

Tuesday, October 27 2015

Dr. Catherine Zahn
President and CEO, CAMH
100 Stokes Street
Toronto, Ontario

Dear Dr. Zahn,

We are writing to express our concerns about the violent and hazardous working conditions throughout CAMH. There is abundant evidence that OPSEU and ONA members are facing serious and unrelenting exposure to workplace violence throughout all CAMH work sites.

Under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the employer and your supervisors are responsible to ensure all reasonable precautions are taken for the protection of workers. We believe the evidence establishes that your supervisors are not trained to be 'competent' under the OHSA. The employers and supervisors are not complying with these duties. Supervisor awareness training is inadequate and insufficient to make your supervisors 'competent' under the OHSA to keep our members safe.

We believe that the violence committee that was established by the employer which includes members of management and both Unions is not working. It appears that this committee was created to appease and placate our members and the Ministry of Labour after criminal charges were laid against CAMH. It also appears that the employer has been using this committee to circumvent the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee.

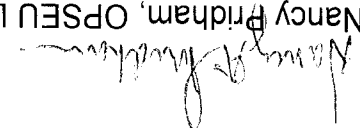
The violence committee started again in January 2015. The only work that has been completed by the committee is the production of a poster. This poster was only approved by the management members of the committee and no Union members.

The committee has had no impact in reducing violence in the workplace assaults and other violent actions against our members. Despite our frustrations with this process we are still deeply committed to working with you to reduce the hazards in our workplace and improve therapeutic care for our clients. We hope you agree that being beaten is not part of a therapeutic relationship. Nurses and staff come to work frightened for their safety and we are asking them to have a positive effect on our client outcomes. We believe that if it isn't safe for our staff, then it can't be safe for our clients.

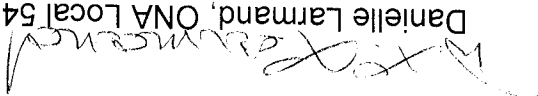
We are asking you as the CEO of CAMH and become more involved in working to reduce and remove violence from the workplace and to commit to taking whatever steps are necessary to protect the staff and patients no matter what the financial implications may be.

Violence in the workplace is not tolerated or allowed under the law. Why is violence tolerated at CAMH?

Sincerely,

Nancy Fritcham, OPSEU Local 500


Thomas Andersson, OPSEU Local 500


Danielle Larmand, ONA Local 54


David Tennant, ONA Local 54
