



Improving Workplace Safety in Nursing Homes: A Resource List for Users of the AHRQ Workplace Safety Supplemental Item Set

Purpose

This document includes references to websites and other publicly available resources nursing homes can use to improve workplace safety for staff. While this resource list is not exhaustive, it is designed to give initial guidance to nursing homes seeking information about workplace safety initiatives.

How To Use This Resource List

Resources are listed in alphabetical order, organized by the Surveys on Patient Safety Culture™ (SOPS®) composite measures assessed in the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) [Workplace Safety Supplemental Item Set](#) for the SOPS [Nursing Home Survey](#), followed by general resources. For easy access to the resources, keep the file open rather than printing it in hard copy, because many of the website URLs are hyperlinked.

Feedback: To provide feedback or suggestions for resources you would like added to the list or if you have questions, email SafetyCultureSurveys@westat.com.

NOTE: The resources included in this document do not constitute an endorsement by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), AHRQ, or any of their employees. HHS does not attest to the accuracy of information provided by linked sites.

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I. Resources by Composite Measure

The following resources are designed to help nursing homes improve areas of organizational culture assessed by the composite measures included in the AHRQ SOPS Workplace Safety Supplemental Item Set for Nursing Homes.

Composite Measure 1. Protection From Workplace Hazards

1. **CDC’s Core Infection Prevention and Control Practices for Safe Healthcare Delivery in All Settings**

https://www.cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/guidelines/core-practices/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fhicpac%2Frecommendations%2Fcore-practices.html

This document describes a core set of infection prevention and control practices that are required in all healthcare settings. The practices were selected from existing Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations and represent fundamental standards of care that are not expected to change based on emerging evidence or to be regularly altered by changes in technology or practices. In addition, they are applicable across healthcare settings.

2. **CDC Train Module 4 – Infection Surveillance**

<https://www.train.org/cdctrain/course/1081802/> (requires free account setup and login)

This guide provides ideas and lessons learned to improve the well-being of the healthcare workforce, including actions that individuals, leaders, and organizations can take to support the healthcare workforce during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

3. **Hand Hygiene Technical Reference Manual**

[https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/integrated-health-services-\(ihs\)/hand-hygiene/monitoring/9789241598606_eng.pdf?sfvrsn=f0870e7e_11](https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/integrated-health-services-(ihs)/hand-hygiene/monitoring/9789241598606_eng.pdf?sfvrsn=f0870e7e_11)

This manual has been developed for use in any healthcare facility to assist healthcare workers to implement improvements in their facility as part of a multimodal strategy and in accordance with the World Health Organization (WHO) Guidelines on Hand Hygiene in Health Care.

4. **Infection Prevention and Control Toolkit for Successful Hand Hygiene and Personal Protective Equipment Programs**

<https://spice.unc.edu/hhppetoolkit/>

This toolkit designed by the North Carolina Statewide Program for Infection Control and Epidemiology guides users in how to establish successful hand hygiene and personal protective equipment programs. The toolkit bundles several resources that can be used jointly or separately, based on a specific healthcare setting’s needs.

5. **Preventing the Spread of COVID-19**

<https://www.ahrq.gov/nursing-home/materials/prevention/index.html>

For nursing homes to effectively prevent the spread of COVID-19, AHRQ has provided information on a variety of topics related to infection control and prevention strategies for cleaning and disinfecting the environment, using personal protective equipment, and more.

6. **The How-To's of Hand Hygiene: AHRQ Safety Program for Long-Term Care: HAIs/CAUTI**

<https://www.ahrq.gov/hai/quality/tools/cauti-ltc/modules/implementation/education-bundles/infection-prevention/hand-hygiene/hand-hygiene-slides.html>

AHRQ created this training module for hand hygiene in long-term care facilities. Upon module completion, staff will understand:

- The importance of hand hygiene in preventing the spread of infections.
- When and how to perform hand hygiene.
- Key hand hygiene practices for the prevention of healthcare-associated infections.

