

Self-Assessment for Identifying Potential Challenges in Your Facility

Review Policy and Procedures

- Does your facility have policies and procedures in place that identify processes for checking inventory and tracking sharps on each shift?
- When sharps are missing, are the procedures clear on when to notify custody? Do staff know who they need to report sharps discrepancies to?
- Do the policies and procedures address all aspects of the NCCHC standard?
- Do you have an emergency response protocol to assist health staff when needed?
 - Have you evaluated response times when a panic button is pushed?
 - Are teams assigned to respond to the health clinic?
- Is there an established training program regarding emergency response protocols?
- Does your facility have a process to check emergency response devices, such as panic buttons, on a regular schedule? Is it a written policy or protocol?
- Do you have a policy and procedure in place for evaluating safety and security concerns coming from health staff? Custody staff?

Talk with Custody and the Healthcare Team

- Verify that emergency communication systems are in working order.
- Ask custody and healthcare staff what they would do in an emergency.

- Verify they know where to find panic buttons and how to use the various devices.
- Ask staff to show you where the panic buttons are and ask if they feel they have easy access in case of an emergency.
- Ask custody staff to tell you how they respond to emergencies in the clinical areas or during med pass. Verify answers with your policy on emergency response. Ask custody staff if the training provided adequately prepares them on how to handle the emergency.
- Ask the healthcare team how they track sharps and ask to see logs for each shift.
- Ask the healthcare team what they would do if a sharp went missing. Who do they notify? What process do they follow? Verify with your policy.
- Ask the healthcare team if they track needle sticks and if they have a needle stick injury prevention program. Ask to see the data and assess how many needle stick injuries there have been.
- Ask the healthcare team what equipment they use when operating the x-ray machine or are involved in radiology. The facility should be tracking radiation exposure and verifying that radiation aprons are in good shape without tears or holes.
- Ask to see the training materials for agency staff who work in clinical areas and verify that emergency response and sharps count policy covered.

Assess the Environment

- Create a schedule to test emergency response systems. Verify that testing

has been completed according to your policy.

- Verify that panic buttons and other emergency response communication systems are in working order.
- Evaluate the clinic space to see if there are areas where health staff could be trapped and to see if there is anything you can do to address the issue.
- Assess custody staffing and the impact of low staffing on healthcare operations.
 - Ask health staff if they feel safe when caring for the incarcerated.
 - Ask if they feel unsafe in the clinic areas or during med pass. Try and understand what the concerns are.
 - Ask what would help them to feel safer.
 - Ask health staff if patients are being seen in a timely fashion. Assess if there are unnecessary delays in treatment due to lack of custody escorts.
- Consider conducting practice drills that involve a healthcare security concern and evaluate the response. Drills are a good way not only to evaluate response time but also to check equipment and verify that staff understand the process.

Key Takeaways

- Any issues that come up during your discussions might include opportunities to enhance policy, procedures, or training enhancements.
- CQI process studies are a great way to understand specific root causes and will help to focus improvement efforts where needed.

Share what you learned with your custody staff and the healthcare team.