



## Increased Workplace Incivility and Bullying Leads to More Mental Health Expenditures in Health Care

### Findings from the Center's Boston Hospital Workers Health Study

#### Total Worker Health Implications

**Workplace incivility and bullying have economic consequences for workers and employers; crafting interventions to reduce these behaviors would benefit both.**

- Approximately 9% of workers in the U.S. experience workplace bullying.
- Workplace bullying may negatively impact the physical and mental health of victims.
- This study sought to determine the extent to which exposure to workplace bullying and incivility is associated with increased use of mental health care services.



#### Data Collected

**A survey completed by patient-care workers in two hospitals included items assessing incivility and bullying behaviors.**

- Bullying and incivility behaviors were assessed using a short version of the nursing-specific Negative Acts Questionnaire.
- Participants were asked about the frequency of experiencing bullying and incivility behaviors: someone withholding information which affects your performance; being humiliated or ridiculed in connection with your work; and being ignored or excluded.

#### Study Findings

**Workers who reported being ignored or excluded at work had higher rates of mental health care utilization, and users of these services experiencing this type of bullying had higher expenditures.**

- This study found that being exposed to increased numbers of uncivil and bullying behaviors was associated with greater expenditures.
- Among workers who sought mental health care, the annual average expenditures in mental health care was nearly double for workers who experienced at least three bullying and incivility behaviors, compared to those who did not experience any.

#### Full Publication

Sabbath EL, Williams JAR, Boden LI, Tempesti T, Wagner GR, Hopcia K, Hashimoto D, Sorensen G. Mental Health Expenditures: Association with Workplace Incivility and Bullying Among Hospital Patient Care Workers. *J Occup Environ Med.* 2018 Aug;60(8):737-742.

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