The Storm Is Already Here

A sociologist's view of workplace violence in healthcare: the patterns, the costs, and what they reveal

by Charles Levy, Professor of Sociology

OPTICS for Healthcare

The Same Crisis. Different Settings. Different People. Why?

If you spend any amount of time working in our healthcare system, you notice a pattern that is difficult to ignore. Situations that should remain manageable sometimes escalate quickly. Conversations that begin normally take on a different tone. Tension appears in places where, on the surface, everyone is trying to do the right thing.

At first, these moments can feel isolated. A difficult patient. A frustrated family member. A bad day. But over time, the pattern becomes harder to dismiss. The same types of situations appear across different shifts, different units, and different healthcare organizations. Different people are involved, but the structure of the interactions feels familiar.

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Some Perspective on My Perspective

When the same problems keep appearing in similar ways, it is worth asking whether something larger is shaping them. Before going further, it is important to be clear about where this perspective is coming from; and where it is not. This article is not written from inside the healthcare field. It is not based on clinical training or administrative authority within a hospital system. Instead, it comes from more than thirty years of work in sociology, with a particular focus on organizational sociology — the study of how institutions are structured, how they function under pressure, and how they unintentionally produce patterns of behavior that no one explicitly sets out to create.

That distinction matters, and it should not be misunderstood. The goal here is not to step into someone else's field or to second-guess the expertise of healthcare professionals or industry executives. It is the opposite. It is to stand alongside that expertise and offer a different lens — one that looks not just at individuals or moments, but at the systems that shape them.

One of the central insights of organizational sociology is that when the same problems keep appearing across different settings, they are rarely random. They are usually structured. They are connected to how work is organized, how time is managed, how communication flows, how authority is distributed, and how people are expected to respond under pressure. In other words, what looks like a series of individual incidents often reflects something more consistent beneath the surface.

Healthcare, in many ways, is not unique in this respect. Organizations in different fields — education, law enforcement, corporate environments, public agencies — face similar challenges when demands increase, resources tighten, and expectations remain high. Under those conditions, tension builds. Communication breaks down. Small moments escalate more quickly than they should. The difference in healthcare is not that these dynamics exist, but that they play out in environments where people are already vulnerable, where emotions are already heightened, and where the stakes are unavoidably human.

Workplace violence in healthcare is often described as unpredictable — something that happens when emotions run high or when individuals lose control. But for many workers, it does not feel random. It feels patterned. It feels connected to workload, time constraints, communication gaps, uncertainty, and the expectations placed on both patients and staff in already difficult moments.

What follows is an attempt to look at those patterns more closely. Not to assign blame, and not to suggest that individuals are the problem, but to better understand the conditions that make these situations more likely — and more likely to repeat.

Once those conditions become visible, the conversation begins to shift. The question is no longer just how should individuals respond in the moment? The question becomes how might the environment itself might be organized differently so that these situations do not escalate in the first place?

When the Same Patterns Appear Everywhere, That's Not Coincidence — It's Structure

With that perspective in mind, it becomes easier to return to the everyday reality of healthcare work and see it a little more clearly.

If you work in healthcare, you probably do not need anyone to tell you that workplace violence feels built into the job. You have seen how quickly a normal interaction can turn tense. You have watched a family member go from anxious to angry in minutes. You have felt the pressure of trying to stay calm, professional, and useful while someone in front of you is raising their voice, making threats, or treating you like the human face of every failure in the system.

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And once you begin to look at those moments through a slightly wider lens, something starts to stand out. What feels unpredictable in the moment begins to look familiar over time. The same types of situations. The same kinds of escalation. The same underlying strain showing up again and again, even in different places with different people.

The Three Pillars Framework

W. Richard Scott is one of the most consequential organizational sociologists of the 20th and 21st centuries. His work explains why similar patterns of conflict and escalation appear across healthcare systems regardless of individual differences.

Scott's most enduring contribution is the "three pillars" framework, developed across multiple editions of his landmark book Institutions and Organizations (first published 1995, now in four editions). The framework argues that institutions rest on three distinct but interconnected pillars:

- **Regulative Pillar** — The rules, laws, and sanctions that constrain and regulate behavior. Compliance is driven by coercion and the threat of consequences. Think licensing requirements, accreditation standards, OSHA regulations, or Joint Commission mandates. Organizations comply because they have to.
- **Normative Pillar** — The norms, values, and professional standards that define what is appropriate or expected behavior. Compliance is driven by social obligation and professional ethics. Organizations comply because they ought to.
- **Cultural-Cognitive Pillar** — The shared beliefs, schemas, and taken-for-granted assumptions that define how things are understood. Compliance is driven by deeply internalized worldviews. Organizations comply because they can't imagine doing otherwise — it's simply "how things are done."

