**OAHHS Workplace Safety Initiative (WSI)**

**Safety and Security Assessment Checklist**

Note: This walkthrough focuses the external and internal physical environment within a hospital building. However, the tool can be customized as needed for example to accommodate WPV controls not listed, and/or adapted for use in outpatient clinics, ambulatory surgical centers etc.

***Note:*** This checklist is provided in MS Excel and includes options for tracking corrective action

*Suggested approach when evaluating patient care units/areas and other staff work areas.*

* Explain goal of the walkthrough to unit/dept. manager and charge nurse as applicable.
* Determine through interviews with the manager and staff concerns related to workplace violence on their unit.
* Identify patient characteristics that might be a risk factor (dementia, neurological disorders, behavioral health issues, drug and alcohol abuse etc.), and
* Work tasks/point of-care work/clinical/nursing practices and procedures that may put staff at a higher risk of exposure to violence e.g. working in the ED, behavioral unit, working in security, home health, dispensing drugs, dealing with the public, handling cash, working alone at night, employees who stay behind after regular office hours etc.)
* When completing the checklist,
* identify the job/department/location being assessed (make copies of the checklist section for in-patient units as needed), the name of the person completing the assessment and the date.
* If the answer to a question is ‘No’ then note potential solutions (as able) and if an issue needs to be addressed immediately. Note practices or physical attributes that staff state are working well if useful etc.
* After completing the walkthrough rank or prioritize the risks identified to determine the most serious safety hazards to be addressed first.
* *Refer to Section 3 of the toolkit for more information about how to use this tool.*

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| **Location** | **Yes** | **No** | **If ‘No’ Describe Issue/Potential Solutions/**  **F/U action** |
| 1. **EXTERIOR BUILDING AREAS**   *Note Location/Name of Building name* |  |  |  |
| 1. The workplace is located *away* from any neighborhoods or businesses that are at risk of violent crimes (bars, banks, liquor store, vacant lots etc.) or have experienced violence or crime |  |  |  |
| 1. Violent, criminal, intoxicated or drugged persons have *not* visited the building/facility accidentally |  |  |  |
| 1. Walls or buildings are free of graffiti |  |  |  |
| 1. Buildings *are not* isolated from each other |  |  |  |
| 1. Overall, the property appears well kept |  |  |  |
| 1. Entrances to the building clearly visible from the street |  |  |  |
| 1. All exterior walkways visible to security personnel |  |  |  |
| 1. There are no physical objects/structures that obstruct your view |  |  |  |
| 1. The area surrounding the building free of bushes or other hiding places |  |  |  |
| 1. The exterior of the building including walkways etc., adequately lighted |  |  |  |
| 1. The building entrance (s) adequately lighted |  |  |  |
| 1. Video surveillance provided outside the building |  |  |  |
| 1. Remote areas are secured during off shifts |  |  |  |
| 1. There are fences or other similar security measures |  |  |  |
| 1. Garbage areas, external buildings or equipment that employees use are:    1. In an area with good visibility    2. Close to the main building with no potential   hiding places |  |  |  |
| ***Process Related*** |  |  |  |
| 1. Workers feel safe walking to and from the workplace |  |  |  |
| 1. Security personnel are provided outside the building |  |  |  |
| 1. A buddy escort system is required to remote areas during off shifts |  |  |  |

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| **Location** | **Yes** | **No** | **If ‘No’ Describe Issue/Potential Solutions/**  **F/U action** |
| 1. **PARKING AREAS**   *Indicate location and type of lot e.g. staff vs. patient/visitor parking* |  |  |  |
| 1. Vehicles are protected from being stolen or vandalized on-site |  |  |  |
| 1. Entrances and exits well marked |  |  |  |
| 1. The lot is appropriately signed with security reminders (lock car, security patrolled) |  |  |  |
| 1. Alarms and/or signage for emergency assistance are clearly marked |  |  |  |
| 1. The parking lot is free of blind spots and is landscaping trimmed back to prevent hiding places |  |  |  |
| 1. There is enough lighting to see clearly in the parking lot and when walking to the building |  |  |  |
| 1. There is a nearby parking lot reserved for employees only |  |  |  |
| 1. The parking lot is attended or otherwise secured |  |  |  |
| 1. The lot has controlled entry |  |  |  |
| 1. There are fences or other similar security measures |  |  |  |
| 1. Company vehicles are parked on-site after hours |  |  |  |
| ***Process Related*** |  |  |  |
| 1. Workers feel safe walking to and from the workplace |  |  |  |
| 1. Security escorts are available to employees walking to and from the parking lot |  |  |  |

