



## Media Release

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION INCREASING IN SEVERITY YET UNDER REPORTED – *CAMPAIGN FOR CHANGE - #IWillReport*

Regina, SK – The healthcare sector in this province continues to experience the highest total number of claims reported than all other industries according to Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) statistics. Today, the Saskatchewan Association for Safe Workplaces in Health (SASWH) is proud to announce the Campaign for Change of *#IWillReport*. This is a collaborative effort with frontline healthcare workers, senior leaders and system partners working together to increase the awareness of under reporting of incidents of violence and aggression.

**VIDEO LINK:** [https://youtu.be/Ji\\_bEXUZ3SA](https://youtu.be/Ji_bEXUZ3SA)

**VIDEO CONTENT:** The video unfolds with Saskatchewan healthcare providers (*these are not actors*) sharing personal experiences about violence and acts of aggression in their healthcare career. Their experience includes not only what happened, but what could be done to reduce the chances of somebody else experiencing violence or aggression in the future. Senior leaders comment on the need for change and offer a commitment to report and encourage reporting, so that together we can collaborate on appropriate solutions to reduce the risk of harm associated with violence and aggression.

The unfortunate reality is that occurrences of violence and aggression is experienced by many frontline healthcare workers. The participants in this video have represented the issue very well signaling the call to action of *#IWillReport* any and all occurrences of violence or aggression. It doesn't matter what department you are from or what role you play in the healthcare system, if you experience or witness an act of violence or aggression please report.

**Note:** The healthcare providers in this video are predominately from the healthcare fields of nursing and EMS; that is not to suggest that violence and aggression is isolated to these two professions. The offer to participate in this campaign was afforded to many frontline workers; however, it takes a lot of courage to put your voice and face to a campaign of this nature. SASWH acknowledges and thanks all the partners in this initiative to raise awareness that violence and aggression in healthcare workplaces should not be considered normal for any healthcare worker, patient, family member or member of the public. *Workplace health and safety is a priority for all.*

## ISSUE:

The lack of reporting and under reporting of incidents of violence and acts of aggression in the healthcare industry is attributed to the notion that care providers put the 'duty of care' ahead of their own safety. Literature and research findings indicate that under reporting is also associated with the normalization of violence for healthcare workers. The prevalence of under reporting of violence and aggression in the workplace is due much in part to it being viewed as a regular occurrence and accepted as '*just part of the job*'.

## KEY MESSAGES:

- The aim of this targeted campaign is designed to increase the reporting of violence and aggression to assist in the building of a stronger culture of safety, promote the adoption of effective violence prevention initiatives, and prevent injuries caused by violence and acts of aggression.
- Currently some healthcare facilities are struggling with a lack of appropriate controls to address the risk of violence and aggression in healthcare. Increased reporting will provide additional context to the current state and allow for more targeted and timely interventions.
- Healthcare partners and leaders in safety must view violence and acts of aggression in our workplaces as a priority and collaborate on corrective actions that drive a change in behavior.
- Enhancing strong positive relationships with healthcare system partners is essential. One of those system partners is SASWH, and is viewed as a key enabler to excel at injury prevention. The key issues are safety culture and effective violence prevention initiatives through a coordinated Provincial approach that includes the development of a video production that elevates the awareness of the under reporting of violence and aggression occurrences.

## Background:

- Within *The Saskatchewan Employment Act, 2014*, a violence prevention strategy is a legislated requirement.
- Accreditation Canada Required Organizational Practices (ROPs) for a violence prevention strategy holds healthcare organizations accountable to this standard prior to issuing a favorable accreditation status. Each healthcare organization must have a violence prevention plan and strategy in place. This is not the case in many Saskatchewan healthcare workplaces.
- SASWH has been working with system partners over the past 18 months to gain a better understanding of the incidents of violence and aggression in the Saskatchewan healthcare system. Statistical information has been obtained from WCB that reflect some of the incidents of injury that are a direct result of violence; however, this number could be considered low in compared to other injury statistics for the healthcare industry. That said, it is evident by this lack of ‘reporting’ that acts of violence and aggression are being normalized and going unreported.
- A significant part of the Violence Prevention Framework and Strategy is the need to have effective and timely reporting. To bring about the desired corrective actions, increased reporting is required and a campaign of **“#IWillReport”** calls for additional collaboration with system partners and frontline workers.

## About the Saskatchewan Association for Safe Workplaces in Health.

SASWH is a non-profit safety association committed to work in partnership with Saskatchewan’s healthcare industry to reduce the number of workplace injuries and illnesses in the health sector.



### The Vision:

Workplace health and safety: a priority for all.

**Mission Statement:** To increase awareness and proactively support, through education, training and services, health related industry workers and employers in their efforts to prevent workplace injury and illness.

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