This framework is powerful precisely because it explains why rules alone rarely change organizational behavior.[RC1] If a policy only operates at the regulative level, it will be gamed, minimized, or followed only under surveillance. Lasting change requires norm adoption and — at the deepest level — a cognitive shift in what people believe is normal and expected.

That is exactly why it is important to declare that this is not random. It is not just the result of "difficult people." It is not an occasional disruption in an otherwise healthy environment. The reason so many healthcare workers across different hospitals and clinics describe the same kinds of experiences is that the conditions shaping those experiences are also the same. Long waits. Short staffing. Constant interruptions. Emotional overload. Uneven power. Little room for recovery. Those are not side notes. They are the setting in which the interaction happens.

Patients show up scared, hurting, confused, and often already frustrated before they meet a caregiver. Families are trying to understand complicated information while worrying about outcomes they cannot control. Healthcare staff are trying to give good care while juggling documentation, alarms, staffing gaps, and multiple competing demands. Put all of that together and the smallest misunderstanding can become combustible. A rushed explanation can sound uncaring. A delay can feel like neglect. A boundary can be read as disrespect.

Once you see the pattern, it becomes harder to accept the usual story that violence is just part of the terrain. It is part of the terrain only because the terrain keeps being organized in ways that produce it. That matters. Because if the environment helps create the problem, then better individual coping is not enough. The environment itself must be addressed.

Four Dimensions of Violence — and the Lenses from Which They Are Viewed

What makes this even more complicated is that the way workplace violence is understood often depends on who is looking at it.

Overt Physical Aggression
Sometimes it looks like patient or visitor aggression in the most obvious sense: yelling, threats, intimidation, a thrown object, a grabbed wrist, a shove. The incident may never become "big enough" to make headlines, but it still leaves a mark. Workers carry those encounters for the rest of the shift and often long after.

Subtle, Corrosive Hostility
Sometimes it is more subtle but still corrosive. A patient mocks staff, a family member refuses to calm down, a visitor circles back again and again with escalating hostility. These encounters do not produce incident reports. They produce something harder to measure: a cumulative erosion of the sense that the work environment is safe.

Lateral and Institutional Violence
Then there is the violence that comes from inside the institution. Many workers know what it is like to be talked down to by a supervisor, excluded by a team, publicly corrected in a way meant more to humiliate than help, or treated as though absorbing disrespect is proof of

professionalism. This may not always be labeled violence, but workers know what it does. It wears down confidence. It increases fear. It teaches people to stay quiet.

Structural Violence
And beneath both of those sits the least visible level: the way the system itself creates danger. If a staff member is assigned too many patients, rushed through every task, and left without meaningful backup, the institution has already increased the odds of conflict. If patients are forced into long waits, confusing handoffs, and poor explanations, the institution has already helped create the frustration that workers will later be asked to absorb. That is why workplace violence cannot be understood only by looking at the final moment when someone explodes. By then, much of the potential for conflict has already been set in motion.

Once you begin to see how broad and layered the problem actually is, the next question becomes harder to avoid: why does it keep repeating in such similar ways?

One reason healthcare workers become cynical about this issue is that everyone seems to know it exists, yet the same situations keep happening. People get trained. Committees are formed. Emails go out. Posters appear. And still, the pattern remains. The reason is simple: the conditions producing the pattern usually stay in place.

Scott's three-pillar framework helps explain why. A mandate that operates only at the regulative level — a new compliance requirement, a poster on the wall, a training module completed once a year — will be minimized, gamed, or forgotten. Lasting change also requires shifting professional norms and, ultimately, changing what staff and leaders take for granted as the acceptable limits of everyday work.

Start with workload. When units are understaffed or stretched thin, workers have less time for explanation, less emotional reserve for de-escalation, and less capacity to recover from one hard interaction before the next one arrives. Patients and families feel the same strain from the other side. They wait longer, get less clarity, and have more opportunities to interpret delay as indifference. Nobody needs to be unusually volatile for that combination to become unstable.