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| **Location** | **Yes** | **No** | **If ‘No’ Describe Issue/Potential Solutions/**  **F/U action** |
| 1. **Interior Building (Non-Patient Care Units/Treatment Areas)**   *Indicate location* |  |  |  |
| ***Access Control*** |  |  |  |
| 1. The building *is not* connected to other buildings through stairwells, elevators, hallways, or underground tunnels |  |  |  |
| 1. If yes, there is access control to the area |  |  |  |
| 1. Keys or key cards are used to access areas |  |  |  |
| 1. There is a system in place to minimize the distribution of keys or key cards |  |  |  |
| 1. Locks are replaced if keys are lost or stolen |  |  |  |
| 1. Access codes/gate locks are limited to staff only |  |  |  |
| 1. There is a system to alert employees to access by intruders |  |  |  |
| 1. Offices and rooms are signed in all areas so are clearly distinguished from public areas |  |  |  |
| 1. Windows and/or locks are in good order and are not broken |  |  |  |
| ***Stairwells and Exits*** |  |  |  |
| 1. Stairwells and exits are clearly marked |  |  |  |
| 1. Stairwells and exits are well lit |  |  |  |
| 1. Lights cannot be turned off in the stairwell |  |  |  |
| 1. List areas where lighting was a concern, i.e. too dark or too bright during the inspection |  |  |  |
| 1. Lighting is evenly spaced |  |  |  |
| 1. All lights are working |  |  |  |
| 1. Stairwells and exits are controlled with locked doors that have panic bars to allow exit in an emergency |  |  |  |
| 1. Exit doors identify where they exit to |  |  |  |
| 1. There is more than one exit route |  |  |  |
| 1. Exit routes restrict the ability to escape an attacker |  |  |  |
| 1. Stairwell doors lock behind people during or after regular hours of operation |  |  |  |
| 1. Are places at the bottom of stairwells blocked off to prevent someone hiding there |  |  |  |
| ***Hallways/Corridors*** |  |  |  |
| 1. Hallways are well lit |  |  |  |
| 1. Lighting is evenly spaced |  |  |  |
| 1. All lights are working |  |  |  |

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| **Location** | **Yes** | **No** | **If ‘No’ Describe Issue/Potential Solutions/**  **F/U action** |
| 1. Hallway lights cannot be turned off |  |  |  |
| 1. There are *no* places such as alcoves, around corners where someone could hide and wait for staff. |  |  |  |
| 1. You can tell what is at the other end of each walkway or corridor. |  |  |  |
| 1. There are security mirrors (e.g. convex mirrors) in appropriate locations e.g. where hallways meet |  |  |  |
| 1. Chairs and furniture are secured to prevent their use as weapons |  |  |  |
| 1. An alternative, well-lit and frequently travelled route is available |  |  |  |
| 1. It is difficult for someone to predict staff patterns of movement   ❑Very difficult ❑ Somewhat difficult ❑No difficult at all |  |  |  |
| ***Elevators*** |  |  |  |
| 1. You have a full view of whether an elevator is occupied before entering |  |  |  |
| 1. There is an emergency telephone or emergency call button in the elevator |  |  |  |
| 1. There is a response procedure for elevator emergencies |  |  |  |
| ***Process Related*** |  |  |  |
| 1. Workers know what to do if cornered in an elevator by an aggressive patient/visitor etc. |  |  |  |
| ***Restrooms in areas accessed by visitors*** |  |  |  |
| 1. Public access to restrooms is controlled |  |  |  |
| 1. Lights in the restrooms cannot be turned off |  |  |  |
| 1. List areas where lighting was a concern, i.e. too dark or too bright during the inspection |  |  |  |
| 1. Lighting is evenly spaced |  |  |  |
| 1. No lights are out/broken |  |  |  |
| 1. Restrooms are inspected on a regular basis |  |  |  |
| 1. Restrooms have emergency call buttons |  |  |  |
| 1. Washrooms are checked for unauthorized personnel on a regular basis |  |  |  |
| ***Signage*** |  |  |  |
| 1. Immediately inside the building/unit entrance, signs identify where you are |  |  |  |
| 1. Rules for visitors are clearly signed |  |  |  |
| 1. Exit signs are posted |  |  |  |
| 1. The posted signs are highly visible to all |  |  |  |
| 1. The hours of operation are adequately posted |  |  |  |
| 1. Impression of overall signage:   ❑ very poor ❑ poor ❑ satisfactory  ❑ good ❑ very good |  |  |  |

