



Mandatory On-Line In-Service  
For All GMHA Employees  
including physicians, students,  
and volunteers



**Please read and follow the  
DIRECTIONS  
below before starting this in-service.:**

- Read each slide carefully.
- Follow the arrows at the bottom of each slide



= continue to next slide



= return to previous slide



# BULLYING IN THE WORKPLACE

**Objectives:** Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Differentiate bullying from other forms of negative workplace behavior
2. Discuss why bullying is so prevalent in the healthcare environment
3. List characteristics that are common to targets and bullies
4. Recognize bullying behavior
5. Identify the consequences of bullying
6. Practice strategies for successfully dealing with bullying



# What is it?

**Definition of workplace bullying:** Bullying is usually seen as acts or verbal comments that could “mentally” hurt or isolate a person in the workplace. Sometimes, bullying can involve negative physical contact as well. Bullying usually involves repeated incidents or a pattern of behavior that is intended to intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate a particular person or group of people. It has also been described as the assertion of power through aggression.

**Is bullying a workplace issue?** - Yes, bullying is a workplace issue. However, it is sometimes hard to know if bullying is happening at the workplace. Many studies acknowledge that there is a “fine line” between strong management and bullying. Comments that are objective and are intended to provide constructive feedback are not usually considered bullying, but rather are intended to assist the employee with their work.



# What is it? (Continuation)

As described by WorkSafe BC, bullying and harassing behavior does not include:

- Offer Expressing differences of opinion.
- Offering constructive feedback, guidance, or advice about work-related behavior.
- Reasonable action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers or the place of employment (e.g., managing a worker's performance, taking reasonable disciplinary actions, or assigning work).

There is no way to predict who may be the bully or target.

Many healthcare workers are subjected to bullying from co-workers, managers, physicians and/or clients. Bullying occurs in all sectors of healthcare and is a significant, under-reported occupational health and safety issue. Bullying has a profound effect on targets, witnesses, clients, healthcare organizations and bullies themselves. Zero tolerance for workplace violence policies exist, however, these policies are often not enforced.

Healthcare workers have a responsibility to learn to successfully deal with bullying on a personal level and to help transform the healthcare environment into a safe place to work and receive care. Bully-free organizations will see a reduction in costs and improvement in patient safety.



# What Are Examples of Bullying

While bullying is a form of aggression, the actions can be both obvious and subtle. It is important to note that the following is not a checklist, nor does it mention all forms of bullying. This list is included as a way of showing some of the ways bullying may happen in a workplace. Also remember that bullying is usually considered to be a pattern of behavior where one or more incidents will help show that bullying is taking place.

Examples include:

- Intimidating a person.
- Belittling a person's opinions.
- Spreading rumors, gossip or innuendo.
- Physically abusing or threatening abuse.
- Excluding or isolating someone socially.
- Unwarranted (or undeserved) punishment.
- Criticizing a person persistently or constantly.
- Underwork – creating a feeling of uselessness.
- Removing areas of responsibilities without cause.
- Falsely accused someone of errors not actually made.
- Blocking applications for training, leave or promotion.
- Undermining or deliberately impeding a person's work.



# More Examples of Bullying

- ❑ Encouraged people to turn against the person being tormented.  
(in a way that creates unnecessary pressure)
- ❑ Intruding on a person's privacy by pestering, spying or stalking.
- ❑ Tampering with a person's personal belongings or work equipment.
- ❑ Establishing possible deadlines that will set up the individual to fail.
- ❑ Making jokes that are obviously offensive by spoken word or e-mail.
- ❑ Exhibited presumably uncontrolled mood swings in front of the group.
- ❑ Harshly and constantly criticized, having a different standard for the target.
- ❑ Yelling, screaming, throwing tantrums in front of others to humiliate a person.
- ❑ Stared, glared, was nonverbally intimidating and was clearly showing hostility.
- ❑ Assigning unreasonable duties or workload which are unfavorable to one person
- ❑ Withholding necessary information or purposefully giving the wrong information.
- ❑ Unjustly discounted the person's thoughts or feelings ("oh, that's silly) in meetings.
- ❑ Singled out and isolated one person from other co-workers, either socially or physically.



# Nurse Bullying Acts Examples

- Sarcasm
- Demeaning
- Verbal abuse
- Setting up to fail
- Continual criticism
- Isolating individuals
- Physical abuse (rare)
- Undermining of work
- Destroying confidence
- Disadvantaging the target
- Interfering in work practices
- Fabricating complaints (false accusations)

If you are not sure an action or statement could be considered bullying, you can use the “reasonable person” test. Would most people consider the action unacceptable?



# How Can Bullying Affect An Individual?

People who are targets of bullying may experience a range of effects. These reactions include:

- Shock
- Anger
- Loss of confidence
- Family tension and stress
- Low morale and productivity
- Increased sense of vulnerability
- Feelings of frustration and/or helplessness
- Panic or anxiety, especially about going to work.
- Psychosomatic symptoms such as "stomach pains," and/or "headaches."
- Physical symptoms such as "inability to sleep," and/or "loss of appetite."



