Description

Aggression in the acute hospital setting is a common occurrence that can put the patient, staff, other patients, and visitors at risk of harm. Accreditation Canada and the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act have recognized the importance of preventing violent workplace incidents as part of achieving excellence in safe patient care and promoting a safe workplace environment. Thus, Humber River Hospital (HRH) embarked on a quality improvement (QI) initiative to increase staff and patient safety through the prompt assessment of patient risk of violence and sharing of real-time information regarding patient level of aggression.

Aim

To assess and monitor a patient’s risk of violence.

Actions Taken

Through interprofessional collaboration and consultations with other healthcare organizations, the violence assessment tool (VAT) was integrated into the HRH electronic health record (EHR). A flagging system utilizing VAT electronic documentation was also developed for the real-time sharing of patient violence risk.

Summary of Results

Six months after implementation, survey results from select inpatient units showed that 86% of nurses found the VAT to be effective at identifying and flagging the risk of violence. Next steps include evaluating patient satisfaction with quality of care and predicting potential physical violent incidents by identifying particular behavioural cues.