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| **Location** | **Yes** | **No** | **If ‘No’ Describe Issue/Potential Solutions/**  **F/U action** |
| 1. **In Patient Care Units**   *OK to use as a basic list for behavioral health dept. but other safety factors should be reviewed that are specific to this specialty* |  |  |  |
| ***Entry/access point(s) and reception area*** |  |  |  |
| 1. Access to the work areas is only through a reception area |  |  |  |
| 1. The reception area or nursing station is the first point of contact for visitors |  |  |  |
| 1. The reception or nursing station is identifiable/visible and accessible to patients or visitors |  |  |  |
| 1. The people at these stations can see incoming visitors |  |  |  |
| 1. There is a policy for receiving and identifying visitors |  |  |  |
| 1. The reception or nursing station is staffed at all times. If no, do staff sometime work alone there? |  |  |  |
| 1. Outsiders are prevented from entering the unit/dept. if the reception or nursing station is not staffed |  |  |  |
| 1. The reception or nursing station has an emergency call button |  |  |  |
| 1. Someone could hear a worker call for help |  |  |  |
| 1. The reception and work areas are designed to prevent unauthorized entry via physical barriers, e.g. Plexiglas partitions, elevated/deep counters to prevent people from jumping over them, bullet-resistant customer windows, etc. |  |  |  |
| 1. There are *no* objects/tools/equipment in this area that could be used as weapons secure |  |  |  |
| 1. Staff can exit from this area in case of emergency |  |  |  |
| ***Treatment areas/Patient rooms*** |  |  |  |
| 1. Areas used for patient or client interviews allow co-workers to observe any problems |  |  |  |
| 1. There is an alarm/emergency call system |  |  |  |
| 1. The furniture is arranged to allow for emergency exits |  |  |  |
| 1. The furniture is arranged for quick access to a patient during a Code Grey |  |  |  |
| **Location** | **Yes** | **No** | **If ‘No’ Describe Issue/Potential Solutions/**  **F/U action** |
| 1. Objects that are readily available in rooms and have a high potential for being used as weapons (e.g. catheters, injection syringes, glass blood tubes, etc.) *are not* accessible by patients/families/visitors |  |  |  |
| ***Medication/Storage equipment rooms*** |  |  |  |
| 1. Medication rooms are locked with staff access only |  |  |  |
| 1. Medication rooms are arranged to allow for emergency exit |  |  |  |
| 1. Equipment/supply storage areas are tidy and free of hiding places |  |  |  |
| 1. Equipment and supplies in storage areas are arranged to allow for emergency exit |  |  |  |
| ***Waiting areas/Family rooms*** |  |  |  |
| 1. Workers can observe patients or clients in waiting areas |  |  |  |
| 1. The waiting area *does not isolate* patients/clients from staff and hinder communication with workers |  |  |  |
| 1. Furniture in waiting and work areas is arranged to prevent workers from becoming trapped/ allow for emergency exit |  |  |  |
| 1. Waiting and work areas are free of objects that could be used as weapons |  |  |  |
| ***Files/Records*** |  |  |  |
| 1. Confidential files/records are kept in a locked room |  |  |  |
| 1. File cabinets containing confidential records are locked |  |  |  |
| 1. Computers are secured |  |  |  |
| ***General*** |  |  |  |
| 1. There are enough exits and adequate routes of escape |  |  |  |
| 1. Exit doors can be opened only from the inside to prevent unauthorized entry |  |  |  |
| 1. Lighting is adequate to see clearly in indoor areas. List areas where lighting was a concern, i.e. too dark or too bright |  |  |  |
| 1. Lighting is evenly spaced |  |  |  |
| 1. There are no broken lights |  |  |  |
| 1. Chairs and furniture are secured or too heavy to prevent their use as weapons |  |  |  |
| 1. Patient or client areas are designed to maximize comfort and minimize stress (e.g. not noisy, crowded, etc.) |  |  |  |
| **Location** | **Yes** | **No** | **If ‘No’ Describe Issue/Potential Solutions/**  **F/U action** |
| 1. All areas where someone could hide have been addressed |  |  |  |
| 1. There are employee-only work areas that are separate from public areas |  |  |  |
| 1. There are private, locked restrooms available for staff |  |  |  |
| 1. There is a secure place available for workers to store their personal belongings |  |  |  |
| 1. Cabinets and syringe drawers have working locks |  |  |  |
| 1. Doors with open hinges been reviewed to eliminate pinching hazard |  |  |  |
| 1. There are no sharp surfaces or edges that could pose a hazard |  |  |  |

