Workplace Violence: Recognizing, Preventing And Responding Fatality File



Visiting Nurse Killed During Home Visit After Employer Failed to Control Violence Risk

On October 28, 2023, licensed practical nurse Joyce Grayson was killed during a home visit in Willimantic, Connecticut, while working for Elara Caring, one of the largest home-based care providers in the U.S. She was visiting a patient whose behavior was known to be aggressive and high-risk.

An OSHA investigation found that the employer failed to protect home-care staff from workplace violence, even though patients with violent or threatening behavior were a recognized hazard. The company did not have adequate workplace violence prevention measures, did not consistently share full background information on high-risk patients, and lacked effective systems such as panic alerts, safety escorts for high-risk visits, and thorough incident reviews. OSHA cited Elara Caring for a willful violation under the General Duty Clause and proposed $163,627 in penalties.

This case clearly illustrates the core of “Workplace Violence: Recognizing, Preventing and Responding”—the need to identify high-risk clients, implement prevention programs, train employees to recognize and report threats, and ensure a clear response plan is in place before workers enter potentially violent environments.

Source: Dol.gov