

# Violence in Health Care & Social Assistance in BC

## *Fact Sheet*

British Columbia's health care and social assistance sector employs approximately 260,000 workers – 11.5% of the provincial workforce. In 2008 healthcare workers had over 7,900 time-loss claims, lost over 330,000 days of work, and cost more than \$41 million in claims costs.

### **Why focus on Violence?**

Healthcare workers sustain significantly more time loss injuries from an act of violence than any other occupation in BC. Fifty-four percent of all time loss claims caused by acts of violence happen in healthcare, compared to 7% in retail and education, and 5% in public administration (which includes law enforcement).

Within healthcare, violence is the third most common cause of injury\*, accounting for 11% of all time loss claims. Between 2004 and 2008, over 3500 healthcare workers were injured and missed time from work due an act of violence. (\*footnote: Overexertion, primarily from patient handling, is the number one cause of injury, accounting 47% of time loss injuries, and slips and trips is the second leading cause, accounting for 12% of all time loss injuries.)

### **Violence in Health Care & Social Assistance Accepted Time-loss Claims in BC**

Year	No. of time-loss claims due to violence	No. of workers injured due to violence every week	Percent of time-loss claims due to violence
2004	536	10	8%
2005	619	12	9%
2006	728	14	10%
2007	825	16	11%
2008	875	17	11%

### **Employment Settings Where Violence Most Often Occurs**

- Complex Care (Long-term Care) 39%
- Acute Care 21%
- Short-term/Residential Social Service Facility 21%
- Counseling or Social Services 8%

### **Health Care Occupations to Whom Violence Most Often Occurs**

- Nurses Aides/LPNs 49%
- Community Health Workers 31%
- Registered and Psychiatric Nurses 15%

## What is the Source of the Violence

- The resident/patient 68%
- A person other than resident ie. family member 27%

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Definition: The Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Regulation, section 4.27, defines **violence** as “the attempted or actual exercise by a person, other than a workers, of any physical force so as to cause injury to a worker.” Violence also includes “any threatening statement or behaviour which gives a worker reasonable cause to believe that he or she is at risk of injury.”

All data is based on non-healthcare only claims.

Data Source 1: WorkSafeBC Statistical Services, February 2010

Data Source 2: WorkSafeBC Data Warehouse, April 2009