15.1: Introduction

Learning Objectives

- Delineate adverse childhood experiences
- Incorporate trauma-informed care
- Assess clients for signs of abuse or neglect and intervene appropriately
- Promote safety for victims of abuse, neglect, or intimate partner violence
- Describe strategies to remain safe if workplace violence occurs

The health care system is composed of people who have experienced trauma, both those providing and those receiving care. Supporters of a trauma-informed approach recognize the prevalence of trauma survivors within health care settings and are aware that the service setting can also be a source of re-traumatization. As stated in the article “Trauma-Informed Nursing Practice,” understanding how trauma has affected patients’ lives and their interactions within the health care system is fundamental to responding to patients’ needs and promotes better physical and mental health outcomes.\(^1\)

Nurses provide care for clients who are experiencing or have experienced neglect, abuse, and intimate partner violence. In many settings, nurses may experience workplace violence while caring for clients who are agitated or combative. This chapter will discuss adverse childhood experiences and trauma-informed care, abuse and neglect of children and vulnerable adults, intimate partner violence, and workplace violence. Be aware that the content in this chapter may trigger powerful emotions, especially for survivors of similar traumatic experiences. Self-awareness and self-care practices should guide your engagement with this chapter.

Read the article “Trauma-Informed Nursing Practice” in the Online Journal of Issues in Nursing published by the...