

Immersive Training in Outpatient Violence Prevention

A Continuing Education Program for Licensed Mental Health Clinicians

Empathian | Robert E. Feinstein, MD

Course Overview

Violence in clinical settings represents one of the most pressing and undertreated challenges in healthcare today. Mental health professionals face rates of verbal and physical aggression that far exceed those of most other professions — yet formal training in violence prevention remains rare and inconsistent. This continuing education program directly addresses that gap, providing licensed mental health clinicians with an integrated, evidence-based framework for recognizing, assessing, managing, and preventing violence across inpatient and outpatient settings.

Drawing on decades of clinical and academic expertise, the curriculum moves systematically through five interlocking domains: situational awareness and emergency preparedness; behavioral de-escalation of the acutely agitated patient; structured violence and suicide risk assessment using the VASA Scale; clinical interviewing of the potentially violent patient; and the legal and ethical obligations arising from Tarasoff, Duty to Protect, and Red Flag laws. The course closes with concrete tools for safety planning at discharge and active threat response in the clinical environment. Each seminar is highly interactive, with participants engaged through case practice, video observation, and structured group discussion.

What You Will Learn

Participants will gain practical, integrative competencies across the full arc of clinical violence prevention, including:

- Situational awareness and environmental safety assessment in outpatient settings
 - Behavioral de-escalation techniques for the acutely agitated or threatening patient
 - Structured violence and suicide risk assessment using the validated VASA Scale
 - Clinical interviewing strategies for the potentially violent patient
 - Legal and ethical obligations under Tarasoff, Duty to Protect, and Red Flag laws
 - Safety planning and structured discharge protocols following violence risk assessment
 - Active threat response and shots-fired protocols for the clinical environment
-

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this activity, participants will be able to:

- Identify environmental risk factors and implement situational awareness strategies to enhance safety in outpatient clinical settings

- Apply evidence-based behavioral de-escalation techniques to effectively manage acutely agitated or potentially violent patients
- Conduct structured violence and suicide risk assessments using the VASA Scale and integrate findings into clinical decision-making
- Demonstrate effective clinical interviewing skills when evaluating patients who present with threats, agitation, or a history of violence
- Articulate clinician obligations under Tarasoff, Duty to Protect statutes, and relevant Red Flag laws, and apply these to real-world clinical scenarios
- Develop individualized safety discharge plans and apply structured protocols to manage patients following a violence risk assessment
- Describe active threat response procedures, including shots-fired protocols, and apply these to clinical workplace safety planning

Program Format

This intensive, one-day program combines video observation, evidence-based didactic instruction, case practice examples, and structured group discussion to ensure that skill transfer is immediate and clinically grounded — not merely informational. Participants will have the opportunity to apply assessment tools in real time, discuss their own clinical cases, and receive expert guidance in a small-group format.

Schedule at a Glance

Time	Session
8:00 – 8:15	Introduction & Program Overview
8:15 – 9:15	Session 1: Violence Prevention Overview, Situational Awareness & Emergency Preparedness
9:15 – 10:15	Session 2: Behavioral De-Escalation of the Acutely Agitated Patient (with Video Observation)
10:15 – 10:30	<i>Break</i>
10:30 – 11:45	Session 3: Clinical Interviewing & Violence/Suicide Risk Assessment — VASA Scale (with Case Practice)
11:45 – 12:45	Session 4: Tarasoff, Duty to Protect & Red Flag Laws — Participant Case Discussion
12:45 – 1:30	<i>Lunch</i>
1:30 – 2:45	Session 5: Safety Discharge Planning — Case Practice Example & Group Discussion
2:45 – 4:00	Session 6: Active Threat Response — Shots Fired Protocol: Group Discussion & Simulation

Target Audience

This program is designed for licensed mental health clinicians — psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and counselors — practicing across inpatient and outpatient settings who encounter patients with a history of, or risk for, violence, aggression, or threats to self or others.

Continuing Education Credit

This activity has been designed for 6.75 Credit hours to meet the educational needs of licensed mental health clinicians. All content is derived from peer-reviewed literature and validated clinical instruments. No commercial support has been received for this activity, and planners have no relevant financial conflicts of interest to disclose.

Program Fees

Fee: \$350 per person practicing clinician
\$200 per person recent graduates (3 years)
\$100 Students (With an ID)

Faculty

Robert E. Feinstein, MD is a board-certified psychiatrist, psychoanalyst, and Professor of Clinical Psychiatry at Northwell/Zucker/Hofstra School of Medicine, with over 40 years of clinical, supervisory, and academic experience. He is founder and CEO of Empathian and has held senior academic leadership roles across Columbia University, New York Medical College, the University of Colorado, and Dell Medical School. He is the author of more than 100 publications and three Oxford University Press textbooks.
