

Emerson Health Workplace Violence Prevention:

Purple Dot Project FAQ

During an encounter, a patient became agitated and threatening. How can I handle these types of situations in a way that's respectful to the patient and protective to me as a staff member?

It is our goal at Emerson, to have a safe and respectful healing environment. We do not want any staff member to experience verbal or physical harassment or threats to their safety at any time during their shift.

- All staff have violence prevention education during orientation and annual training.
- Use de-escalation strategies to maintain a safe work environment.
- FOR ANY PHYSICAL THREAT OR ACTION: call Security for backup

What should I do if the patient continues to escalate?

If the patient continues to escalate, remove yourself/end the conversation with the patient and escalate to your manager. **You always have the option to call security (x1333) any time you feel threatened or unsafe.**

- Remove yourself from the in person interaction
- Immediately contact your supervisor and/or security
- Supervisor will clarify resolution plans and attempt another de-escalation.
- If the patient's inappropriate behavior continues, the care team may meet to work on a Patient Partnership Agreement (PPA)
- Report this interaction as a workplace violence safety report (in RL)
- Consider placing Purple Dot sign in INPATIENT locations

How do I let everyone on the unit know that a patient has been threatening/violent?

The purple dot sign is posted at the doorway of any inpatient who has been aggressive, threatening or violent. **The sign is a signal of potential risk.** The sign will signal to all members of the staff that they need to use caution as they enter the room.

- The sign does not require an order.
- The sign is not documented in the medical record.
- The sign can be used proactively if there is a known history of past violence in hospital.
- The sign can be removed if the patient's presentation changes.
 - Example: delirious patient with agitation clears medically
 - Example: intoxicated patient withdrawing whose behavior stabilizes after detox

What do we do when we see a purple dot sign?

- The sign means “Stop for Safety and Ask before you Enter.”
- Staff who see the sign will check in with the UC/Nurse/PCT to clarify next steps.
 - Unit staff will enter the room to support each other, help the patient based on the safety plan for that patient. Patients with a purple dot can be reviewed in shift huddle for planning.
 - EVS, Food Service, Facilities, Phlebotomy, Rehab, Radiology, Case Managers, Patient Access and other groups who enter patient rooms but may not have immediate access to the medical record will be able to see the sign, **STOP**, check with the UC/Nurse/PCT and make a plan before entering the room. This will increase their safety.
 - The unit staff may want to join you as you enter the room if the patient is currently agitated or may be able to clarify that the patient is agitated at a particular time of day or with certain activities. The team can plan before care is delivered.

How do we explain the purple dot sign to patients, friends or family?

- The Workplace Violence Prevention Committee created a handout for use with patients, family and friends. This handout was reviewed by our Patient Family Advisory Committee. The handout is available on the HUB under Resources Quick Link “Workplace Violence Prevention and Patient & Visitor Code of Conduct.”

Do patients with a purple dot sign get the same care as other patients?

- Yes. All the intended care, treatment and team members will still help the patient, but they may make plans for a specific time and to work with the local staff.
 - Example: EVS will clean the patient room but may discuss with RN to do this during daytime when patient is less confused/agitated.
 - Example: Phlebotomy will still draw labs but may work with the RN to go into the room together and approach the scared autistic patient differently knowing that the lab draw frightens the patient and precipitates agitation.

What if the patient travels off the floor?

- For testing or procedures off the floor, the team will take steps to plan a safe way to manage the patient. This may include scheduling the testing at a particular time or sending unit staff with the patient to help support safety and care.
- The “ticket to ride” transport does not include information about aggression/violence.
- These patients in most cases would not be appropriate for volunteer transport alone.

Why is the dot purple?

- The Workplace Violence Prevention Committee chose purple as it was a relatively neutral color signal, unlike red. The idea was “violet for violence.”
- There are already a number of colors on precaution signs, falling stars and in our color Code system. Purple appeared to be different enough to help staff talk about this issue without confusion with existing processes.

Where can I learn more about this?

- *Inpatient Purple Dot Violence Prevention Guideline* is available on Policy Manager
- All Purple Dot handouts and materials are also available on the HUB under Resources Quick Link “Workplace Violence Prevention and Patient & Visitor Code of Conduct.”
- Please talk about any questions or concerns with local Managers, Directors or Supervisors.