



Addressing Violence

in Colorado Hospitals

We all deserve a **safe place**
to seek medical care.

Our health care workers deserve a
safe place to provide it.



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Violence against health care workers is on the rise. It is an unbelievable reality for a workforce that has been brutalized by the COVID-19 pandemic and its subsequent mental and emotional fallout.

5x

Health care workers have the highest rates of workplace violence injuries – they are **five times more likely to be injured** than other workers.¹

Every 30 minutes

On average, a nurse is **assaulted every 30 minutes** – more than 5,200 nurses were assaulted in just the second quarter of 2022.²

90%

In a one month review, **90% of health care workers had experienced or witnessed violence** from a patient or a patient's caregiver.³

Violence is **increasing**

A National Nurses United survey found that nearly **half of nurses report an increase in workplace violence** – a **119% increase** from March 2021.⁴

In the same month, **75% encountered both verbal and physical assaults** and **nearly half of workers had to call for help.**

Rates of Assaults in Hospitals 2012 – 2021

In its most recent report, the International Association for Healthcare Security and Safety (IAHSS) found that assaults against health care workers reached an all-time high in 2021.⁵



When asked, Colorado's hospitals reported an increase in violence against their staff – due to both increased incidents and increased reporting.

*IAHSS did not produce a Crime Survey in 2017

Simple Assaults per 100 Beds

Simple assault is defined by the FBI as an unlawful physical attack by one person upon another where neither the offender displays a weapon, nor the victim suffers obvious severe or aggravated bodily injury.

The consequences of this trend cannot be ignored. Due in part to the repeated trauma of violence and harassment, health care workers are leaving the field to take themselves out of harm's way. At a time when the Colorado is expected to be **short 10,000 nurses and 54,000 health care ancillary staff members by 2026**,⁶ we must do all that we can to protect our health care workers.

A recent Mercer study found that Colorado is in the bottom five states for anticipated shortages in registered nurses.

Bottom 5 RN Gap/Surplus States⁶

	Gap to 2021	Gap to 2022	Gap to 2023	Gap to 2024	Gap to 2025	Gap to 2026
Pennsylvania	-3,865	-5,951	-9,639	-13,265	-16,688	-20,345
North Carolina	-3,012	-4,261	-6,708	-9,013	-10,914	-13,112
Colorado	-2,640	-3,778	-5,595	-7,319	-8,759	-10,431
Illinois	-2,329	-3,960	-5,187	-6,369	-7,452	-8,654
Massachusetts	-2,275	-3,652	-4,705	-5,714	-6,575	-7,576

Through a once-in-a-generation pandemic, health care workers were there for us.
Now, it's our turn to be here for them.

What Hospitals Are Doing

The safety of their patients and staff is the highest priority for every Colorado hospital. All hospitals have violence prevention programs and are required to have worker training programs as a condition of their accreditation. Safety efforts underway include:



Alarms and monitors



Security screening and cameras



Security presence or rounding



Restricted access to certain areas



Signage



Huddles and safety drills



Peer support and debriefing



Easy incident reporting



Paid time off to file appropriate charges

What Can YOU DO?

Verbal and physical assault have no place in a health care setting. Bring your best to the hospital by treating health care workers with kindness and respect. Help create a

#CULTUREOF CARE

in your hospital.

Remember:

- ✓ Hospitals are places of healing. Disrespectful, aggressive, abusive, or violent behaviors or actions towards staff, patients, and visitors are not tolerated.
- ✓ Assault isn't just physical. Threatening, discriminatory, bullying, disrespectful, or offensive language towards staff, patients, and visitors is assault.
- ✓ Don't take photos or videos of patients, visitors, and/or staff without permission.
- ✓ Don't disrupt other patients' care or experience.



¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9206999/>

² <https://www.ormanager.com/briefs/2022-statistics-on-healthcare-workplace-violence/#:~:text=According%20to%20data%20from%20Press,majority%20of%20attackers%20were%20patients>

³ <https://www.securitymagazine.com/articles/97590-92-of-healthcare-workers-experienced-workplace-violence-in-april-2022>

⁴ <https://www.ormanager.com/briefs/2022-statistics-on-healthcare-workplace-violence/#:~:text=According%20to%20data%20from%20Press,majority%20of%20attackers%20were%20patients>

⁵ <https://iahssf.org/assets/2022-IAHSS-Foundation-Crime-Survey.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.mercer.us/content/dam/mercer/assets/content-images/north-america/united-states/us-healthcare-news/us-2021-healthcare-labor-market-whitepaper.pdf>

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