

# THE Accent

Prince Edward Island Union of Public Sector Employees

## Workplace Violence Survey: Results

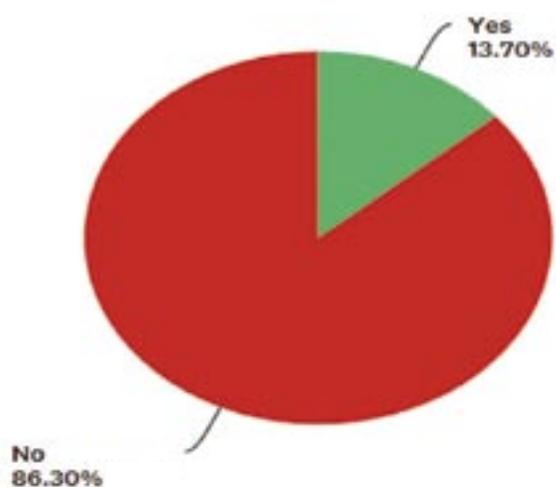
Over the past three years, the PEI Union of Public Sector Employees has been working to raise awareness about workplace violence in health care facilities. We have had many incident reports from our members, and as a result of this have voiced our concerns with government - numerous times.

Recently, UPSE conducted a workplace violence survey of Resident Care Workers, Patient Care Workers and Licensed Practical Nurses working in the health system. The results were alarming but not surprising: **90% of these front-line health care workers have experienced violence in the workplace.** This includes physical violence (hitting, biting, pushing, kicking, etc.), verbal abuse (swearing, threats, name calling and yelling) and sexual harassment.

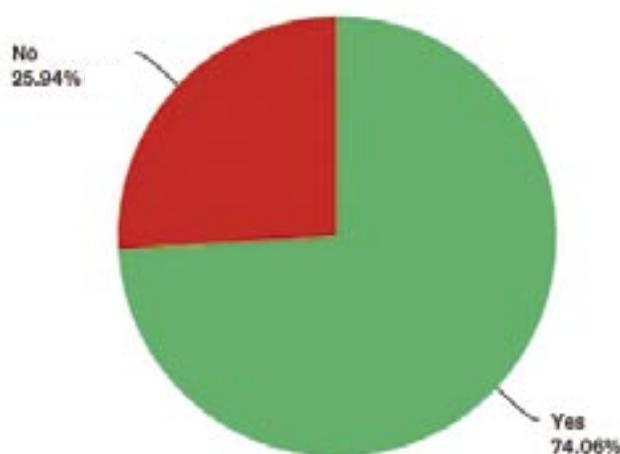
The violence health care workers experience most often comes from the clients they are providing care for. Many of these clients are experiencing dementia at an earlier age and are physically stronger. Further, there is now less emphasis placed on restraint protocols (which includes medication) in acute care, long term care and home care environments.

The survey asked workers about how to reduce workplace violence in health facilities. The most frequent responses indicated that more staff is required, appropriate medication should be used, and workers need more training. The results also showed that front-line health care workers do not feel supported by management with **86% reporting that their employer does not do enough to prevent violence in their workplace** (continued on next page).

**Does your employer do enough to prevent workplace violence in your workplace?**



**Do you think the incident could have been prevented?**



Note to members distributing The Accent:

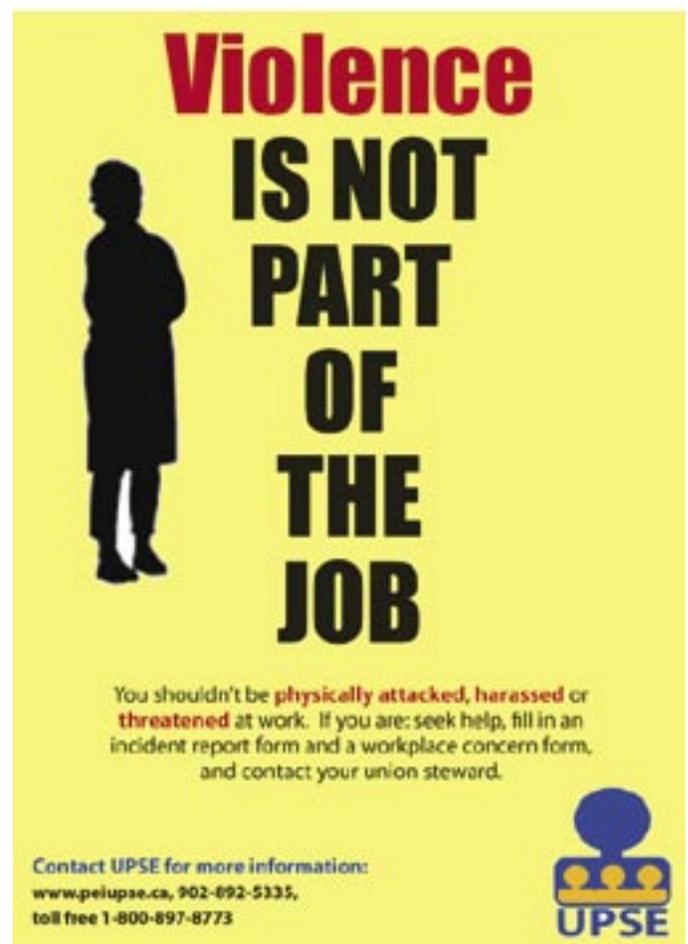
Because the material contained in this publication is often of a time-sensitive nature, please post or distribute it as soon as possible.

*PEI UPSE is proud to represent over 5000 members in the public and private sectors.*

I recently met with representatives of government and Health PEI to discuss the results of the survey. Workplace violence is not acceptable and there has to be changes made within the health care system to deal with this serious issue. These changes must happen now before any more of our members are injured.

The survey asked those who had seen or experienced workplace violence whether they thought the incident could have been prevented - **74% believed the incident was preventable.** In other words, workplace violence is not simply a given and in many instances can be prevented through improved workplace health and safety.

My message has always been that the provision of a safe workplace is ultimately the employer's responsibility. Our members are working in unsafe worksites and are facing violent clients without the resources required to provide a safe working environment, not only for our members, but for the other clientele living in these facilities.



The issue of workplace violence is complex; however, the bottom line is that no one should have to go to work on a daily basis expecting to be assaulted. UPSE will launch a campaign to build more awareness about workplace violence in the early fall of 2019. This issue affects front-line health care workers, patients and residents, and their families. Workplace violence is not **"just part of the job"** and it's time for change!

Karen Jackson  
President, UPSE

## Call for Directors (Vacant Positions)

UPSE's *Membership Services Committee* has issued a call for nominations for two vacant Director positions in local 12. Nomination forms are available to print from the union's website ([www.peiupse.ca](http://www.peiupse.ca)), or call UPSE at 902-892-5335 (toll free 1-800-897-8773), or e-mail ([peiupse@peiupse.ca](mailto:peiupse@peiupse.ca)).

To be eligible for nomination as a Director a member must:

- be in good standing for at least the previous twelve months (1 yr)
- be nominated by a member in good standing of the applicable local
- have completed the Welcome to UPSE or equivalent course

All nominations must be received at the union office by 4:00 pm on August 30, 2019. A biography must be included with the nomination form (mandatory).

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