

# HPAE. Putting care first.

## HPAE Convention 2016 Resolution #4

### **Petition the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) for a Workplace Violence Prevention Standard for all Healthcare Workers**

**WHEREAS**, the healthcare and social assistance sector accounted for 52% of all reported workplace violence events causing injuries resulting in days away from work in 2014 according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics; and

**WHEREAS**, Bureau of Labor Statistics data indicates the problem is worsening significantly. Rates of workplace violence increased by 64% between 2005 and 2014 in private sector facilities, with rates for private sector hospitals climbing by 110%, and

**WHEREAS**, these statistics represent only a fraction of all assaults, threats, and verbal abuse experienced by healthcare workers. Studies cited by the GAO estimate that only 12 to 40% of workers formally reported an incident of workplace violence to their employer; and

**WHEREAS**, it has been 20 years since OSHA first issued voluntary guidelines to encourage healthcare and social assistance employers to develop comprehensive workplace violence prevention programs. We have found little evidence to suggest that many employers have implemented such programs; and

**WHEREAS**, workplace violence is a serious concern for our members. Workplace assaults, threats, verbal abuse and bullying impact every HPAE local.

Therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that HPAE will encourage its members and healthcare workers throughout the state of New Jersey and southeastern Pennsylvania to join with the AFT Nurses and Health Professionals in petitioning OSHA for a federal standard to protect healthcare workers from workplace violence. The standard should require healthcare employers to establish and maintain comprehensive workplace violence prevention programs with genuine worker and union involvement and include the following elements:

- Written workplace violence prevention programs that also address bullying and harassment specific to the risk factors and characteristics of the healthcare setting; and
- Genuine worker and union involvement in the development and implementation of the program through a joint committee; and
- Healthcare facility analysis to identify hazards and conditions, including the tracking of violent incidents and threats; and
- Implementation and evaluation of engineering and administrative controls specific to the existing hazards; and
- Development of a user-friendly reporting system, training for workers on the need to report all incidents, and requirements that prevent reprisals to workers for reporting; and
- Training appropriate to all workers' specific occupational needs; and
- Evaluation and recordkeeping to improve the effectiveness of the program on an on-going basis; and

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**RESOLVED**, that HP AE will educate members about the importance of reporting all workplace violence to the employer, including assaults, near misses, threats, and verbal abuse. We will encourage bargaining for user-friendly reporting systems and reprisal-free reporting.

**RESOLVED**, that HP AE will educate members about their right to report assaults to the police and press charges.

Submitted by HP AE Local 5091