Health Quality Alberta



Promoting civility for safer patient care

Civility = Safer care

Incivility in healthcare refers to rude, disrespectful, or dismissive behaviours that disrupt teamwork and negatively affect working relationships.

Promote civility

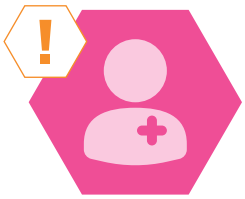
Promoting civility requires an integrated approach with actions at the individual, leadership, and organizational levels.

- **Set expectations**
- **Prevent incivility**
- **Respond consistently**

The impact of incivility

Incivility undermines trust and increases the risk of harm to patients and providers.

Patients under the care of disrespectful physicians are:



- **24-30%** more likely to die if trauma care is required
- **20-40%** more likely to develop sepsis
- **20-30%** more likely to have a surgical site infection

When a healthcare provider is the target of rude behaviour:



- **80%** spend time worrying about it
- **38%** reduced the quality of their work
- **48%** reduced their time at work
- **61%** experience reduced cognitive function

Cooper WO et al. (2019). Association of coworker reports about unprofessional behavior by surgeons with surgical complications in their patients.

Riskin, A., Erez, A., Foulk, T. A., Kugelman, A., Gover, A., Shoris, I., Riskin, K. S., & Bamberger, P. A. (2015). The impact of rudeness on medical team performance: A randomized trial.

Porath, C., & Pearson, C. (2013). The price of incivility.

Health Quality Alberta's *Promoting civility for patient care: A guide and toolkit for healthcare providers and organizations* can help make respect and civility the standard in your workplace. Access the toolkit at hqa.ca/civility.

Organizational self assessment

This checklist can be used as a self-assessment for organizations to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement within their environment. Topics on the checklist that have this symbol ⊖ can be found in Health Quality Alberta's *Promoting civility for patient care: A guide and toolkit for healthcare providers and organizations* (www.hqa.ca/civility).



Set expectations

- ☐ Organization values, including a commitment to just culture, are communicated and monitored. ⊖
- ☐ A code of conduct that includes definitions and examples of expected and unacceptable behaviour is in place. ⊖
- ☐ Policies and procedures related to workplace behaviours are established. ⊖
- ☐ There is visible support from executives, senior leaders, and champions throughout the organization.
- ☐ Executives, senior leaders, managers, and clinical educators model desired behaviours.
- ☐ Interpersonal behaviour is evaluated in recruitment, performance review, and credentialing.

Prevent incivility

- ☐ Psychosocial hazards and workplace stressors are identified and addressed. ⊖
- ☐ Orientation to expectations of workplace behaviour and related policies and procedures is provided during onboarding and on an ongoing basis.
- ☐ Staff formally commit to a code of conduct that is consistently and equitably enforced.
- ☐ Education about what it means to be civil is provided through communication skills training programs for individuals and teams. ⊖
- ☐ Conflict management skills training for managers and teams is provided. ⊖
- ☐ Intervention skills training for managers, leaders, and executives is provided. ⊖
- ☐ An assessment of organization culture and staff perceptions about the extent and impact of incivilities is conducted regularly. ⊖
- ☐ A reporting system or process for identifying concerns about incivilities and other behaviours is in place.
- ☐ Support programs to promote employee wellness are available. ⊖

Respond to incivilities

- ☐ A standardized process for documenting, evaluating, and investigating reports is used. ⊖
- ☐ A visible tiered approach for intervention that emphasizes timely response, self-regulation, positive change, and professional accountability is in place. ⊖
- ☐ A resolution process that considers needs of both the complainant and the respondent is adopted. ⊖