least frequent is hospital-property damage/ theft associated with violence and the rates lie in the middle of international range. Violence, which worries the victims most, usually occurs during the daytime work shifts and the main perpetrator is a male, who is mostly the patient's family member, relative, companion or friend. Workplace violence victims either do nothing as an immediate response to the incident or take limited actions and they, often, do not take an action after the end of the incidents. Furthermore, violence does not leave long-term consequences in Iraqi professionals.

KEYWORDS: Violence, Emergency Department, Basra