

# Mercy Gilbert Medical Center

A member of CHW

# **Workplace Bullying and Intent to Leave: Measuring the Impact of Horizontal Hostility**

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# Purpose of research study

- Determine prevalence of Horizontal Hostility in a community hospital in the Southwest
- Examine whether a relationship existed between perceived Horizontal Hostility and intent to leave current position

# Background

## Horizontal Hostility (HH)

- Bullying, lateral violence, peer incivility, nurses 'eating their young'
- Behaviors consistent with HH vary; range from overt manifestations (e.g., infighting, passive-aggressive gestures such as eye rolling) to more covert actions including failure to respect confidences
- Apparent when the workplace culture or norm enables dominant individuals to pressure those who are more vulnerable
- Origins of behavior: power vs. powerlessness; oppression by nurses toward other nurses as a characteristic of oppressed group behavior
- Nurses who report greatest degree of perceived hostility also report the highest rate of burnout
- Impaired personal relationships in the healthcare workplace lead to diminished work performance and higher rates of absenteeism

# Impact of Horizontal Hostility

In healthcare, HH can lead to:

- Diminished productivity and increased absenteeism (Bartholomew, 2006)
- Burnout (Thomas, 2003)
- Anxiety (Rowell, 2005)
- Depression (Rowell, 2005)
- Post traumatic stress disorder (Rowell, 2005)
- Suicide (Hastie, 1995)

# Methods

- 28-item survey
- Modeled after 3 validated survey tools
  - AACN and National Association of Children's Hospitals and related Institutes study
  - “Lateral Violence in Nursing Survey” study (Stanley, 2007)
  - “Civility of the work place environment” (Longo, 2007; Vessey et al, 2009)



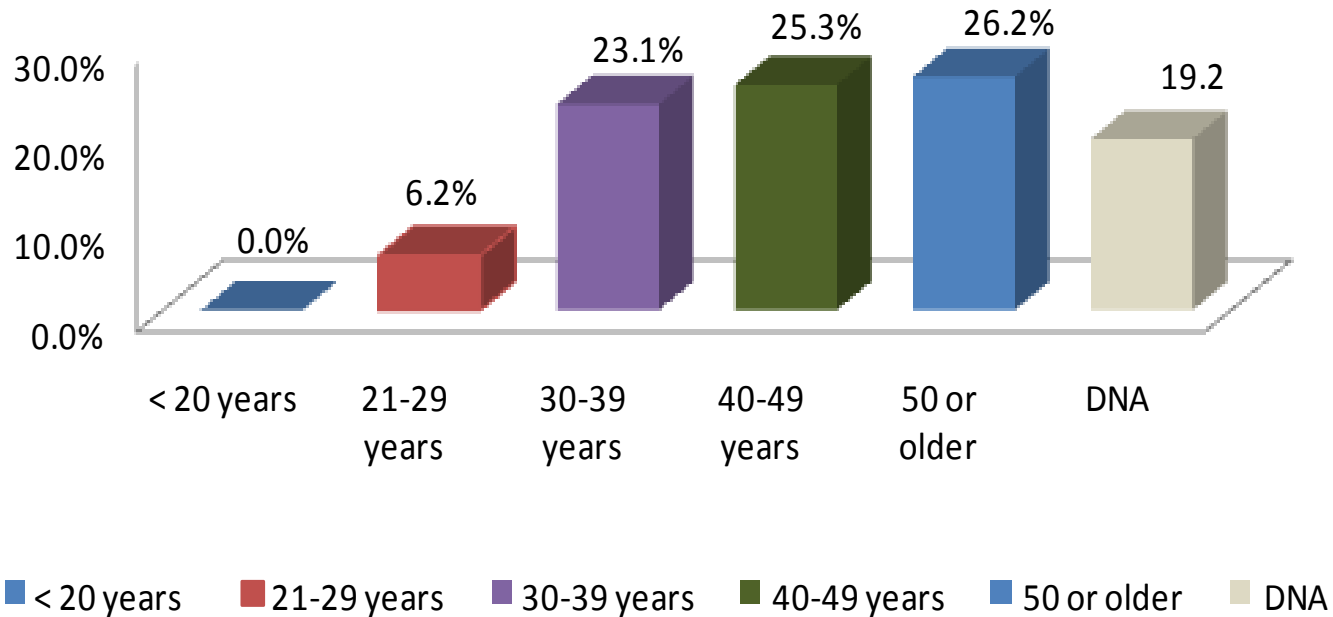


# Process

- IRB approved survey November 2010
- Research Council members assigned to hand out surveys to all hospital RNs
- Nurses asked to complete survey and return to locked survey boxes located throughout hospital
- Surveys collected Dec, 1 2010 – Jan 31, 2011
- 130 completed surveys returned (28%)



