

**MEMBERALERT:**

**State agency issues health and safety citation against Cornerstone**

On October 31, 2018, the New Jersey Office of Public Employees’ Occupational Safety and Health (PEOSH) issued a citation against Cornerstone Behavioral Health Hospital resulting from a health and safety complaint filed by our union, the Health Professionals and Allied Employees.

We filed our complaint after several incidents where **nurses and other hospital employees were victims of workplace violence while providing patient care.** Prior to issuing the notice, PEOSH conducted an inspection of the facility in August and interviewed staff including our union representatives.

**PEOSH found the following serious violations at Cornerstone:**

1. The hospital had a generic Workplace Violence Prevention Plan which failed to conduct an analysis of incidents from the past year or update their plan as a result of the analysis.
2. The hospital identified multiple instances of serious injuries reported based on the NJOSH 300 Logs of Work Related Injuries and Illnesses provided for 2015, 2016, 2017 and for the period of 1/1/18-8/8/18.

**PEOSH has directed Cornerstone to correct these violations by February 5, 2019 or face penalties of up to $7,000 per day, however the hospital has 15 days to appeal the decision.**

The hospital administration must be more willing to listen to our front-line nurses and other hospital employees and bargain in good faith with our union. We’ve made numerous proposals in an attempt to address health and safety concerns to ensure the hospital is more prepared to care for potentially violent patients that may enter the facility.

Priscilla Surles, RN

President, HPAE Local 5112