

**Poster Session III**

**Poster # 13**

***Making Things Right: A Qualitative Study of How Nurses Encounter and Resolve Workplace Aggression and Bullying***

Donna A. Gaffney, DNSc, PMHCNS-BC, FAAN, International Trauma Studies Program, Summit, NJ ~ Wendy Budin, PhD, RN-BC, NYU Langone Medical Center, New York, NY ~ Rosanna DeMarco, PhD, PHCNS-BC, ACRN, FAAN, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA ~ Anne Hofmeyer, PhD, RN, MRCNA, International Centre for Allied Health Evidence, UniSA, Klemzig, South Australia ~ Judith Vessey, PhD, CRNP, FAAN, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the experiences, motivations and consequences of nurses who have encountered bullying/aggressive behaviors in the healthcare workplace. While bullying in healthcare settings has been recognized worldwide, there is still a culture of silence in many institutions, perpetuating underreporting and insufficient interventions. These deliberate, aggressive behaviors can cause psychological or physical harm in professionals and disrupt nursing care and patient safety. Much of the literature focuses on bullying categories and nurse responses, yet there is limited information on how nurses resolve workplace bullying for themselves and their patients. A convenience sample of 99 US participants self-completed an optional open-ended question embedded in an online survey in 2007. Constructivist grounded theory methods of concurrent data collection, reflective memoing and constant comparative technique were used to analyze data from 81 participants' narratives describing a bullying situation. This qualitative study shaped a grounded theory of how nurses make things right when confronted with bullying events. In a four-part process they place bullying in context, assess the situation, take action and judge the outcomes of their actions. While many nurses do engage in a number of valuable strategies, two concerns emerged: inadequate support among nursing colleagues and silence/inaction on the part of nursing administration. Nurses engage in a multifaceted process to resolve bullying and can offer new strategies for this global problem. Different approaches are proposed for each part of the process of making things right. Critical steps are the nurse's transition from bystander to upstander and the need for nursing administrators to collaborate in order to develop more effective outcomes.