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| ***Other Security Measures***  ***Note if any of the following are present:*** |  |  |  |
| 1. Internal phone system to activate emergency assistance |  |  |  |
| 1. Phones with an outside line programmed to call 911 |  |  |  |
| 1. Personal alarm devices |  |  |  |
| 1. Two-way radios, pagers or cellular phones |  |  |  |
| 1. Security cameras or closed-circuit TV in high- risk areas |  |  |  |
| 1. Panic buttons – (portable or fixed); other alarm systems |  |  |  |
| 1. Security mirrors (convex mirrors) |  |  |  |
| 1. Door locks |  |  |  |
| 1. Secured entry (buzzers) |  |  |  |
| 1. Security alarms and devices are tested regularly |  |  |  |
| 1. There is an area (‘safe room’) that staff can secure themselves for emergencies |  |  |  |
| ***Process Related*** |  |  |  |
| 1. Workers know what to do if a patient and/or visitor/family member is aggressive verbally and/or physically |  |  |  |
| 1. Workers know what to do if cornered by an aggressive patient and/or visitor/family member |  |  |  |
| 1. Workers know when and how to contact security and/or emergency response team/use alarms etc. |  |  |  |
| 1. Workers can identify:    1. The different exit routes available and    2. Safe area(s) in case of emergency |  |  |  |
| 1. Workers know how to report all assaults or threats |  |  |  |

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| **Location** | **Yes** | **No** | **If ‘No’ Describe Issue/Potential Solutions/**  **F/U action** |
| 1. **Emergency Room** |  |  |  |
| ***Entry/access point(s) and admitting, payment areas*** |  |  |  |
| 1. Access to the work areas is only through an admitting desk/area |  |  |  |
| 1. The admitting desk/area is the first point of contact for visitors |  |  |  |
| 1. The admitting desk/area is identifiable/visible and accessible to patients or visitors |  |  |  |
| 1. The people at the admitting desk/area see incoming visitors |  |  |  |
| 1. There is a policy for receiving and identifying visitors |  |  |  |
| 1. The reception or nursing station is always staffed   If no, do staff sometime work alone there? |  |  |  |
| 1. Outsiders are prevented from entering the unit/dept. if the admitting desk/area is not staffed |  |  |  |
| 1. The admitting desk/area has an emergency call button |  |  |  |
| 1. Someone could hear a worker call for help |  |  |  |
| 1. Admitting desk/areas, payment stations and work areas are designed to prevent unauthorized entry via physical barriers, e.g. Plexiglas partitions, elevated/deep counters to prevent people from jumping over them, bullet-resistant customer windows, etc. |  |  |  |
| 1. There are *no* objects/tools/equipment in this area that could be used as weapons secure |  |  |  |
| 1. Staff can exit from this area in case of emergency |  |  |  |
| ***Treatment/Interview/Counseling Rooms/ Patient rooms/Triage areas***  *Identify the type and location of each room* |  |  |  |
| 1. The room is located in a relatively open area that still maintains privacy and confidentially |  |  |  |
| 1. Access is controlled by locked doors |  |  |  |
| 1. Areas used for patient or client interviews allow co-workers to observe any problems e.g., through a window in a door |  |  |  |
| 1. There is an alarm/emergency call system |  |  |  |
| 1. The furniture is arranged to allow for emergency exit |  |  |  |
| 1. The furniture is arranged to allow quick access to a patient during a Code Grey |  |  |  |