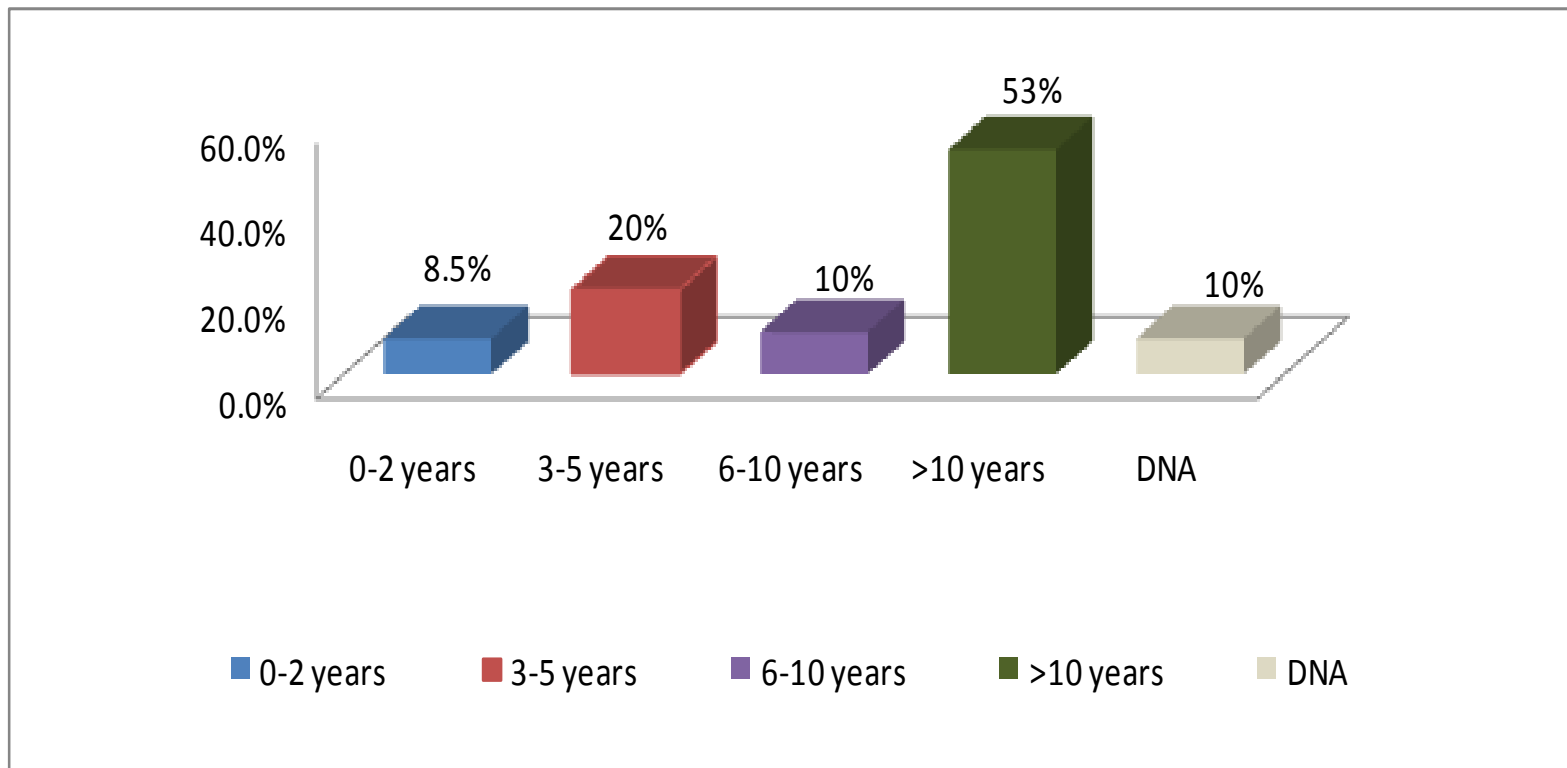
# Current Age



**Participant responses n = 130**

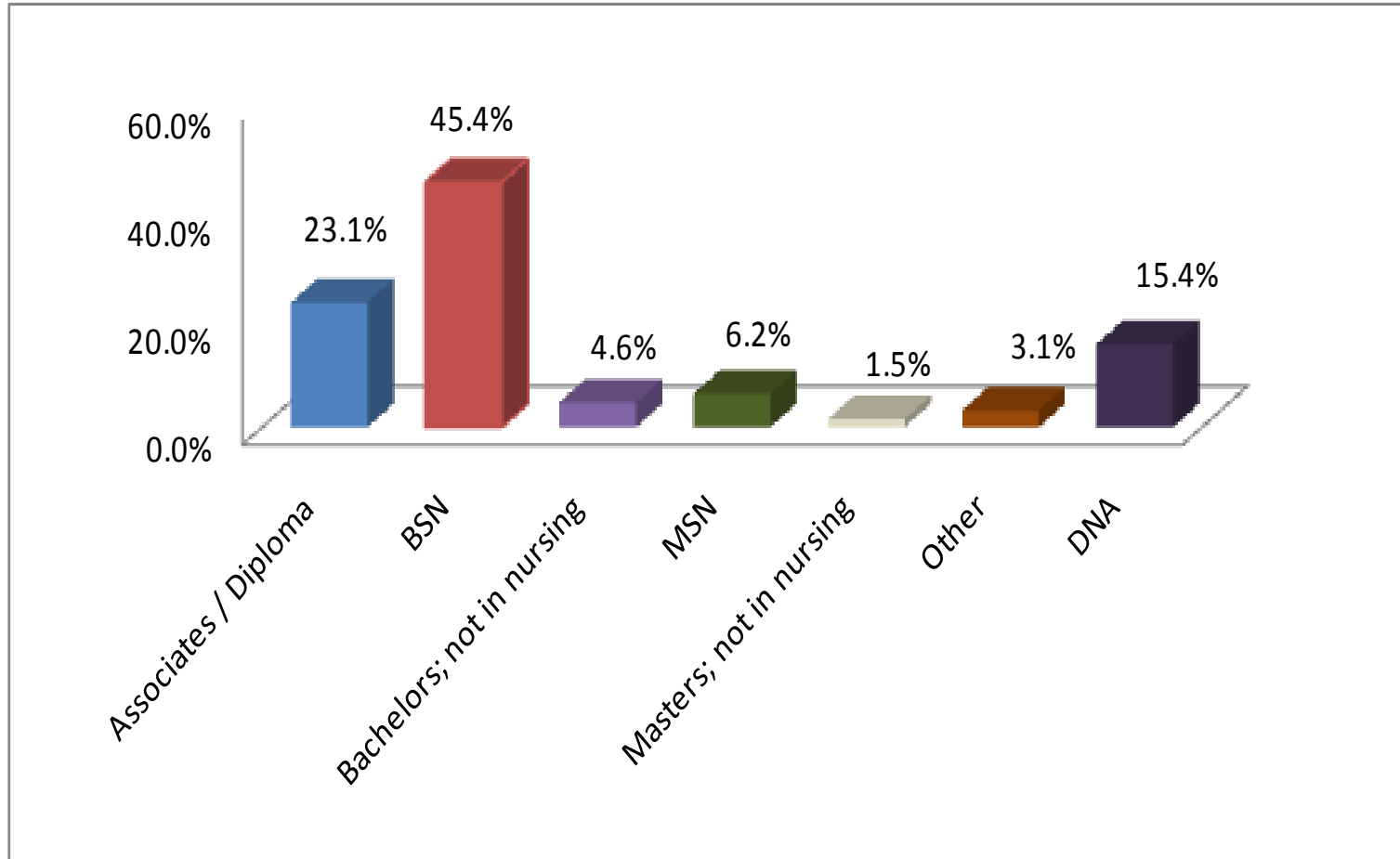