Then add hierarchy. Not every worker has the same freedom to say, "This situation is unsafe," and step away. Some roles carry more direct exposure and less authority. Some workers know that if they report a problem, nothing will happen except more paperwork and maybe quiet judgment from peers or supervisors. Institutions rarely say out loud that some people are expected to absorb more risk, but workers learn that lesson anyway.

Normalization locks the whole thing in place. Once enough aggression is treated as ordinary, the threshold for concern rises. Workers stop reporting smaller events because they are too common. Leaders see fewer reports and conclude the problem is smaller than it is. Staff then

feel even less reason to document what happened. That loop is powerful. It makes preventable harm look natural simply because it happens often.

And of course, healthcare is not insulated from the society around it. Economic stress, untreated mental illness, addiction, housing insecurity, public distrust, misinformation — these forces all enter hospitals and clinics through the people seeking care. Healthcare workers end up standing at the point where personal crisis, institutional limits, and social failure meet. It should not be surprising that violence keeps happening there. The surprising thing is how often workers are asked to experience that reality as though it were an individual problem rather than a structural one.

Who Carries the Weight? The Exposure Isn't Even

Once you start to see how these conditions operate, another pattern becomes difficult to ignore: the burden is not distributed evenly.

Caregiving roles often carry the heaviest emotional burden. Workers in those roles are expected to be warm, patient, and accommodating under conditions that would test anyone's patience. That expectation is often framed as professionalism, and sometimes it is. But it can also become a quiet demand that people absorb disrespect, hostility, and fear without visibly reacting. When composure becomes the measure of competence, the worker who says "this is not acceptable" can end up seeming like the problem.

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Arlie Hochschild on Emotional Labor

Arlie Hochschild introduced the concept of emotional labor to describe the way workers are required to manage, suppress, or perform emotions as part of their job. This is not simply about being polite or professional. It is about the systematic expectation that workers will regulate their internal emotional responses in order to produce a particular outward experience for others.

In healthcare settings, this expectation is especially pronounced. Workers are not only providing clinical care; they are also expected to absorb fear, anxiety, anger, confusion, and sometimes outright hostility, while continuing to present calmness, empathy, and control.

This dynamic becomes particularly significant in environments where stress is constant and interactions are emotionally charged. A nurse, physician, or technician may be yelled at, blamed, or threatened, yet still be expected to respond with patience and reassurance. Over time, this repeated regulation of emotion does not simply disappear at the end of a shift. It accumulates.

Importantly, emotional labor helps explain why exposure to aggression can become normalized. When managing difficult emotional interactions is defined as part of the job, the boundary between acceptable strain and unacceptable behavior begins to blur. Workers may come to see repeated hostility not as a signal that something is wrong with the environment, but as an expected feature of their role. This does not reduce the impact of those interactions. It conceals it.

Understanding emotional labor in this context helps clarify why workplace violence cannot be understood only as isolated incidents. It is also embedded in the emotional expectations placed on workers — expectations that quietly shape how much strain individuals are expected to absorb before something is recognized as a problem.

That burden is not distributed evenly. Bias matters too. Workers from minoritized backgrounds often face hostility that is not just general frustration but specifically racialized or discriminatory. Sometimes it is obvious. Sometimes it takes the form of repeated questioning, refusal, mistrust, or coded disrespect. Those experiences are not incidental to workplace violence. They are part of it, and they can make institutions feel especially unsafe for the people most frequently exposed.

The emergency department makes all this vivid. It is where people arrive at their worst moments. It is where uncertainty is high, pace is relentless, and the social problems no one solved upstream arrive all at once. When an ED staff member says the ED feels like a pressure cooker, that is not dramatic language. It is a practical description. The emergency department is often the place where crisis, fear, exhaustion, and institutional overload are most tightly packed together. If we want to understand workplace violence honestly, we must pay close attention to who stands closest to that pressure every day.

Why It Feels Like It's Getting Worse: Four Forces Making It Harder

If these patterns were stable, they would already be difficult enough to manage. But many healthcare workers have the sense that something is shifting — that the overall environment is becoming more strained, not less.

Complexity of Care
One factor is complexity of care. As patient populations age and chronic illness becomes more common, healthcare encounters involve more uncertainty, more caregiving stress, and more

emotionally loaded decisions. That does not automatically produce violence. But it does mean that more encounters begin with a high emotional charge.

Financial Strain
Another factor is financial strain. By the time many patients arrive, they are already carrying stress about insurance, cost, missed work, transportation, family logistics, and whether they will be able to follow through on treatment. That frustration does not stay neatly separated from the clinical interaction. It comes into the room with them.