Composite Measure 2. Moving, Transferring, or Lifting Residents

1. **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Resources**

a. **Safe Lifting and Movement of Nursing Home Residents**

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2006-117/pdfs/2006-117.pdf?id=10.26616/NIOSH PUB2006117>

The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has developed this guide for nursing home owners, administrators, nurse managers, safety and health professionals, and workers interested in establishing a safe resident lifting program. NIOSH, the Veterans' Health Administration, and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee have conducted research on safe resident lifting programs. Their research shows programs that incorporate mechanical lifting equipment can protect workers from injury, reduce workers' compensation costs, and improve the quality of resident care. This NIOSH guide also presents a business case to show that the investment in training and equipment for lifting can be recovered through reduced workers' compensation expenses and costs associated with lost and restricted workdays.

b. **Safe Patient Handling and Movement (SPHM)**

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/safepatient/default.html>

This web page from NIOSH provides healthcare leadership and healthcare workers with important information regarding:

- Patient handling hazards.
- Patient handling ergonomics.
- Revised NIOSH lifting equation.

2. United States Department of Labor Resources

a. Guidelines for Nursing Homes: Ergonomics for the Prevention of Musculoskeletal Disorders

https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/final_nh_guidelines.pdf

These guidelines from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) provide recommendations for nursing home employers to reduce the number and severity of work-related musculoskeletal disorders in their facilities. The guidelines help facilities identify problems and implement solutions for lifting and repositioning residents.

b. Safe Patient Handling

<https://www.osha.gov/healthcare/safe-patient-handling>

This page from OSHA provides information on common patient handling hazards and solutions, describes how to start a safe patient handling program, and provides links to free trainings and resources on safe patient handling.

Composite Measure 3. Addressing Inappropriate Resident Behavior Toward Staff

1. A Guide to De-Escalating Resident Behavior

<http://www.accaging.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/A-Guide-to-DeEscalating-Behavior-Web.pdf>

The Athens Community Council on Aging created this guide to assist long-term care facilities in identifying agitated resident behavior and de-escalating resident behavior crises and aggressive behaviors. It also offers a positive physical approach for residents with dementia.

2. Joint Commission Resources on Workplace Violence

a. Crisis Prevention Institute's Top 10 De-Escalation Tips

https://www.jointcommission.org/-/media/tjc/documents/resources/workplace-violence/cpi-s-top-10-de-escalation-tips_revised-01-18-17pdf.pdf

These tips, developed by the Crisis Prevention Institute and shared by the Joint Commission, provide guidance on how to respond to difficult behavior in the safest, most effective way possible.

b. Sentinel Event Alert 59: Physical and Verbal Violence Against Health Care Workers

<https://www.jointcommission.org/resources/patient-safety-topics/sentinel-event/sentinel-event-alert-newsletters/sentinel-event-alert-59-physical-and-verbal-violence-against-health-care-workers/>

The focus of this Joint Commission alert is to help organizations recognize and acknowledge workplace violence directed against healthcare workers from patients and visitors, better prepare staff to handle violence, and more effectively address the aftermath. A link to a related webcast is also provided.

3. Reducing Workplace Violence With TeamSTEPPS® Webinar

<https://www.ahrq.gov/teamstepps/webinars/previous-webinars-2016.html>

Clinical teams can learn how to reduce risk of injury, meet regulatory standards, and become proactive members of the team by identifying behavioral triggers and underlying emotional or psychological issues that may cause a person in crisis to escalate to violent behavior. Clinical teams can apply their new knowledge, skills, and attitudes and use AHRQ's TeamSTEPPS tools to address difficult situations. At the end of this webinar, participants will be able to:

- Integrate TeamSTEPPS and nonviolent interventions to improve communication and teamwork to safely manage disruptive and aggressive patients.
- Reduce workplace violence with early intervention methods for de-escalation.
- Improve staff and patient experience and satisfaction by building a culture of patient and staff safety.
- Increase joy and meaning of work by applying new knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

4. United States Department of Labor Resources

a. Guidelines for Preventing Workplace Violence for Healthcare and Social Service Workers

<https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/osha3148.pdf>

This publication provides updates to OSHA's guidelines for preventing workplace violence for healthcare and social service workers. Employers should use these guidelines to develop appropriate workplace violence prevention programs, engaging workers to ensure their perspective is recognized and their needs are incorporated into the program.

b. Preventing Workplace Violence: A Road Map for Healthcare Facilities

<https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/OSHA3827.pdf>

OSHA has developed this resource to assist healthcare employers and employees interested in establishing a workplace violence prevention program or strengthening an existing program. This road map describes the five core components of a workplace violence prevention program:

- Management commitment and employee participation.
- Worksite analysis and hazard identification.
- Hazard prevention and control.
- Safety and health training.
- Recordkeeping and program evaluation.

