Workplace Violence – Nurse Stabbed to Death



INCIDENT

#1 Gail Sandidge, a Nurse from Longview Texas cared for and protected her patients at a Medical

Center in Longview. She died 2 days before Thanksgiving Day in 2013 when she was stabbed to death. The assailant was a 22-year-old Kyron Templeton who went on a killing spree with a hunting knife. This young male was in the hospital waiting for his mother's surgery and become distraught. He stabbed Gail in the chest which ended her life. He also killed 82-year Harris Teel, visitor to the hospital. Three others were injured.

#2 Cara Russell, was the executive director of the Colorado Association For Recycling she had recently filed for divorce from her husband Mickey Russell. This 52-year-old was the shot multiple times by her husband who then killed himself. The shooting took place at her work.

The shooting was an act of domestic violence, and that's actually exactly what a work place shooting looks like.

NEED TO KNOW

Workplace violence is front and center one of the most vexing issue in our society. It is trending upwards!!! Domestic violence morphs into our workplace. Sadly, women are more often the victims in the home and in the workplace. There are two scenarios. One where the victim has some family or personal connection to the assailant, and one where the victim does not know or have any family or personal connection to the assailant.

BUSINESS / REGULATIONS

Gail's situation can be contracted with Cara's. With Gail, she did not know or have any family or personal connection to her killer. She was merely doing her job. The New England Journal of

Medicine in 2016 published a comprehensive review of Workplace Violence in the U.S. and "statistically" comes to a conclusion that is widely accepted.

HealthCare is the most Dangerous Profession to work.

Gail's life would have been saved had a proper safeguards and regulations been in place to prevent violence from occurring.

70% of U.S. workplaces do not have formal programs or policies that address workplace violence.

In Cara Russell's case, there is a different dynamic. She was killed in the workplace by her husband. Obviously, a personal connection.

Homicide is a leading cause of workplace death for women.

Why is that?

Abusers shoot women at work because it's easy to find them there!!!

The most dangerous time for victims of domestic abuse is when they try to leave. A woman who leaves her partner can find a new living arrangement and change her phone number, but she'll probably keep going to the same job.

"It's access," said Lydia Waligorski, public policy director at the Colorado Coalition against Domestic Violence. "Your guard is down at work. The doors are open. There are other people around. It's a place where you feel safe.

"Survivors cannot be survivors 24 hours a day without losing their minds," she added. "Especially as women, we're taught there is safety in numbers."

Gail had given her life in the service of others in the nursing field. She wanted to be a nurse since she was 7 years old. She was consummate caregiving.

Cara Russell simply wanted to live her life without fear of retribution from her husband. But she could not escape him even at her work.

Workplace violence is defined by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) as any act or threat of physical violence harassment, intimidation or other threatening disruptive behavior that occurs at the worksite.

Workplace violence is one of the major causes of death in the corporate world, second only to transportation. This growing issue can have very damaging effects on morale, reputation and revenue; making it something business have to address now.

The impact on Business is enormous and like the perpetration of homicides itself, the trend is going up, not down.

A half-million employees miss an estimated 1.8 million work days each year due to workplace violence – resulting in more than $55 million in lost wages on 2018. The annual comprehensive cost to businesses, including estimated losses, was $130 billion compared to $36 billion in 1995.

- Workplace violence crimes also extend beyond victims to co-workers, clients, executives, shareholders and even out to the community. There are also direct losses reflected in diminished productivity, low morale and negative publicity – which can all damage a company's reputation in the

long-term.
- What’s more, incidents are often followed by lawsuits charging organizations with negligent retention, negligent supervisor and inadequate security. The average out-of-court settlement is around $500,000 and the average jury award is $3 million.

STATISTICS

The prestigious New England Journal sets out interesting facts and statistics. Their review concludes healthcare is the most dangerous profession for women to work. Almost entirely are women the objects of assault and violence in their profession.

The review included data from the (B.L.S) showing healthcare workers are nearby four times as likely to require time away from work as a result of violence.

The (B.L.S.) keeps a grim list, the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. In 2014, homicides accounted for 8 percent of all workplace deaths and 8 percent of workplace death for men. They accounted for 19 percent of workplace deaths for women, a very close second behind transportation accidents at 20 percent. When men are murdered at work, it’s most commonly in the course of a robbery, but for women, it’s more likely to be someone they know that is husbands, boyfriends and exes.

The review also reported that, although employees in the healthcare and social assistance sectors account for 12.2% of the working population (and despite there being the potential for underreporting in other industries), nearly 75% of workplace assaults occurred in a healthcare setting.

There are other notable statistics:

- 80% of Emergency Medical Services personnel have been attacked by patients.
- Homicide is the second leading cause of workplace death for home healthcare workers.
- 78% of Emergency Department physicians and 100% of Emergency Department nurses have experienced violence from patients within the last year.
- The annual incidence of physical assault in a psychiatric setting is 70%.
- Among nursing homes with dementia units, 59% of nursing aides reported being assaulted by patients weekly and 16% daily.
- 46% of nurses reported some form of workplace violence during their five most recent shifts.
- Between 2000 and 2011, there were 154 shootings with injury either inside or on the grounds of American hospitals.
- The healthcare industry makes up 9% of the U.S. workforce, yet healthcare professionals experience more workplace violence injuries than all other industries combined.
- The third leading cause of death for workers in the healthcare and professional servicesindustries (education, law and media) is due to workplace violence.

According to OSHA:

- About 2 million people each year report some type of workplace violence.
- It is estimated that 25 percent of workplace violence goes unreported.

PREVENTION

Financial losses and business loss usually attract a lot of attention. Especially when discussions are lead dealing with Prevention of Work Place Violence. Studies have shown:

- 00 or more is saved for each dollar invested in workplace safety.
- Domestic violence issues that are brought to the workplace cost nearly 727 million in lost productivity.

In both Cara and Gail’s cases, the same steps must be implemented to prevent these tragedies.

- Develop, publicize, and enforce a workplace violence prevention policy.
- Conduct a risk assessment in the workplace to determine the types of violence that might most impact your workplace and to identify where in the workplace and/or at what time of day employees might be most vulnerable to violence.
- Enforce a no-weapons policy for employees, as allowed by law.
- Take administrative and environmental precautions; initiate prevention activities, conduct trainings on workplace violence.
- Take security measures to mitigate the threat of violence, create a workplace culture that supports victims and holds perpetrators of violence accountable.
- Take time to address these concerns before an incident occurs. Take proactive measures now to protect your employees. ensure a safer, more supportive environment for victims of domestic violence by taking these preventative steps.

The ounce of prevention by taking these preventive safety steps will be rewarded in ¨pounds¨ of safety!!!