Technology and Shifting Authority
Technology is a complicating factor. More patients arrive at a healthcare facility having searched their symptoms, joined online forums, watched unvetted medical content, or used AI tools that give them "confident" insights, even confirmation, about what is wrong and what should happen next. Some of this can be useful; patient education is not a bad thing. But when the clinician's view does not match the patient's expectation, disagreement can feel personal very quickly. Workers then face not only fear and pain, but also the frustration of being perceived as contradicting knowledge the patient has already embraced.

Eroding Trust
Trust is the final factor. In a climate where many people have less confidence in institutions, healthcare workers often meet patients and families who arrive with less goodwill in reserve. A minor delay, a short answer, or an imperfect handoff can therefore trigger a level of suspicion that would once have been less common. Put these elements together — greater complexity, more financial stress, altered authority, and weaker trust — and the phrase "perfect storm" stops sounding dramatic. It starts sounding accurate.

What This Is Really Costing Society

The financial costs of workplace violence in healthcare have been studied extensively. What the research shows is not surprising. What is surprising is how rarely those costs are framed as a societal problem rather than an operational one.

The numbers are large. Estimates of the total annual cost to the healthcare sector exceed $30 billion. The American Hospital Association, in a 2025 analysis prepared by the University of Washington, put the cost to hospitals alone at $18.27 billion in a single year. These are not projections. They are measured costs — medical treatment for injured workers, infrastructure repair, overtime, litigation, and case management. They reflect what has already happened, not what might.

What the financial data also reveals is a pattern of misallocated response. Hospitals spent roughly $3.62 billion on prevention in 2023. They spent $14.65 billion responding to violence after it occurred. That is a four-to-one ratio of reaction to prevention. From a sociological standpoint, that ratio is itself data. It tells us something about how institutions have been

categorizing this problem — not as a structural hazard to be engineered out of the system, but as an operational interruption to be managed after the fact.

The workforce consequences follow a similar logic. When experiencing a single violent incident raises the probability that a staff member will leave by 40 percent, and when a quarter of healthcare workers report considering leaving the field entirely, the cost calculations extend well beyond what any individual organization can absorb. The pipeline implications are long. Training a replacement takes time that systems under strain do not have. The communities those systems serve absorb the difference.

There is also a patient cost that tends to be undercounted in financial analyses. Violence does not stay contained to the person it first touches. The data show measurable effects on wait times, complaint rates, and satisfaction scores following incidents — effects felt by patients who were never involved and may never know why their care was affected.

These are not hidden costs. They are documented. The question the data raises is not whether the problem is expensive. It is why the expense has been so consistently treated as inevitable.

The Financial Footprint: What Workplace Violence Costs the Healthcare Industry

Selected figures published research and industry analysis

The Scale

- Total annual cost to the healthcare sector: more than $30 billion†
- Total cost to U.S. hospitals in 2023: $18.27 billion (AHA/University of Washington, 2025)
- Prevention spending: $3.62 billion — Post-incident spending: $14.65 billion

Workforce Costs

- Replacement cost per registered nurse: $82,000
- Average replacement cost per employee: $10,000
- A single violent incident increases a staff member's probability of leaving by 40%
- 240 nurses leave the profession every day
- 1 in 4 healthcare workers are considering leaving the field entirely *(Indeed, Pulse of Healthcare, 2025)*

Patient Impact

- Following a single incident, patient wait times increase by an average of 19 minutes
- Patient complaints increase 37%
- Patient satisfaction scores decline by 8.8 points
- 46,000 patients experience care delays or unsatisfactory service every day

Institutional Exposure

- Average workplace violence settlement: $800,000–$1.2 million
- Regulatory investigation hidden costs per incident: $345,000–$1.4 million — 12 to 48 times higher than the fine itself
- Lost productivity costs to the healthcare industry: approximately $1.1 billion per year *(Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine)*
- Employee engagement declines by 31 points per worker who experiences or witnesses a violent incident

† The $18.27 billion figure represents hospital costs only. The $30 billion estimate reflects the full healthcare sector — including outpatient, long-term care, behavioral health, and social services settings — based on aggregate industry research compiled by OPTICS for Healthcare.