5. Workplace Violence Prevention for Nurses

https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/violence/training_nurses.html

This free interactive course from NIOSH was designed to help healthcare workers better understand the scope and nature of violence in the workplace. Course modules include definition, types, and prevalence of workplace violence; workplace violence consequences; risk factors; prevention strategies; and post-event response.

Composite Measure 4. Interactions Among Staff

1. Bullying in the Health Care Workplace: A Guide to Prevention & Mitigation

<https://www.ama-assn.org/practice-management/physician-health/bullying-health-care-workplace-guide-prevention-mitigation>

The guide from the American Medical Association (AMA) provides the following management strategies and key steps organizations may use to address bullying in the workplace:

- Implement or improve workplace policies.
- Improve organizational culture.
- Make the administration aware that unprofessional behavior is a threat.
- Educate the entire staff—from physicians to custodians—about why unprofessional or hostile behavior is a problem.

2. Civility Best Practices for Nurses

<https://www.nursingworld.org/~4afd0d/globalassets/practiceandpolicy/health-and-safety/incivility.jpg>

The American Nurses Association (ANA) created this Civility Best Practices for Nurses poster for healthcare organizations. The poster lists several positive behavior examples to maintain a civil and professional workplace.

3. Nurse Bullying: Why It Happens and How To Prevent It

<https://www.stkate.edu/academics/healthcare-degrees/nurse-bullying>

Healthcare organizations can review this resource from St. Catherine University to understand forms of nurse bullying, identify common nurse bully types, and understand why bullying occurs. This resource also provides organizational strategies to address bullying among nurses.

4. Passionate About Creating Environments of Respect and Civilities (PACERS) Resources

a. Civility Tool-Kit: Resources To Empower Healthcare Leaders To Identify, Intervene, and Prevent Workplace Bullying

<http://stopbullyingtoolkit.org/>

The “PACERS” are members of the 2012 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Executive Nurse Fellows program. The PACERS toolkit:

- Discusses the socioecological model (SEM) as an effective framework to address the complex and multiple causes of bullying.
- Describes the application of SEM to the four buckets (Truth, Wisdom, Courage, and Renewal) of the civility toolkit. SEM is a comprehensive, cohesive, and integrated solution to support, create, and sustain cultures of civility and respect in the healthcare organization/environment.
- Provides guiding principles for effective use of the civility toolkit.

- b. **Enabling Solutions: PACERS' Toolkit Tackles the Wicked Problems of Bullying in Healthcare**
https://sigma.nursingrepository.org/bitstream/handle/10755/616083/1_Adeniran_R_p79084_1.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

This presentation from PACERS discusses the damaging consequences of bullying and the operationalization of the stop bullying toolkit for any healthcare organization/environment.

Composite Measures 5 and 6. Supervisor Support for Workplace Safety and Management Support for Workplace Safety

1. Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) Resources

a. Leading a Culture of Safety: A Blueprint for Success

<https://www.ihl.org/resources/Pages/Publications/Leading-a-Culture-of-Safety-A-Blueprint-for-Success.aspx> (requires free account setup and login)

The American College of Healthcare Executives and the IHI/Lucian Leape Institute collaborated with leaders of progressive healthcare organizations and globally renowned experts in leadership, safety, and culture to develop this resource. It provides chief executive officers and other healthcare leaders with a useful tool for assessing and advancing their organization's culture of safety. This resource can be used to help determine the current state of an organization's journey, inform dialogue with the board and leadership team, and help leaders set priorities.

b. National Action Plan To Advance Patient Safety

<http://www.ihl.org/Engage/Initiatives/National-Steering-Committee-Patient-Safety/Pages/National-Action-Plan-to-Advance-Patient-Safety.aspx> (requires free account setup and login)

Healthcare leaders can download this free action plan from the IHI that provides clear directions to make significant advances toward safer care and reduced harm across the continuum of care. Healthcare leaders can also download a free self-assessment tool to help decide where to start and the free resource guide to identify resources for implementing the National Action Plan recommendations.

2. Leadership, Management, and Quality Improvement

<https://www.ahrq.gov/nursing-home/materials/leadership/index.html>

Nursing home administrators can review the specific resources from AHRQ that address leadership and quality improvement.

