Bullying in the nursing workforce has been well studied. We know that bullying can have significant costs and consequences such as:

- **Increased rates of nursing staff turnover** resulting in increased hospital expenditures for recruitment and training costs
- Long-lasting psychological, physical, emotional, and social impacts on bullied Nurses
- Significant increase in the costs of delivering patient care
- Costly medical errors and deleterious patient outcomes

Horizontal Bullying in the workplace is defined from the ONA Nurse-to-Nurse Bullying: A Fact Sheet

Many nurses are familiar with bullying between fellow nurses but do we always recognize bullying by management or superiors in a power differential?

**How to recognize bullying:**

**Bullying** is unwelcome or unreasonable behavior that demeans, intimidates or humiliates people either as individuals or as a group. Bullying behavior is often persistent and part of a pattern, but it can also occur as a single incident. It is usually carried out by an individual but can also be an aspect of group behavior (see “mobbing” below).
Bullying Continued

Some examples of bullying behavior are:

- Verbal communication
- Abusive and offensive language
- Insults
- Teasing
- Spreading rumor and innuendo
- Unreasonable criticism
- Trivializing of work and achievements
- Manipulating the work environment
- Isolating people from normal work interaction
- Excessive demands
- Setting impossible deadlines
- Psychological manipulation
- Unfairly blaming for mistakes
- Setting people up for failure
- Deliberate exclusion
- Excessive supervision
- Practical jokes
- Belittling or disregarding opinions or suggestions
- Criticizing in public

Context is important in understanding bullying, particularly verbal communication. There is a difference between friendly insults exchanged by long-time work colleagues and comments that are meant to be, or are taken as, demeaning. While care should be exercised, particularly if a person is reporting alleged bullying as a witness, it is better to be genuinely mistaken than to let actual bullying go unreported.

You can also take the Bullying Quiz at the end of the packet here: https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.oregonrn.org/resource/resmgr/imported/ONA_Nurse-to-Nurse-Bullying-Intervention-Packet.pdf

Is your department subject to institutional bullying? Rosemary Taylor (2016) in Nurses’ Perception of Horizontal Violence identifies recurring themes:

- Behaviors are minimized and not recognized
- Fear inhibits all reporting
- Avoidance and isolation are coping strategies
- Lack of respect and support
- Organizational chaos

If you are the target of bullying how do you protect yourself?

- As we always heard in nursing school, “document, document, document!” A bullying interaction can be exhausting and stressful, we don’t always recall these incidents well as we are often caught in a “fight or flight” reaction. To keep track of these situations you can use this documentation form for your own use: https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.oregonrn.org/resource/resmgr/sky/SKY_BullyingForm_2019.pdf

ONA stewards are the lifeblood of what makes our union strong. A strong union has at least one steward for every unit and shift. Stewards are there to answer colleague’s questions and discuss concerns and help keep every nurse up to date on important union activities. We offer three, rotating steward trainings. Introductory steward training focuses on representing your coworkers and problem-solving workplace issues. Grievance handling covers identifying, filing and following up on contract grievance. Building worksite power stresses how to build your union and create an environment that results in improvements for nurses. Find the training that works best for you! Register at the link below or scan the QR code above! https://www.oregonrn.org/page/steward-training

2021 Online Training Schedule

**Introductory Steward Training**
- Thursday, August 26, 2021
- Tuesday, Sept. 21, 2021
- Saturday, October 16, 2021
- Wednesday, November 17, 2021
- Thursday, Dec. 9, 2021

**Grievance Handling Training**
- Thursday, July 22, 2021
- Saturday, Oct. 9, 2021

**Building Worksite Power Training**
- Saturday, Aug. 7, 2021
- Wednesday, Nov. 10, 2021

continued on page 3
• In the St. Charles Health System, you can anonymously report bullying behavior via Ethics Point.
• The St. Charles Handbook states: “(Bullying Behavior) Reporting Procedure-This policy is intended to provide caregivers with the most comfortable means of reporting workplace bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, and discrimination. Any caregiver who has a complaint should report it to his or her supervisor, department leadership or Human Resources. He or she can also report the complaint through the Safety Alert System (SAS) and/or the EthicsPoint hotline immediately. Both of these systems allow for anonymous reporting. A caregiver may report the complaint to the supervisor or manager to whom he or she feels most comfortable reporting, even if that supervisor or manager is not the caregiver’s direct supervisor or manager. If a supervisor has knowledge of any situation involving workplace bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, or discrimination he or she must report any information known to Human Resources immediately. If a supervisor neglects to report a complaint, he or she could be subject to corrective action, up to and including termination.”
• Bullying by any nurse (including nurse managers) is reportable to the Oregon State Board of Nursing. Nursing management’s nursing duty is to protect the nurses under their supervision.
• Nurses are required to report bullying to the OSBN as it is conduct derogatory to the standards of nursing:

Conduct Derogatory to the Practice of Nursing:

OAR 851-045-0070 (6) Conduct related to co-workers and health care team members:

(a) Engaging in violent, abusive, or threatening behavior towards a co-worker; or (b) engaging in violent, abusive, or threatening behavior that relates to the delivery of nursing services.

• Additionally, you contact your ONA Executive Team and/or Stewards and your Labor Rep, Liz Weltin weltin@oregonrn.org, to report this behavior.

For further reading and resources:
1) Your St. Charles Redmond BU Webpage has resources at the bottom of the page
https://www.oregonrn.org/page/93
2) ONA Professional Services has these resources
https://www.oregonrn.org/page/103
3) This is a particularly good article on Decoding Bullying in Nursing
4) OSBN May 2020 Sentinel. Article on Bullying and the Nurse Practice Act starts on page 14

Oregon Staffing Law Workshop, July 28

Please join ONA nurse practice consultants and fellow nurses for a virtual Staffing Workshop for nurses in the St. Charles system 5-7 p.m. on Wednesday, July 28.

The workshop will cover best practices for developing a staffing plan and provide education on how you can review your plans to ensure they meet the requirements of the Oregon Hospital Nurse Staffing Law.

Learn more and register at
https://www.oregonrn.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=1535152
ONA is proud to be at the forefront of improving diversity, equity, and inclusion practices within the nursing profession. ONA will host our first-ever Health Equity Conference, with the theme of “A Vision for Nursing and Equity,” on August 5-6, 2021 in Portland.

**Topics Include:**
- The crucial role that equity can, and must, play in nursing and in ensuring health care equity for all
- The connection between nursing practice and health equity
- Identifying opportunities for nursing practice to promote greater health equity for our patients and the communities we serve
- The dual impacts on our Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) nursing colleagues of system failures and facing bias, discrimination, and psychological trauma in the workplace
- The intersectionality of health as a commodity and its historical impacts on diverse communities
- How nurses are ideally positioned to be advocates to advance health equity
- Much more…

**Continuing Education**
Continuing nursing education contact hours will be available. Number TBD.

Oregon Nurses Association is accredited as a provider of nursing continuing professional development by the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Commission on Accreditation.

**Registration**
The ONA Health Equity Conference is FREE for ONA members! To follow current COVID-19 protocols and maintain safe social distancing, we are limiting attendance at the conference, so register early to ensure you are able to attend. Register today at www.OregonRN.org.