Seeing the Bigger Sociological Pattern

At this point, it becomes useful to step back again — not to move away from the problem, but to better understand the pattern behind everything that has already been described. It helps explain why some workers are closer to danger than others. It helps explain why the same kinds of incidents happen across different places. And it helps show how a single bedside interaction is shaped by larger forces: staffing decisions, institutional culture, public distrust, inequality, and the emotional rules attached to caregiving work.

In simple terms, sociology reminds us that what looks personal is often organized. A confrontation is still a confrontation, and people are still responsible for what they do. But the question of why that confrontation keeps happening in similar ways cannot be answered by looking only at the people in the room. It requires looking at the setting that put them there and the pressures already acting on both sides.

What the Research Confirms

Importantly, this is not just a theoretical observation. The research largely confirms what many workers already recognize from experience.

Research also shows something workers have been saying for years: training is helpful, but it is not enough. People can be taught better de-escalation skills. They can learn to recognize escalation cues earlier. Those things matter. But they do not solve chronic understaffing, poor reporting systems, weak follow-up, or cultures that quietly reward endurance more than honesty.

Perhaps the most important lesson from the research is that institutions often misunderstand underreporting. It is not just that workers forget or do not bother. Underreporting frequently reflects learned futility. If workers believe nothing will change, they protect their time and energy by not reporting. That is not worker failure. It is organizational feedback. It tells leadership that staff may not see the system as responsive enough to make a difference.

What Staff, Management, and Patients Can Each Do

Many of these insights are already understood at some level. The challenge has never been awareness — it has been what to do with it.

For Healthcare Staff
One of the most powerful actions is refusing normalization. That does not mean treating every rude interaction as identical. It means holding on to the idea that repeated hostility is not simply proof that you are in a caring profession. Peer culture matters here. Workers help set the tone when they take one another seriously, challenge dismissive attitudes, and keep smaller harms from disappearing just because they happen often.

For Patients and Families
Clinical environments are frightening and confusing, and no one should pretend otherwise. But even under those conditions, how frustration is expressed matters. Clear questions, patience during delay, and direct but nonaggressive communication can change the feel of an encounter more than people realize.

For Management
The most revealing moment is after something goes wrong. If the message after an incident is basically “do your paperwork and get back out there,” staff learn that endurance is the real policy. If the response includes follow-up, review, visible support, and changes based on what happened, staff learn something else: that the organization actually believes violence is preventable and worth addressing.

What Comes Next

All of this brings us to a point that is both familiar and difficult to fully confront.

The storm named in this paper's title is not approaching. It is already inside the building. What remains to be decided is how healthcare organizations choose to respond to it — as the structural phenomenon it is, or as a series of individual incidents that no one could have predicted.

Workplace violence cannot be eliminated entirely. But it can be reduced — sometimes significantly — when organizations stop treating it as background noise and start treating it as a sign that care is being organized in ways that predictably expose people to harm. That requires honesty about how much of the problem is built into everyday routines rather than exceptional crises.

Healthcare workers already know the cost of pretending otherwise. They feel it in the body after a shift, in the tension they carry into the next interaction, in the quiet calculation about whether this workplace is sustainable, and in the way they warn newer workers what to expect. That lived knowledge should not be treated as anecdotal background to more "objective" data. It is part of the evidence.

The work ahead is therefore practical as much as moral. It asks whether institutions are willing to reduce preventable strain, whether leaders are willing to count harms before they become catastrophic, and whether the culture of care will finally stop defining professionalism as the ability to endure what should never have been normalized in the first place.

About the Author

Charles Levy has been a higher education professor and academic author for over thirty years. He is an organizational sociologist examining how institutional structures, professional cultures, and authority systems shape behavior in complex organizations. His work emphasizes that issues such as workplace violence in healthcare are rooted in organizational design, power relations, and cultural norms rather than isolated incidents. Drawing on sociological theory and institutional analysis, the research focuses on structural inequality, role expectations, and systemic pressures, advancing solutions centered on organizational reform, cultural change, and policy intervention across high-stress institutional environments

Annotated Resources & References

1. The Cost of Healing — U.S. News (2026) Features national nursing leadership connecting workplace violence directly to staffing shortages, burnout, and systemic policy failures. Situates violence within broader labor conditions, arguing that chronic understaffing, emotional exhaustion, and institutional constraints create environments where conflict is more likely to escalate into aggression.

2. Healthcare workers face rising workplace violence — InvestigateTV (2026) Examines federal policy debates over how to address workplace violence, contrasting punitive criminal approaches with prevention-oriented reforms. Highlights how policy frameworks often overlook structural causes such as workload, communication breakdowns, and institutional strain.

