



ENVIRONMENT OF CARE NEWSLETTER June 2013



Employee Safety and Footwear

During Safety rounds last week it was noticed that with the warmer weather upon the Verde Valley many employees are changing out their footwear. While we want everyone to be comfortable, we do have to remember that our choices need to meet hospital policy for the job we are performing and are safe.

HR Policy for Professional Attire and Appearance (HR 10-5) specifically states: **“Shoes** must provide safe, secure footing and offer protection against hazards including icy or snow covered walkways. Shoes should be appropriate for the work being performed by the employee and not impair them from performing their work activities. Beach-type thongs and sandals are not permitted. Open-toed shoes/sandals are not permitted for patient care services positions.”

Violations we observed and asked for correction: two employees wearing flip flops; an employee running in high heels across the stone islands in the parking lot; an employee walking off the side of her “kitten heel” shoes and one employee walking out of and then tripping over their open backed shoes.



A MESSAGE FROM... PATTY HAMEL, RN in Employee Health...

Protect Your Eyes from Exposure to Bloodborne pathogens

In review of employee exposure reports, the number of cases with Blood and OPIM (other potentially infectious material) exposures to our employee's eyes is on the rise at VVMC.

Last month in May, we had four mucus membrane (eye) exposures to blood, urine, and bile. That is the same number of mucus membrane exposures we had for *entire year* of 2012. In only one of the four exposures were goggles worn. However, in the other three cases employee's reported that goggles were available in their pocket or locker at the time of the splash/exposure.

Per OSHA regulation 1910.1030 and our Infection Control policy 16.311: **“when splashes, sprays, splatters or droplets of blood or OPIM pose a hazard to the eyes, nose or mouth, then masks *in conjunction with eye protection* (such as goggles or glasses with solid side shields) or chin-length face shields must be worn.”**

As a reminder: *Please wear goggles* whenever there is an *anticipated* risk for exposure to blood, body fluids or chemicals. Carry and wear your goggles — Let's remember to protect our eyes! Goggles are available at the Employee Health and Infection Prevention offices.

Educational Opportunities:

The EOC Committee is sponsoring a two upcoming training sessions that are open to all employees. Seating is limited so please get your RSVP in early!

I. CRISIS PREVENTION TRAINING



When: June 7th from 0800-1600

Where: Conf Room A

This program is considered the worldwide standard for crisis prevention and intervention training. The training has a didactic portion that helps students learn how to organize their thinking about how behavior escalates and then how to respond appropriately during the moments of chaos. While the class focuses on ways to utilize nonviolent crisis intervention methodologies to address escalating behaviors, the afternoon session also contains a "hands on" portion where the instructor works with students to demonstrate and review how to defend your patients and yourself.

Last day to RSVP: Thursday June 6th at noon (5 openings remain)

II. Drug Recognition Training



When: Wednesday July 10th from 8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Where: Conference Room B.

This training will be presented by Cottonwood Police Dept and will include information on:

- Local drug trends.
- An overview of physiology and drugs.
- Drug combinations and their effects.
- Observing and documenting clinical signs and symptoms of the drug-impaired employee.

This training will assist staff in recognizing the drug-impaired employee or visitors and to assist in identifying street drugs or illegal substances found on campus.

Last day to RSVP: June 18, 2013 (25 openings remain)



Avoid Workplace Violence

It is a sad fact that healthcare workers who help ill and injured people are frequently the victims of violence.

While VVMC has safety and security plans in place to help make VVMC a safe work environment, there are things you can do to help protect yourself and coworkers from workplace violence.