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| **Location** | **Yes** | **No** | **If ‘No’ Describe Issue/Potential Solutions/**  **F/U action** |
| 1. Objects that are readily available in rooms and have a high potential for being used as weapons (e.g. catheters, injection syringes, glass blood tubes, etc.) *are not* accessible by patients/families/visitors |  |  |  |
| 1. In open treatment areas etc., the nurse/patient interaction can be viewed or heard from common nursing areas |  |  |  |
| 1. There are *no* rooms that are secluded from regular foot traffic, out of view, or out of range of hearing from the centrally staffed and populated areas (nurses' station, triage, waiting room, etc.) |  |  |  |
| ***Medication/Storage equipment rooms*** |  |  |  |
| 1. Medication rooms are locked with staff access only |  |  |  |
| 1. Are medication rooms arranged to allow for emergency exit |  |  |  |
| 1. Equipment/supply storage areas are tidy and free of hiding places |  |  |  |
| 1. Equipment and supplies in storage areas are arranged to allow for emergency exit |  |  |  |
| ***Waiting areas/Family rooms*** |  |  |  |
| 1. Workers can observe patients or clients in waiting areas |  |  |  |
| 1. The waiting area *does not isolate* patients/clients from staff and hinder communication with workers |  |  |  |
| 1. Furniture in waiting and work areas is arranged to prevent workers from becoming trapped/ allow for emergency exit |  |  |  |
| 1. Waiting and work areas are free of objects that could be used as weapons |  |  |  |
| 1. Patient or client waiting areas are designed to maximize comfort and minimize stress (e.g. not noisy, crowded, etc.) |  |  |  |
| ***Files/Records*** |  |  |  |
| 1. Confidential files/records are kept in a locked room |  |  |  |
| 1. File cabinets containing confidential records are locked |  |  |  |
| 1. Computers are secured |  |  |  |
| ***General*** |  |  |  |
| 1. There are enough exits and adequate routes of escape |  |  |  |
| 1. Exit doors can be opened only from the inside to prevent unauthorized entry |  |  |  |

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| **Location** | **Yes** | **No** | **If ‘No’ Describe Issue/Potential Solutions/**  **F/U action** |
| 1. Public (visitor) access to treatment areas is restricted |  |  |  |
| 1. Lighting is adequate to see clearly in indoor areas List areas where lighting was a concern, i.e. too dark or too bright |  |  |  |
| 1. Lighting is evenly spaced |  |  |  |
| 1. There are no broken lights |  |  |  |
| 1. Chairs and furniture are secured or too heavy to prevent their use as weapons |  |  |  |
| 1. Patient or client areas are designed to maximize comfort and minimize stress (e.g. not noisy, crowded, etc.) |  |  |  |
| 1. Areas where someone could hide have been eliminated |  |  |  |
| 1. There are employee-only work areas that are separate from public areas |  |  |  |
| 1. There are private, locked restrooms available for staff |  |  |  |
| 1. There is a secure place available for workers to store their personal belongings |  |  |  |
| ***External*** |  |  |  |
| 1. The parking lot and ambulance area are monitored for safety |  |  |  |
| 1. The ambulance entrance is a restricted access point of entry |  |  |  |
| 1. The ambulance entrance is located near treatment areas |  |  |  |
| 1. Transport teams and other staff can readily communicate with the emergency department staff from the ambulance entry |  |  |  |
| 1. The parking lot and ambulance entrance is well-lit |  |  |  |
| 1. Hospital security patrols the surrounding exterior of the emergency department |  |  |  |
| **Other Security Measures:**  **Are the following present** |  |  |  |
| 1. A hospital security officer monitors the flow of traffic into the emergency department from outside |  |  |  |
| 1. Surveillance equipment is being used inside the emergency department and/or on the grounds surrounding the emergency department.   If there is surveillance equipment being used, note where the cameras are located, who monitors the surveillance video and how frequently this occurs and if it is functioning. |  |  |  |