3. AHA Podcast — American Hospital Association (2026) A high-authority institutional source emphasizing leadership responsibility in violence prevention. Frames workplace violence as a system-level issue requiring organizational redesign, improved reporting systems, and proactive interventions rather than reliance on individual staff resilience.

4. Utah Reporting Law — National Law Review (2026) Outlines new reporting mandates, anti-retaliation protections, and compliance expectations. Demonstrates how workplace violence is increasingly formalized as an institutional responsibility requiring structured documentation, transparency, and accountability.

5. Legislation Heats Up — National Law Review (2026) Surveys expanding legislative efforts across states and federal levels. Shows how workplace violence is moving from an internal operational concern to a regulated issue with legal, financial, and organizational consequences.

6. OIG Audit Workplan — U.S. Department of Labor (2026) Signals growing federal oversight of workplace violence in healthcare. Reflects a shift toward treating violence as an organizational risk requiring monitoring, reporting, and systematic prevention strategies.

7. ACEP Guidance Call (2026) Emergency physicians advocate for standardized prevention measures such as signage and environmental controls. Reinforces the importance of structural design in shaping behavior and reducing escalation in high-pressure clinical settings.

8. Safety+Health Coalition (2026) Highlights coalition efforts to implement visible deterrents and communication strategies. Emphasizes how environmental cues and expectations can influence interactions and reduce conflict escalation.

9. AACN Paradigm Shift (2026) Argues that workplace violence persists because institutions treat it as episodic rather than structural. Calls for systemic reform in staffing, organizational culture, and institutional expectations.

10. Southcoast Health Case (2026) A case study illustrating how healthcare systems are formalizing safety leadership roles. Reflects institutional adaptation to repeated violence patterns through governance and structural change.

11. Psychological Safety — MedCity News (2026) Explores how fear of reporting and weak organizational responses undermine safety. Highlights the relationship between hierarchy, silence, and normalization of workplace violence.

12. Medscape Survey — The DO (2026) Provides survey-based evidence showing widespread exposure to workplace violence. Supports claims that violence is common, underreported, and increasingly normalized within healthcare environments.

13. DocWire News (2026) Outlines practical prevention strategies including reporting systems, staff support, and environmental adjustments. Reinforces the importance of organizational intervention rather than individual coping.

14. Legal Risk — National Law Review (2026) Frames workplace violence as a legal liability issue. Emphasizes that failure to address violence exposes institutions to regulatory penalties and litigation.

15. New York Requirements — JD Supra (2026) Details regulatory expectations for prevention programs, training, and reporting. Illustrates how structural safeguards are becoming standardized across healthcare systems.

16. Washington State Law — WSNA (2026) Focuses on worker protections and reporting requirements. Highlights how risk is unevenly distributed across roles and how policy can address these disparities.

17. Nurse.org Utah Law (2026) Provides a worker-centered explanation of reporting laws. Emphasizes accountability and institutional responsibility in documenting workplace violence.

18. ASIS Data (2026) Analyzes demographic and occupational differences in exposure to workplace violence. Supports arguments about inequality and uneven risk distribution.

19. HSI Report (2026) Links workplace violence to burnout, turnover, and workforce instability. Demonstrates long-term organizational consequences.

20. Penn LDI (2025) Examines emergency department environments as high-risk settings. Identifies structural conditions such as crowding and uncertainty that increase conflict.

21. Mission Local (2025) Case study showing leadership inaction and ignored safety concerns. Highlights consequences of institutional failure to respond.

22. Tri-City Herald (2026) Documents repeated violent incidents reported by nurses. Reinforces normalization and lack of effective institutional intervention.

23. American Prospect (2026) Connects workplace violence to labor organizing and collective action. Demonstrates how safety becomes a central labor issue.

24. Associated Press (2026) Reports on hospital strikes, linking staffing shortages and working conditions to broader institutional strain and safety concerns.

25. Reuters (2025) Survey data showing high levels of workforce attrition. Connects unsafe conditions, including violence, to long-term staffing instability.

26. HealthLeaders (2025) Provides an example of institutional response strategies. Demonstrates how systems attempt to implement prevention measures.

27. Kentucky Hospital Association (2025) Public awareness campaign aimed at reducing violence. Highlights role of communication and culture change.

28. Stateline (2025) National overview of state-level policy responses. Shows increasing recognition of workplace violence as a systemic issue.