\*DNA = Did Not Answer

# Years experience in current role



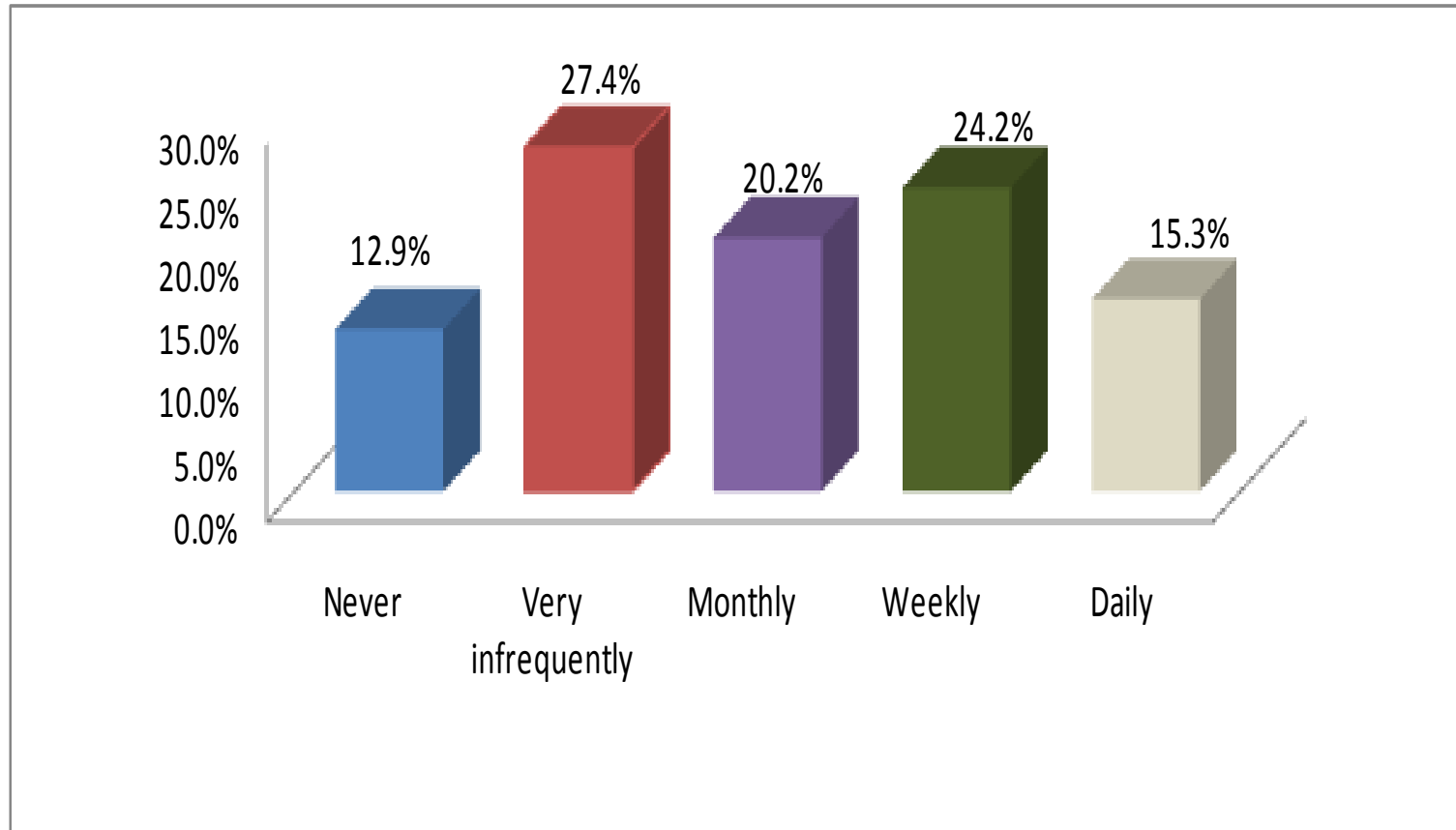
**Participant demographics (n = 130)**

# Educational preparation



Participant demographics (n = 130)