3. Safety Training for Assisted Living Administrators

<https://www.nehca.org/wp-content/uploads/Assisted-Living-Administrator-Training-2017.pdf>

The Nebraska Safety Council created this safety training for assisted living administrators, which covers healthcare topics from patient safety handling to slips, trips, and falls and describes best practices for safety in healthcare.

4. United States Department of Labor Resources

a. Compliance Assistance Quick Start

<https://www.osha.gov/complianceassistance/quickstarts/health-care>

This step-by-step guide enables users to identify many of the major OSHA requirements and guidance materials that apply to healthcare facilities. These steps will enable management to comply with OSHA requirements and prevent workplace injuries and illnesses.

b. Nursing Homes and Personal Care Facilities

<https://www.osha.gov/nursing-home>

This OSHA web page provides information that can help healthcare employers control risks to staff and train workers on potential hazards associated with each job. Resources listed on this page contain information on the standards in nursing homes, OSHA enforcement, hazards and solutions, and safety and health programs.

II. Resources by Additional Measures

Workplace Safety Reporting

1. Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) Resources

a. Create a Reporting System

<https://www.ihl.org/resources/Pages/Changes/CreateaReportingSystem.aspx> (requires free account setup and login)

This IHI web page provides tips to encourage staff members to report conditions that could lead to near-misses or adverse events.

b. Develop a Culture of Safety

<https://www.ihl.org/resources/Pages/Changes/DevelopaCultureofSafety.aspx> (requires free account setup and login)

This IHI web page provides information for improvement of safety culture in healthcare institutions, with resources for nonpunitive reporting policies and aids.

2. Just Culture

<https://www.unmc.edu/patient-safety/patientsafetyculture/just-culture.html>

This website provides links for ways to engage in and teach about the balance between the need to learn mistakes and to take disciplinary action, otherwise known as a Just Culture. Additional sources on this website include information on executing and evaluating a Just Culture.

3. **Encourage Workers To Report Safety and Health Concerns**

https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/2_Reporting_Safety_And_Health_Concerns.pdf

This worksheet created by OSHA aids management in designing a reporting system for injuries, illnesses, incidents, and hazards.

4. **Sentinel Event Alert 60: Developing a Reporting Culture: Learning From Close Calls and Hazardous Conditions**

<https://www.jointcommission.org/resources/patient-safety-topics/sentinel-event/sentinel-event-alert-newsletters/sentinel-event-alert-60-developing-a-reporting-culture-learning-from-close-calls-and-hazardous-condi/>

This Sentinel Event Alert was published for Joint Commission-accredited organizations and interested healthcare professionals. It is about identifying and reporting unsafe conditions before they can cause harm, trusting other staff and leaders to act on the report, and taking personal responsibility for one's actions. These are critical to creating a safety culture and nurturing high reliability within a healthcare organization. The web page also links to a related webinar recording.

Work Stress/Burnout

1. **Burnout and Well-Being**

<https://edhub.ama-assn.org/steps-forward/pages/professional-well-being>

This collection of AMA STEPS Forward™ toolkits offers strategies on engaging health system leadership, understanding and addressing physician burnout, and developing a culture that supports physician well-being.

2. **Caring for Yourself & Others During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Managing Healthcare Workers' Stress**

<https://www.theschwartzcenter.org/webinar/caring-for-yourself-others-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-managing-healthcare-workers-stress/>

In this 1-hour video, Patricia Watson, Ph.D., of the National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder discusses ways healthcare workers can manage stress—theirs and others'—as they face the ever-changing circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. **Healthy Nurse, Healthy Nation**

<http://www.hnhn.org> (requires free account setup and login)

This free ANA Enterprise wellness program is dedicated to improving the Nation's health—one nurse at a time. Healthy Nurse, Healthy Nation (HNHN) is open to everyone and focuses on the domains of rest, physical activity, nutrition, quality of life, and safety. HNHN seeks to connect and engage nurses, nursing students, and partner organizations through an online platform, texts, and social media by challenges, health surveys, discussion boards, and other resources.

4. Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) Resources

a. A Guide to Promoting Health Care Workforce Well-Being During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic

<https://www.ihl.org/resources/Pages/Publications/guide-to-promoting-health-care-workforce-well-being-during-and-after-the-COVID-19-pandemic.aspx> (requires free account setup and login)

This guide aims to support healthcare leaders at all levels with actionable tools for combating healthcare workforce burnout, fatigue, and emotional distress.

b. Lessons From Nursing Home Staff To Address Burnout and Enhance Joy in Work

<https://www.ihl.org/communities/blogs/lessons-from-nursing-home-staff-to-address-burnout-and-joy-in-work> (requires free account setup and login)

Based on the delivery of a standardized curriculum to five cohorts of nursing homes and the feedback of the IHI Training Center participants, IHI has created this list of ideas for enhancing staff joy in nursing homes.

c. Time-Saving Tips To Help Prevent Nursing Home Staff Burnout

<https://www.ihl.org/communities/blogs/time-saving-tips-to-help-prevent-nursing-home-staff-burnout> (requires free account setup and login)

Based on the feedback of the IHI Training Center nursing homes, IHI has created this list of processes to support nursing home staff members in preventing staff burnout.

5. Resource Compendium for Health Care Worker Well-Being

<https://nam.edu/compendium-of-key-resources-for-improving-clinician-well-being/>

The National Academy of Medicine Action Collaborative on Clinician Well-Being and Resilience offers this collection of resources that highlight strategies and tools healthcare leaders and workers can use across practice settings to decrease burnout and improve clinician well-being.

6. Staff & Resident Well-Being

<https://www.ahrq.gov/nursing-home/materials/well-being/index.html>

Nursing home leaders may benefit from the resources and strategies provided by AHRQ to support staff well-being. Resources include:

- Learning modules for frontline staff.
- Best practices for promoting mental health and emotional well-being among nursing home staff.
- Emotional and organizational support for staff learning modules.
- Emotional wellness resources for nursing home staff.

7. **Well-Being Initiative**

<https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/work-environment/health-safety/disaster-preparedness/coronavirus/what-you-need-to-know/the-well-being-initiative/>

Launched by the American Nurses Foundation in partnership with the ANA and several other nursing organizations, this site provides free tools, apps, and additional resources to support the mental health and resilience of nurses.

III. **General Resources**

1. **5-Minute Learning Modules for Frontline Staff**

<https://www.ahrq.gov/nursing-home/learning-modules/index.html>

These brief AHRQ videos offer self-paced learning for those on the front lines of nursing home care, including nursing assistants, as well as housekeeping, dietary, and maintenance staff, and others. Topics include emotional and organizational support for staff, leadership by example, and COVID-19 postvaccination practices to minimize infection risk.

2. **Health Worker Safety: A Priority for Patient Safety**

https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/world-patient-safety-day/health-worker-safety-charter-wpsd-17-september-2020-3-1.pdf?sfvrsn=2cb6752d_2

The intersection of worker well-being and safety with patient harm prevention has become apparent due to COVID-19. This WHO report discusses five areas of importance in motivating lasting change in healthcare environments to support workforce safety. It highlights policy and strategy alignment, occupational considerations, violence reduction, psychological concerns, and physiological harms as essential elements of a robust approach to workforce safety improvement.

3. **Nursing Home Safety**

https://www.oshatrain.org/pages/nursing_home_safety.html (requires free account setup and login to access training, requires payment for training certificate)

These free employee training courses from OSHAcademy cover topics such as personal protective equipment, workplace safety, and housekeeping safety. The courses provided are for the wide range of employee positions found in nursing homes, including cleaning staff, cooks, technicians, and nurses.

4. **Safety Training Resources for Nursing and Residential Care Facilities**

<https://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/safety/videoresources/targnursing.html>

This page from the Texas Department of Insurance offers free downloadable safety publications, worksheets, videos, and training programs for nursing homes and residential care facilities.

IV. Alphabetical Index of Resources

[5-Minute Learning Modules for Frontline Staff](#)

[A Guide to De-Escalating Resident Behavior](#)

[A Guide to Promoting Health Care Workforce Well-Being During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

[Bullying in the Health Care Workplace: A Guide to Prevention & Mitigation](#)

[Burnout and Well-Being](#)

[Caring for Yourself & Others During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Managing Healthcare Workers' Stress](#)

[CDC's Core Infection Prevention and Control Practices for Safe Healthcare Delivery in All Settings](#)

[CDC Train Module 4 – Infection Surveillance](#)

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