Clinic Name: Date:

Violence Prevention Policy and Procedure

SWITCH BC

doctors of bc

BRITISH COLUMBIA
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Purpose

To prevent workplace violence and promote a safe and secure working environment for all clinic staff.

Scope

This policy applies to all clinic personnel, including physicians, locum physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners, allied health professionals, administrative staff, Primary Care Network (PCN) clinicians, medical residents, and contractors.

Policy

We recognize that workplace violence poses risks of both physical and psychological harm to our clinic staff. Our clinic is committed to preventing workplace violence and will take all reasonable steps to protect staff safety during all work-related activities.

All individuals present in the clinic or communicating with clinic staff by phone are expected to behave in a civil, respectful, cooperative, and non-discriminatory manner. Any threat or act of violence against clinic staff is unacceptable. We are committed to ensuring a safe work environment and will take appropriate measures to address such actions, which may include involving the police. No disciplinary action will be taken against staff when reporting workplace incidents.

Definitions

Workplace violence is any attempted or actual use of physical force by a non-staff member that could cause injury to a worker. It also includes threatening statements or behaviours that give staff a reasonable cause to believe that they are at risk of injury.

Responsibilities

Employer:

- Conduct violence risk assessments to identify potential hazards related to violence and take steps to eliminate or minimize those risks.
- Ensure staff are informed about the risks of violence and the measures in place to protect them.
- Provide staff training on identifying, preventing, responding to, and reporting incidents of violence.
- Ensure all incidents of violence are documented and investigated.
- Report incidents to WorkSafeBC when required (as below).
- Take corrective actions following incidents to prevent recurrence.

- Ensure workers are advised to seek medical attention when injured or experiencing symptoms from a workplace incident.

Supervisor:

- Ensure all staff are familiar with the clinic's violence prevention policies and procedures.
- Support workers involved in or affected by incidents of violence, including making necessary adjustments or accommodations.
- Ensure incident reporting procedures are followed and documentation is complete and accurate.
- Follow up on corrective actions and ensure they are implemented to prevent recurrence.

Staff:

- Follow procedures for preventing workplace violence.
- Report all incidents of violence or potential violence (verbal or physical, with or without injuries) using the clinic's incident report form.
- Cooperate fully with workplace violence investigations and assessments.
- Notify your supervisor, a joint health and safety committee member, or a worker representative of any workplace violence concerns.
- Contribute to the development, implementation, and review of the clinic's violence prevention plan.
- Participate in training or educational sessions when offered.

Risk Identification and Assessment

Periodic risk assessments will be conducted to evaluate the nature and types of workplace violence incidents, and records of these assessments will be maintained for at least three years.

Risk Control

General Mandatory Practices

- All clinic staff are expected to take reasonable care to protect their health and safety, as well as the safety of others in the clinic.
- Patients exhibiting any form of violent behaviour should have an alert or visual identifier added to their chart to inform and warn staff members.
- Verbal violence related to an emotional or situational crisis will be managed using verbal and non-verbal de-escalation strategies..
- Staff are not required to continue providing service or treatment if it poses a danger to themselves or others. In the event of imminent danger or direct threat, staff should remove themselves from harm, notify their supervisor, and call the police (911) from a safe location, if necessary.
- Every reasonable effort will be made to limit the occurrences of staff working alone or in isolation.

Written instructions

- Written instructions will be provided to clinic staff on how to respond safely to violent incidents, and staff are expected to follow them.

Patient Code of Conduct

- Patients and their families will be informed of their responsibility to follow the clinic's code of conduct while interacting with or receiving care from clinic staff.
- A code of conduct poster will be displayed at the clinic so that it is clearly visible to the visiting public, patients, and their family members.

Workplace Safety Plan

A safety plan will be implemented in the clinic to protect staff from workplace violence, including the following key measures:

- Clear sightlines in the reception area, controlled access to staff-only areas, and protective physical barriers between the public and staff.
- Workspaces free of potential weapons, office furniture arranged to allow quick exit, and adequate lighting in the workspaces.

Procedures

Incident Reporting and Investigation

- All workplace violence incidents will be reported to supervisors.
- All workplace violence incidents will be investigated, and corrective actions will be implemented to prevent recurrence.
- Any workplace violence incident resulting in injury requiring medical treatment, time loss, or any incident with the potential to cause serious injury will be investigated using an Incident Investigation Form and reported to WorkSafeBC.

Incident Follow-Up

- Corrective actions will be taken to address incidents or threats of violence and prevent them from reoccurring. These actions will be reviewed to assess their effectiveness.
- Depending on the incident, an all-staff debrief will be encouraged following the incident.
- Mental health resources will be offered to affected staff as needed, such as the WorkSafe BC crisis support line, the Doctors of BC Physician Health Program, and the Canadian Mental Health Association BC Division Care to Speak.

Documentation

- All workplace violence incidents and near misses will be documented.
- Workplace violence incidents will be documented in the patient's medical record to alert staff for future interactions, and on the clinic's incident reporting form for internal tracking and to guide the implementation of control measures.

- The language used to document workplace violence incidents shall be clear, objective, factual and non-judgmental.
- Written records of workplace violence incidents and investigations will be maintained for at least three years.

Training

- Staff will be trained to recognize signs of potential violence, understand the clinic's procedures and policies for minimizing risk, respond appropriately to violent incidents, including how to obtain assistance, and follow proper protocols for reporting, investigating, and documenting such incidents.
- Staff can take the free provincial Violence Prevention for Healthcare Workers in Low Risk Departments online course on the LearningHub as part of their training.
- Physicians, residents, and nurse practitioners can also take the free provincial Violence Prevention for Physicians online course on the LearningHub and earn up to 1.5 Mainpro+® credits upon completion.
- Training records will be kept for at least three years.

Annual Review

This Violence Prevention Policy and Procedure will be reviewed annually and updated as needed to ensure staff safety.

Reference

- WorkSafeBC – Violence in the Workplace Regulations
- WorkSafeBC – Violence in the Workplace Policies
- WorkSafeBC – Preventing Violence in Health Care Handbook
- Canadian Medical Protective Association – The Office Safety Plan
- Canadian Medical Protective Association - Challenging patient encounters

Approval

Employer: *Insert Employer Name* _____ Date: Insert Date _____