1. **Learn about the particular risks in your work area** – for example, do you work in the ED where you may be dealing with patients who are intoxicated, mentally ill, frightened or are in pain? Then you understand that you may encounter patients/visitors or even coworkers who are stressed and may exhibit escalating behaviors. How do you handle these events? Learn what systems are in place in your department to call for help. Learn what policies or protocols your department implements that address escalating situations. Learn your departmental escape route. Attend educational opportunities that will help you learn how to respond to these events.
2. **Learn about your departmental and the facility security equipment and procedures that are in place for your protection** – At VVMC we have multiple systems in place – to name a few...Alarm buttons, identification badges, secured access/egress doors, security escorts, patient safety attendants, Code Kardexes (to announce alerts). VVMC performs ongoing assessments of our environment and works diligently to keep our environment safe for all employees, patients and visitors.
3. **Learn to recognize signs of potential violence in patients, visitors or fellow coworkers (Observe body language)** – have you watched the required Workplace Violence video on the LMS system? This short 10 minute video covers Workplace Violence and signs and symptoms of escalating behaviors. Have you read the NAH Human Resources policy HR 09-05 on Workplace Violence? It is clearly stated that NAH maintains a **zero** tolerance regarding workplace violence and gives you guidance on how to report Workplace Violence, Use de-escalation techniques, and call a Code Gray for assistance. Participate in the ongoing safety lectures and programs announced by email or in newsletters (i.e.: CPI Training and Drug Recognition training)
4. **Use a "Buddy System" to avoid being alone with a violent/aggressive patient/visitor/coworker** – If a coworker is unavailable or if the patient/visitor or coworker is making threats, call security for assistance (For offsite locations, call "911" for police assistance).
5. **Be aware of your environment** – know your exit points; know what in your environment could be used as a weapon – avoid wearing scarves, jewelry, necklaces that could be used to harm you or wearing footwear that would make it difficult for you to run away from an attacker
6. **Never bypass security systems** – do not trade or allow someone else to use your identification badge, do not allow unauthorized persons to enter a secured area or prop these doors open, secured areas need to refer to security cameras to see who is trying to access your unit before unlocking the doors, do not give out passwords, codes or keys to secured items for example: computers-Pyxis units- locked doors or carts.
7. **Report unusual activity** – Report ALL suspicious activity to Security or for offsite locations, call the Police.
8. **Trust your instincts** – If you suspect something is wrong, get to a safe area and call for help (call Security)

In addition to these strategies, remember to always follow the **A – B – C's of Safety and Security** listed below:

AWARENESS...

- Keep your eyes open and be alert
- Know your environment: what belongs – what doesn't belong (anything/anyone looks suspicious?)
- Know where your closest exit, phone, fire extinguisher, fire pull station and Code Kardex are located
- Know how to contact your Director and Security

BADGING...

- All employees are to display/wear their hospital identification whenever they are at work
- If someone is unfamiliar to you and they are entering your department, do not be afraid to ask the person to identify themselves
- When entering a secured area, always check to make sure that there is not an unauthorized person trying to enter the unit behind you
- Never give your badge-passwords-keys to others

CHALLENGING

- Ask yourself: Is that person supposed to be here?
- If someone looks lost - Ask the person: May I help you?
- If someone looks suspicious – contact Security

If anything or anyone looks suspicious – call Security

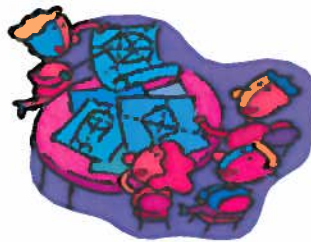
If a person's behavior is escalating or getting out of control – call Security

The best way to contact Security for these situations is to use the hospital phone system and dial "0" – ask the PBX Operator to dispatch security to your location. (For offsite locations – please contact the local Police Department by dialing "911").



Respiratory Fit Testing

OSHA requires that all employees who have direct patient care be fit tested ANNUALLY for a respirator. Patty Hamel, RN Employee Health wants to send a special "Thank You" out to the 200 employees who have completed this requirement and to the remaining staff that needs to have fit testing performed a reminder to please call her to set up an appointment to complete this annual requirement. Plan to set aside about 20 minutes for the test and 10 minutes for paperwork.



"PREPAREDNESS"

VVMC participated in the Statewide Disaster Exercise held on May 22, 2013. The scenario involved a prolonged statewide power outage. VVMC had to respond to injects involving scenarios that the hospital (and other facilities across the state) were facing and determine how we would mobilize to address this disaster and respond to other facilities who were trying to send patients to us and VVMC needing to transfer or discharge out certain patient populations that were in-house. This was a daylong event and I would like to send a special THANK YOU out to all the Hospital Incident Command Staff and their delegates (both inside and outside the Command Center) who participated.

VVMC demonstrated strength in the creativity to handle the injects delivered to us in a timely manner as well as identifying resources to handle events we have never faced before but are now addressing in our preparedness plans by developing Memo's of Understanding (MOU's) with vendors that we do not currently have in place.

VVMC will once again be participating in the Functional Statewide Disaster Exercise in November. This exercise is designed to bring together the hospitals and clinics across the state who receives preparedness funding from the HPP grant to work with other First Responders (Police, Fire, EMS and Public Health). We do not have specifics on the event YET but we do know that VVMC will be extending the exercise scenario to include units/departments outside of the Hospital Incident Command Center.

The important part of VVMC participating in these and our own scripted exercises is to test the effectiveness of our policies, procedures, resources and personnel in the event of a disaster. We are NOT looking at a pass/fail system for evaluating our response but for the identification of educational opportunities to improve the training and education of staff, to streamline our policies to address the response VVMC can effectively perform and to evaluate the availability of needed resources in both a short-term or prolonged disaster event.