EXPOSURE TO PATIENT RELATED VIOLENCE AGAINST NURSING OFFICERS IN DIFFERENT UNITS, IN TEACHING HOSPITAL KARAPITIYA (THK)

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The healthcare industry has been identified as one of the work places where violence is most prevalent and nursing has been identified as the occupation at highest risk of patient-related violence. Patient-related violence in the health care system is increasing, and it strongly influences recruitment and retention of nurses. The objectives of this study were to determine the exposure to patient related-violence against nursing officers working in THK and to compare the prevalence of patient-related violence against nursing officers in different units of THK. A descriptive survey design was used. Setting was Teaching Hospital Karapitiya. Study sample was selected from all units in THK using systematic random sampling method. Data was collected using interviewer-administered questionnaire. Of 136 respondents, 88 (64.7%) were exposed to some kind of violence with (n=34) 25% to physical assault, (n=77) 56.6% to verbal abuse, (n=12) 8.8% to verbal threat, (n=13) 9.6% to sexual harassment. There was a significant relationship (p> 0.026) between the exposure to violence and the type of wards in THK, the highest rate 85.2% (n=115 nurses) being in special units with surgical and medical units having rates of 65.9% (n=89) and 55.9% (n=76) respectively. Only 33.8% (n=46) of participants were aware of the availability of violence reporting procedures in their workplace. The rates of exposure to violence among nurses in THK are fairly high. There is a direct need to create awareness regarding the availability of reporting procedures and a regular program for training in violent patient management.

Keywords: Violence, Nurses, Physical Assault, Sexual Harassment, Verbal Abuse, Verbal Threat