Reducing violence against staff by patients in acute inpatient psychiatric settings

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On my honor, I pledge that I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance on this paper.
ABSTRACT

Objective: This quality improvement project evaluated the effects of a staff training program in therapeutic communications on decreasing violence by patients against staff in an acute inpatient behavioral hospital. Further, the project measured the effect of the training on the self-efficacy and knowledge level of staff in the use of therapeutic communications, and its overall impact on the participants.

Methods: This project used a single group pretest and posttest design and compared the incidence of patient-initiated violence twelve weeks before and during the twelve weeks of implementation. Additionally, the project compared the staff’s self-efficacy and knowledge level in the use of therapeutic communications before and after the intervention, as well as the overall impact of the training in staff’s reaction, learning, behavior, and observed results. The intervention consisted of graduated hourly training multi-format sessions in therapeutic communications.

Results: Fifteen recruits met the inclusion and exclusion criteria and all fifteen participated in the training sessions. The incidence of violence decreased by 73% during project implementation compared to the twelve weeks preceding the implementation. There was also a statistically significant increase in the staff’s self-efficacy, \( t(-11.4), \text{df}=114, p<.001 \), and knowledge level \( t(-10.40), \text{df}=14, p<.001 \) as a result of the training program. Further, there was an overall positive impact on staff’s reaction, learning and behavior, and observed positive results on the practice setting.

Conclusion: This quality improvement project found that staff training in effective therapeutic communications had a multidimensional effect, the most important being its effect on decreasing
violence. Additionally, the findings showed a positive effect of the training on staff’s self-efficacy and knowledge level in therapeutic communications, and the overall impact on staff’s reaction, learning, and behavior, and observed. The findings underscore the need to emphasize therapeutic communications in promoting a safety culture in behavioral health settings.