

Policy Name: Violence Prevention Policy

Policy Number: CLINIC-BULLY-HARASS-002

Effective Date: July 3, 2024

Review Date: July 3, 2024

Purpose

Murrayville Family Practice Group is committed to the prevention of workplace violence and will take all reasonable steps to ensure person(s) at Murrayville Family Practice Group are safe from acts of violence arising out of employment.

Policy Statement

All persons associated with Murrayville Family Practice Group are expected to conduct themselves in a civil, respectful, cooperative, and non-discriminatory manner. Any threat or act of violence against persons on Murrayville Family Practice Group property or against staff in the course of their duties is unacceptable and measures will be taken to hold people accountable for these actions up to and including contacting police to press charges.

Definitions

Murrayville Family Practice Group recognizes violence in the workplace as being the attempted or actual exercise by a person, other than a worker, of any physical force so as to cause injury to a worker and includes any threatening statement or behaviour which gives a worker reasonable cause to believe that he or she is at risk of injury.¹

- a. **“Person(s)”** – includes all staff (excluded and unionized), students, medical staff, researchers, physicians, medical patients, fellows, volunteers, executives, contractors, and suppliers, employees of academic institutions, visitors, patients, and families.

- b. **“Staff”** – all workers including excluded staff, union staff, medical staff, researchers, students, and volunteers who are on a site.
- c. **“Verbal and non-verbal de-escalation skills”** – intervention skills used to de-escalate or defuse an emotional crisis. Skills include awareness of body language, personal space and stance, validation and active listening.
- d. **“Emotional Crisis”** – a process during which a person’s coping skills and abilities are significantly challenged by a combination of internal and external events.
- e. **“Behavioral Emergency”** – an acute situation where there is imminent danger of serious harm or death to self or others.
- f. **“Health Care Team”** – clinical staff responsible for the care of the patient.

Roles & Responsibilities

1. Employers & Senior Leadership Team

- Support and promote Murrayville Family Practice Group commitment to the prevention of violent behavior and the Murrayville Family Practice Group Violence Prevention Program.
- Establish specific responsibility for the implementation and maintenance of the Violence Prevention Program.
- Ensure all levels of leadership are accountable for occupational health and safety performance in their areas of responsibility.
- Monitor the Violence Prevention Program through review of statistical information relative to workplace risk assessment, training records, and incident reports.
- Inform and encourage all persons of the need to report workplace violence incidents or threats of violence, and ensure all persons are aware of how to do so.

2. Supervisors/Managers

- Support and promote Murrayville Family Practice Group commitment to violence prevention.
- Inform staff of the nature and extent of the risk(s) from violence in their workplace and act to remedy any hazard related to violence in the workplace.
- Inform and encourage all persons of the need to report workplace violence incidents or threats of violence, and ensure all persons are aware of how to do so.
- Provide appropriate violence prevention instruction and training necessary to ensure the health and safety of all staff.
- Appropriately communicate to patients and family members about their applicable code of conduct while at Murrayville Family Practice Group including displaying clear signage outlining the code of conduct.
- Ensure appropriate policies and procedures are established to eliminate or minimize violence.
- Monitor and ensure compliance with safe work practices with respect to the prevention of violence in the workplace program.
- Provide access to education and training in the prevention and management of violence.
- Investigate reported incidents of violence in conjunction with Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC) members or worker representatives if no JOHSC exists.
- Ensure an up to date violence risk assessment has been completed, reviewed, and recommendations have been implemented and evaluated as required by Worker's Compensation Act regulations.
- Participate as required in workplace inspections and investigations of incidents involving violence or threats of violence in the workplace.