# How can bullying affect the workplace?

Bullying affects the overall “health” of an organization. An “unhealthy” workplace can have many effects. In general these include:

- Increased stress
- Decreased morale
- Increased turnover
- Increased absenteeism
- Poor customer service
- Increased risk for accidents/incidents
- Decreased productivity and motivation
- Reduced corporate image and customer confidence
- Increased cost for employee assistance programs (EAP's), recruitment, etc.



# Forms of Workplace Bullying

- ❑ **Serial bullying** – The source of all dysfunction can be traced to one individual, who picks on one employee after another destroys them, then moves on. Probably the most common type of bullying.
- ❑ **Secondary bullying** – The pressure of having to deal with a serial bully causes the general behavior to decline and sink to the lowest level.
- ❑ **Pair bullying** – This takes place with two people, one active and verbal, the other often watching and listening.
- ❑ **Gang bullying or group bullying** – Is a serial bully with colleagues. Gangs can occur anywhere, but flourish in corporate bullying climates. It is often called mobbing and usually involves scapegoating and victimization.
- ❑ **Vicarious bullying** – Two parties are encouraged to fight. This is the typical “triangulation” where the aggression gets passed around.
- ❑ **Regulation bullying** – Where a serial bully fights their target to comply with rules, regulations, procedures or laws regardless of their appropriateness, applicability or necessity.
- ❑ **Legal bullying** – The bringing of a vexatious legal action to control and punish a person.



# Forms of Workplace Bullying (Continuation)

- ❑ **Pressure bullying or unwitting bullying** – Having to work to unrealistic time scales or inadequate resources.
- ❑ **Corporate bullying** – Where an employer abuses an employee with impunity, knowing the law is weak and the job market is soft.
- ❑ **Organizational bullying** – A combination of pressure bullying and corporate bullying. Occurs when an organization struggles to adapt to changing markets, reduced income, cuts in budgets, imposed expectations and other extreme pressures.
- ❑ **Institutional bullying** – Entrenched and is accepted as part of the culture.
- ❑ **Client bullying** – An employee is bullied by those they serve, for instance subway attendants or public servants.
- ❑ **Cyberbullying** – The use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.



# Are There Laws Addressing Bullying on Guam?

Yes, 17 Guam Code Annotated  
(GCA) 3112.1

Policy against bullying



# What Can You Do If You Think You Are Being Bullied?

If you feel that you are being bullied, discriminated against, victimized or subjected to any form of harassment:

## Employee's Responsibilities:

### **DO:**

- Firmly tell the person that his or her behavior is not acceptable and ask them to **STOP!**
- If the behavior does not stop, talk to your supervisor.
- Keep a factual journal or diary of daily events. Record the date, time and what happened in as much detail as possible.  
Names of witnesses and the outcome of the event.  
Remember, it is not just the character of incidents, but the number, frequency and especially the pattern that can reveal the bullying or harassment.



# What Can You Do If You Think You Are Being Bullied? (Continuation)

- ❑ Keep copies of any letters, memos, emails, faxes, etc., received from the person.
- ❑ Report the harassment to the person identified in your workplace policy: Your supervisor, Human Resources or the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer. If your concerns are minimized, proceed to the next level of management.

## **DO NOT:**

- ❑ **DO NOT RETALIATE:** You may end up looking like the perpetrator and will most certainly cause confusion for those responsible for evaluating and responding to the situation.



# What Are Some General Tips For The Workplace?

## Manager's/Supervisor's Responsibilities:

### **DO:**

- ❑ ENCOURAGE everyone at the workplace to act towards others in a respectful and professional manner.
- ❑ HAVE a workplace policy in place that includes a reporting system. (GMHA Policy A-LD500 – Behaviors That Undermine a Culture of Safety)
- ❑ EDUCATE everyone that bullying is a serious matter. EDUCATE everyone about what is considered bullying, and whom they can go to for help.
- ❑ TRY TO WORK OUT solutions before the situation gets serious or “out of control.”
- ❑ TREAT all complaints seriously, and deal with complaints promptly and confidentially.
- ❑ TRAIN Supervisors and managers in how to deal with complaints and potential situations. Encourage them to address situations promptly whether or not a formal complaint has been filed.
- ❑ HAVE an impartial third party help with the resolution, if necessary.

### **DO NOT:**

- ❑ DO NOT IGNORE any potential problems.
- ❑ DO NOT DELAY resolution. Act as soon as possible.



# What To Do If You Are Experiencing Persistent Bullying

Refer to GMHA Administrative Policy No. A-LD 500  
– Behaviors that Undermine a Culture of Safety.

- ❑ 1. Report by activating Code 60
- ❑ 2. Written reporting of the incident either to the immediate supervisor or SLS (Safety Learning System)



# ***This is the end of the presentation!***

**Your next step is:**

1. See your supervisor or department manager for your **written exam**.
2. To pass the exam, you must score **70%**.
3. You **must** sign at the bottom of your exam when done.
4. **Supervisor, please sign at the bottom** – your signature would acknowledge that your employee reviewed the on-line in-service and completed the exam.