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| **Location** | **Yes** | **No** | **If ‘No’ Describe Issue/Potential Solutions/**  **F/U action** |
| 1. Internal phone system to activate emergency assistance |  |  |  |
| 1. Phones with an outside line programmed to call 911 |  |  |  |
| 1. Personal alarm devices |  |  |  |
| 1. Two-way radios, pagers or cellular phones |  |  |  |
| 1. Panic buttons – (portable or fixed); other alarm systems |  |  |  |
| 1. Security mirrors (convex mirrors) |  |  |  |
| 1. Door locks |  |  |  |
| 1. Secured entry (buzzers) |  |  |  |
| 1. Security alarms and devices are tested regularly |  |  |  |
| 1. There is an area (‘safe room’) that staff can secure themselves for emergencies |  |  |  |
| ***Process Related*** |  |  |  |
| 1. Workers know what to do if a patient and/or visitor/family member is aggressive verbally and/or physically |  |  |  |
| 1. Workers know what to do if cornered by an aggressive patient and/or visitor/family member |  |  |  |
| 1. Workers know when and how to contact security and/or emergency response team/use alarms etc. |  |  |  |
| 1. Workers can identify:    1. The different exit routes available and    2. Safe area(s) in case of emergency |  |  |  |
| 1. Workers know how to report all assaults or threats |  |  |  |

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| **Location** | **Yes** | **No** | **If ‘No’ Describe Issue/Potential Solutions/**  **F/U action** |
| 1. **Pharmacy** |  |  |  |
| 1. There is another way out for an emergency exit |  |  |  |
| 1. Furniture/counters are arranged to allow both visibility and protection of staff |  |  |  |
| 1. Counter and other work areas are designed to prevent unauthorized entry via physical barriers, e.g. Plexiglas partitions, elevated/deep counters to prevent people from jumping over them, bullet-resistant customer windows, etc. |  |  |  |
| 1. The area does have an alarm system/emergency call button |  |  |  |
| 1. Workers *do not* work alone |  |  |  |
| 1. Workers know the emergency alert procedures |  |  |  |
| 1. Someone could hear a worker call for help |  |  |  |
| 1. There are *no* objects/tools/equipment in this area that could be used as weapons secure |  |  |  |
| 1. Pharmacy staff are not required to handle cash |  |  |  |
| 1. **Other treatment areas/offices where patients are interviewed etc.** |  |  |  |
| 1. Areas used for patient or client interviews allow co-workers to observe any problems |  |  |  |
| 1. There is an alarm/emergency call system |  |  |  |
| 1. The furniture is arranged to allow for emergency exits |  |  |  |
| 1. The furniture is arranged to maintain a safe distance between the staff and client |  |  |  |
| 1. The furniture is arranged for quick access to a patient during a Code Grey |  |  |  |
| 1. Objects that are readily available in treatment rooms and have a high potential for being used as weapons (e.g. catheters, injection syringes, glass blood tubes, etc.) *are not* accessible by patients/families/visitors |  |  |  |
| 1. These rooms have good natural surveillance (shatterproof glass in walls and doors) or are in areas where someone could hear a worker call for help |  |  |  |

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| **Location** | **Yes** | **No** | **If ‘No’ Describe Issue/Potential Solutions/**  **F/U action** |
| 1. **Other Rooms and Storage Areas** |  |  |  |
| 1. Unoccupied rooms are locked |  |  |  |
| 1. Other places, such as recessed doorways, unlocked storage areas, and stairwells, where someone could hide out of view of others have been addressed |  |  |  |
| 1. Physical objects/structures that obstruct a person’s view have been addressed |  |  |  |
| 1. **Individual Offices** |  |  |  |
| 1. Furniture is arranged to allow for emergency exits |  |  |  |
| 1. Objects that can be thrown or used as weapons been minimized |  |  |  |
| 1. These rooms have good natural surveillance (shatterproof glass in walls and doors) or are in areas where someone could hear a worker call for help |  |  |  |
| 1. There is an alarm/emergency call system |  |  |  |
| 1. **Files/Records in non-patient unit areas** |  |  |  |
| 1. Confidential files/records kept in a locked room |  |  |  |
| 1. File cabinets containing confidential records are locked |  |  |  |
| 1. Computers are secured |  |  |  |
| 1. **Cafeterias** |  |  |  |
| 1. There is an alarm/emergency call system |  |  |  |
| 1. Furniture in waiting and work areas arranged to prevent workers from becoming trapped/ arranged to allow for emergency exit |  |  |  |
| 1. **Other Areas as identified during the walkthrough** |  |  |  |
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