- Ensure staff receive training and education consistent with the recommendations of the risk assessment and incident investigations.
- Communicate and record all staff reported incidents in which their personal health or safety or the health and safety of other persons were at risk to the leadership team.
- Do a check-in with staff involved in a violent incident (including threats of violence) and ensure support and resources are offered as soon as possible.
- Ensure that staff use or wear any required personal protective equipment, devices, or clothing.
- Cooperate with the site Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee.
- In the event a staff person wishes to involve the police following an incident of violence, assist by:
 - Supporting the staff member's right to file criminal charges,
 - If requested, contacting the appropriate law enforcement authority and assisting in scheduling an interview,
 - Notifying Employer and Senior Leadership Team,
 - Advising all staff members of the support systems available to them (e.g. EFAP),
 - Maintaining contact with staff involved for the duration of the legal proceedings to ensure they receive all necessary support.

3. Staff

- Report all threats or incidents of violence in which their personal health and safety, or the health and safety of other persons were at risk, whether injured or not. Students should inform their clinical instructor and preceptor, in addition to informing their on-site supervisor, if applicable. Other persons should report to their supervisor as required by Murrayville Family Practice Group.

- Take reasonable care to protect their health and safety and the safety of others in the work site.
- Follow safe work procedures and safety requirements as outlined in Murrayville Family Practice Group policies and procedures.
- Use or wear any required personal protective equipment, devices, or clothing.
- Cooperate with the site Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee.

4. Patients and Visiting Public

- Follow the applicable policy and procedures
- Report any violence-related health and safety concerns to the area supervisor/manager.

5. Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committees

- Monitor the violence in the workplace program through review of statistical information relative to workplace risk assessment, training records, and incident reports.
- Participate in an annual program review and ensure violence risk assessments are conducted regularly.
- Participate as required in workplace inspections and investigations of incidents involving violence or threats of violence in the workplace.
- Provide expertise and assistance as required with workplace violence incident investigations and the development of violence prevention policies and procedures.

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the workplace violence prevention program. Based on this evaluation, make recommendations to the Senior Leadership Team.
- Assist with the development of new or revised work procedures specific to the workplace violence prevention program to ensure compliance with Worker's Compensation Act regulatory requirements.
- Coordinate and advise with the performance of risk assessment through analysis of patient and staff incidents, site and staff surveys.
- Ensure that staff use or wear any required personal protective equipment, devices, or clothing.

Standards & Procedures

Murrayville Family Practice Group will:

- Promote workplace safety for all staff members, patients, and visitors.
- Include all levels of staff in the development of violence prevention policies and programs.
- Provide policies and access to educational tools to empower staff to identify potential situations of violence, de-escalate, or prevent violence, and appropriately respond to violence in the workplace.
- Ensure a violence risk assessment is conducted.² Violence risk assessments must be conducted by supervisors/managers in conjunction with a worker who is familiar with the work being performed, and a Joint Occupational Health and Safety member who is knowledgeable about the risk assessment process.

- Ensure that supervisors/managers implement policies, procedures, and work arrangements to eliminate or minimize the risk to staff, as identified by the violence risk assessment process.
- Ensure that the policies and procedures comply with the Workers Compensation Act, the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, and collective agreement(s) (if applicable).

Communication of the Code of Conduct

- Murrayville Family Practice Group will advise patients and family members about their responsibility to abide by the applicable code of conduct while at Murrayville Family Practice Group. The Code of Conduct will be communicated in a language, and at a level of understanding appropriate for the individual being advised.
- The Code of Conduct will be displayed at Murrayville Family Practice Group, such that it is clearly visible to patients and family members. It will be displayed in a language, and at a level of understanding appropriate for the community being served.

Visual Identifier of Past Violence

- Patients with a history of violence must have an alert/visual identifier (e.g. purple dot, purple violence symbol, electronic alert). Any risk must be communicated widely and include information regarding underlying causes for the behavior and mitigation/control strategies.

Verbal De-escalation Strategies

- Verbal violence related to an emotional crisis should be managed using verbal and non-verbal de-escalation strategies to defuse the situation.

Dealing with Behavioral Situation(s)

On-going behavioral situations should be reported and discussed with the supervisor/manager and the health care team.

