
Efforts to Prevent Workplace Violence against Nurses

By CAPT Marilyn Ridenour, BSN, MPH and Dan Hartley, Ed.D.

I am Captain Marilyn Lou Ridenour, and I became a nurse in 1985. I enjoyed taking care of patients and never expected to be exposed to workplace violence, especially from my colleagues. During my tenure in a cardiology unit I was subjected to bullying by other nurses in my unit. I never want another nurse to experience bullying like I did. To prevent this from happening, I made it my mission to do everything in my power to put a stop to healthcare workplace violence. My first step in this journey was to get my Masters of Public Health in 2002 from the University of Pittsburgh.

From 2005 to 2007, I worked in the Epidemic Intelligence Service Training Program as a nurse epidemiologist in the Analysis and Field Evaluation Branch of the Division of Safety Research, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). NIOSH is where I met my co-author, Dan Hartley. Together, we collaborated on research focusing on workplace violence in the healthcare sector. Currently, we are co-project officers for the Workplace Violence Prevention for Nurses online training course and the Workplace Prevention Programs in New Jersey Health Care Facilities Project.



The Workplace Violence Prevention for Nurses online course covers workplace violence prevalence by typology, consequences, risk factors, prevention strategies and intervention strategies, and post incident response in the healthcare setting. Each unit is introduced by excerpts from interviews with actual nurses sharing their experiences with workplace violence. Concepts presented throughout the course are reinforced by reenactments of five real-life case studies, including:

- An agitated psychiatric patient in the Emergency Department
- The husband of a post-partum patient is abusive to his wife's nurse
- The patient of a home health nurse threatens her with physical harm
- Nurses working in a long-term care facility encounter abusive behavior from facility residents
- A frustrated patient expresses anger at a nursing assistant, and then surprises her with a sexual advance

The NIOSH online course offers nurses the opportunity to earn 2.6 free continuing education units. To access the course, visit: [Violence Training](#).

Since the course was first released to the public in August 2013, over 11,000 nurses have completed it for continuing education units. We are developing additional units for the online course that relate specifically to prevention of violence in emergency departments, psychiatric units, long-term care facilities, stand-alone healthcare facilities, and field-based occupations such as home health/social services, and emergency responders. I take personal satisfaction in knowing that an additional unit is being developed that will focus on prevention of bullying in healthcare.

Dan Hartley and I are co-project officers on another healthcare violence-related project that is evaluating the effectiveness of the Workplace Violence Prevention Programs in the September 2011 New Jersey Healthcare Facilities Act. As part of a two-pronged approach, we interviewed the Workplace Violence Prevention Committee Chair in 50 New Jersey hospitals regarding the comprehensiveness of their workplace violence prevention programs. In addition, we independently surveyed nurses to assess the following: their knowledge of the New Jersey regulations, whether they received the training components mandated in the regulations, and their experiences with verbal and physical assaults in the previous year. Data analysis is ongoing, and we expect the results to be released in 2016.

I am also a member on the American Nurses Association (ANA) Workplace Violence, Incivility and Bullying Panel Steering Committee that is developing a position statement and detailed guidance addressing workplace violence for registered nurses and employers worldwide. The draft document closed for public comment on April 30, 2015. The position statement will be published later this year and will be available on the ANA website at: [Nursing World](http://www.nursingworld.org).

Featured Award Recipient

Congratulations to Rebecca S. Noe who received the **Nurse Responder Of the Year Award** by the United States Commissioned Corps. The awardees are nominated by a Chief Professional Officer, and selected based on their impact on public health preparedness and response, career contributions to emergency preparedness and/or disaster response, roles in deployment impact, preparedness and response training and education, and preparedness and response publications and presentations in the public arena.



Pictured above is Rebecca S. Noe with Suleiman Haladu, MD, graduate of the Nigerian Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training program in Nigeria in 2009.

As a nurse and epidemiologist, Rebecca S. Noe has dedicated her professional career to public health and emergency preparedness, and this award reflects her hard work and dedication to improving disaster-related responses. Specifically, Rebecca has identified critical intersections between agencies, programs, and process used to respond to disasters, and expanded the knowledge to improve and advance health disaster response.

Before becoming a public health nurse, Rebecca worked as a traveling nurse, spending most of her career in the emergency department. In her free time, Rebecca loves to explore, from Alaska to the Grand Canyon. Other highlights of Noe's career in environmental health include:

- Organized a CASPER or use "community door-to-door assessment" to explore the effectiveness of a new regional extreme cold weather warning among the residents of North Dakota in collaboration with National Weather Service and North Dakota Department of Public Health;
- Collaborated on a study at Grand Canyon National Park to address the health effects of extreme heat exposure of inner canyon hikers;
- Served as key liaison between CDC and the American Red Cross during several national disasters, including Hurricane Sandy;
- Deployed to Liberia to assist with the Ebola epidemic

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President's Corner

Ariane Reeves
CNWG President



It's officially summer, generally a time for an easier pace and hopefully a vacation! I know that work/life balance is sometimes difficult to achieve here at CDC/ATSDR. Here's hoping that you take a moment to recharge, either by relaxing on vacation or by learning something new that makes your job easier or sparks a new passion for your work.

Speaking of learning something new, we cohosted, with the Office of the Associate Director for Policy, a very successful Policy Series event with Susan Hassmiller, Senior Advisor for Nursing, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, in celebration of National Nurses Week in May. Look for more information about this event in this edition. The CNWG Executive Committee is busy following up on action items that grew out of the event and subsequent meetings with CIO leadership across the agency. Stay tuned for more information in the coming months!

Here's another learning opportunity! The CNWG Education Committee is hosting the first in a series of CNWG Seminars from 12:00 – 1:00 pm ET on Tuesday, June 30th, entitled ***"Experiences in Applying a Conceptual Framework for Identifying, Planning and Improving Evidence-Based Practice"***. Check your calendar for this event and hope to see you there, either in person or virtually! We will be offering CNE. Feel free to share with colleagues as well.

We are also in the early stages of developing a CDC Nurse Re-entry curriculum and practical experience for CDC/ATSDR nurses who have a lapsed license and wish to obtain a Georgia nursing license. CNWG members are working with the Georgia Board of Nursing and hope to have this in place by the end of year.

Hopefully you completed the CNWG strategic planning survey we recently sent out. If you haven't yet, please take a few moments to do so! Click here to take the survey: [Strategic Planning Survey](#). **The deadline to reply is June 26, 2015.** We will use this information for a strategic planning meeting later this summer with an expected outcome of having a five-year strategic plan for CNWG. More information on this process will be featured in the next newsletter.