

Sexual Harassment By A Patient: Nurse Covered By Worker’s Comp.

A nurse was fondled by a male patient as she got very close to him to work on his dialysis access site.

The incident was witnessed by another nurse and was immediately reported to the unit nursing supervisor.

The victim started having psychological symptoms and began seeing a therapist. Things went from bad to worse. Her psychiatrist diagnosed her with PTSD, while her employer’s company doctors thought it was a less-serious adjustment disorder.

The incident with the patient qualified as an on-the-job accident for purposes of worker’s compensation and the nurse’s adjustment disorder qualified as an on-the-job injury for which the nurse was entitled to compensation for her medical bills and 5% total permanent disability, the Missouri Court of Appeals ruled. Jones v. Washington University, __ S.W. 3d __, 2007 WL 4233443 (Mo. App., December 4, 2007).