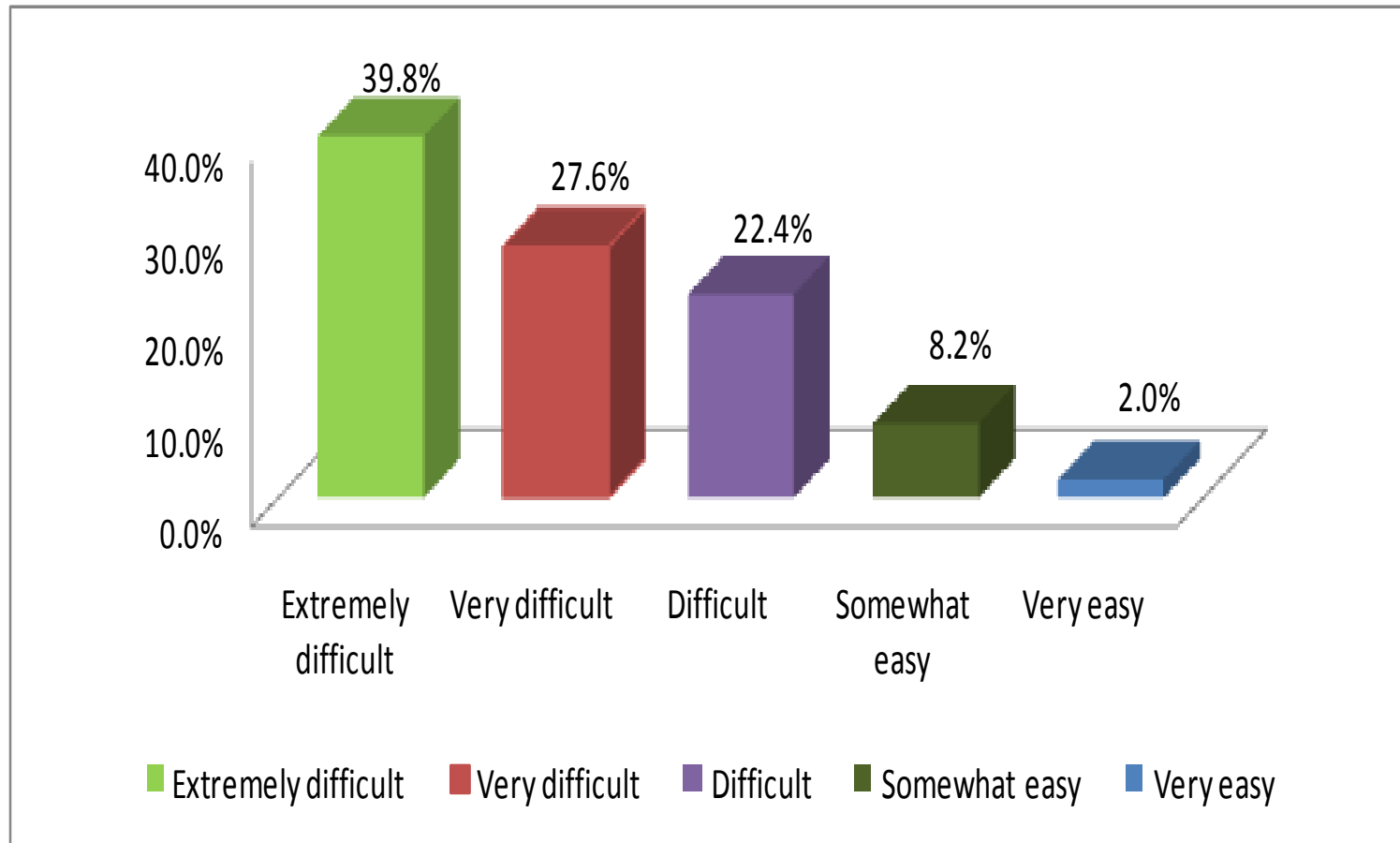
# How frequently do you see someone demonstrate HH or bullying behaviors?