- Patients capable of understanding the consequences of their actions – Murrayville Family Practice Group will use a progressive, problem-solving approach which, if other options are not successful, may include imposing restrictions up to and including discharge from Murrayville Family Practice Group, if determined to be appropriate in the circumstances. This action will be carried out in collaboration with the health care team, representatives of the Ethics Committee and members of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Patients not capable of understanding the consequences of their actions will be assessed by the health care team and management strategies implemented and evaluated on an on-going basis. Where necessary, referral to care homes/programs that can provide appropriate control measures to address ongoing behavioural concerns will be made.
- Family Members/Visitors – a progressive, problem-solving process will be followed including the involvement of members of the Senior Leadership Team.
- Staff members – Murrayville Family Practice Group has policies related to workplace conduct. Any staff member subject to any form of violence or harassment from another staff member should follow the relevant policies & procedures.

Reporting Incidences of Violence

- All incidents of violence or threats of violence will be reported and documented, whether individual(s) are injured or not. All staff will report incidents that pose a risk to their personal safety by contacting the supervisor/ manager on duty. All incidents required under the Workers Compensation Act and Occupational Health and Safety Regulations will be reported to WorkSafeBC.
- If any staff member of Murrayville Family Practice Group is made aware of any threat to the workplace or public she\he shall follow the appropriate response mechanisms as outline by Murrayville Family Practice Group, including notifying the supervisor/manager on duty immediately and contacting the Police (911) where appropriate.
- Murrayville Family Practice Group must develop, and all staff must be aware of and follow the violence response procedure for Murrayville Family Practice Group. In the event of a behavioral emergency or in instances where the situation is escalating beyond the abilities of the staff present to manage safely, staff will proceed according to Murrayville Family Practice Group's Code White policy.
- Any Murrayville Family Practice Group staff member who becomes aware of a person or persons in the possession of a weapon, or in the event of imminent danger will remove themselves and others (as possible) from danger, and contact the supervisor/ manager on duty (where available) from a safe location. They will also contact the Police (911) where appropriate. Staff are not required to continue to provide treatment under circumstances that present a danger or the perception of danger to themselves or others and should follow procedures outlined in the Murrayville Family Practice Group's Weapons in the Workplace Policy.

Investigating Incidences of Violence

- All threats of violence and incidents of violence must be reported and investigated, whether an individual(s) are injured or not. Any incident resulting in injury requiring medical treatment, time loss or any incident with the potential to cause serious injury must be investigated, at a minimum, in accordance with the Workers Compensation Act and Regulations and as outlined in Murrayville Family Practice Group's Incident Investigation Policy.

Working Alone

- Every reasonable effort will be made to limit the occurrences of Murrayville Family Practice Group staff working alone or in isolation. When this is not operationally possible, Murrayville Family Practice Group is committed to doing a risk assessment and having procedures in place to secure the safety of all Murrayville Family Practice Group staff. In order to prevent incidents and to check the well-being of those who are required to work alone or in isolation, the procedures as described in the Murrayville Family Practice Group Working Alone or in Isolation Guide will be established and followed.

Right to Refuse Unsafe Work

- Staff have the right to refuse unsafe work. Work refusal is a serious issue and is not a routine way of solving workplace concerns. If a staff member has reasonable cause to believe a work process would create an undue hazard to the health and safety of any person, the staff member must follow the process outlined in the Murrayville Family Practice Group's Right to Refuse Unsafe Work Policy. Any refusal to carry out work must follow the process as per section 3.12 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation.³

Document Retention

Written records of workplace violence incident/injury reports and investigation must be maintained by Murrayville Family Practice Group for a period of not less than 3 years from the date of incident/injury or investigation.

Evaluation & Continuous Improvement

Murrayville Family Practice Group will annually review the Violence Prevention Policy and make any changes as needed to ensure the safety of all staff and patients and visitors. Such revisions will be done in consultation with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committees (JOHSCs) and any new policy changes/informational resources will be based on best practice and include the date of revision/completion.