**Participant Responses (n = 124)**

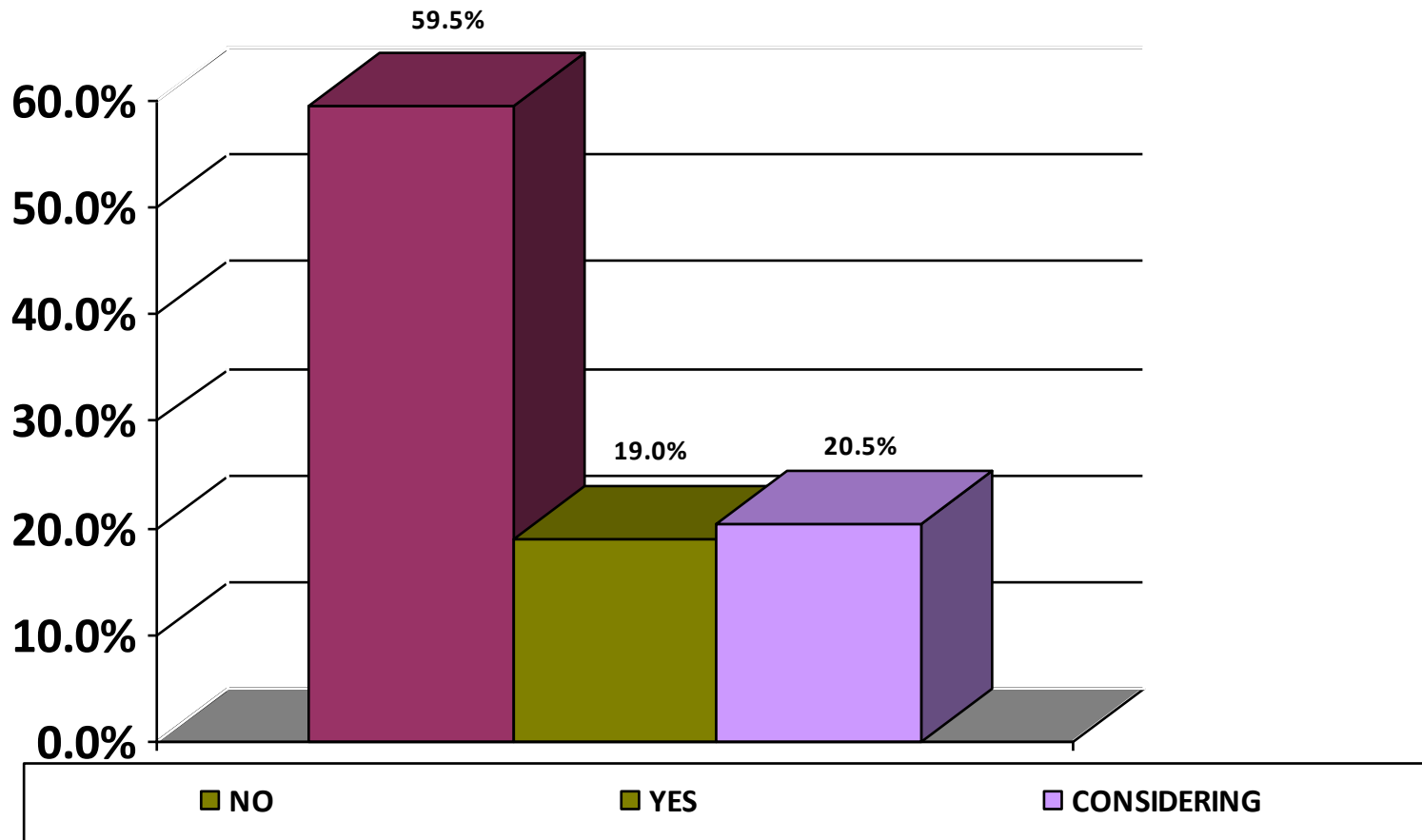
Note: 6 did not answer this question

# How difficult is it to confront someone who is demonstrating hostile behavior?



**Participant responses (n = 98)**

# Are you considering leaving your position due to Horizontal Hostility?



Participant responses (n = 121)

\*Note: 9 respondents chose not to answer this question



## Potential impact of HH on nursing turnover

Organizational costs of Horizontal Hostility

# Cost of RN turnover

- Pendry (2007) estimates that the cost to recruit, hire, and orient a medical / surgical nurse is \$92,000; and up to \$145,000 for a specialty nurse
- The costs associated with a typical RN turnover rate of 19% (Jones, 2008) in a hospital with 500 nurses will cost the organization between 7.8 and 9 million per year
- In addition to financial costs, RN turnover is associated with higher nurse-to-patient ratios and compromised patient care (Bae et al., 2010; Boyle & Miller, 2008; Kane et al., 2007)
- Previous studies have found intent to leave is a strong predictor of employment turnover (Kovner et al., 2009; Hayes et al., 2006; Shader et al., 2001)





## Study Conclusions

Next steps . . . .

# The effect of HH in the acute care setting

- Influences job satisfaction and well being
- Contributes to high turnover rates
- Leaders at all levels should be alert to the potential for HH in their workplace
- The effect of HH on the financial viability of the organization can be underestimated
- Assessment of hospital work environment should include nurse perception of hostile / intimidating behaviors
- Steps must be taken to educate staff, managers, and leaders, and effective systems and processes must be implemented



## Questions?

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