



Two-thirds of nurses face work abuse

Six in 10 nurses have been verbally abused over the last two years while working in the community, the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) has warned. Eleven per cent have also been victims of physical abuse, RCN found. Some 16 per cent of the more than 760 nurses questioned said their employer would not take action on verbal abuse while a further 33 per cent neither agreed nor disagreed. And six per cent felt their employer would fail to take action on physical abuse, with a further 21 per cent neither agreeing nor disagreeing. RCN chief Dr Peter Carter told the Morning Star newspaper: 'I am utterly appalled that nurses continue to be subjected to violence. Nurses working alone in the community are vulnerable and are often without backup or immediate help close by. Out of sight should not mean out of mind.' He added: 'While it is not surprising that respondents felt their employer would be more likely to take action as a result of physical rather than verbal abuse, it is still completely unacceptable that it should have to come to a nurse suffering physical violence before something is done.'

Cameron is 'irresponsible and dangerous'

The prime minister's 'repeated attacks' on workplace health and safety measures 'are irresponsible and dangerous,' the union representing Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspectors has warned. Commenting after David Cameron's 5 January resolution to a business audience that his government would 'kill off' health and safety, Prospect said two recent reviews commissioned by the government had concluded the existing system worked. The latest, headed by Professor Ragnar Löfstedt, reported late last year with the professor concluding: 'I have neither seen nor heard any evidence to suggest that there is a case for radically altering or stripping back current health and safety regulation.' Prospect health and safety officer Sarah Page commented: 'Unfortunately, the prime minister seems determined to ignore the findings of his own advisers and play fast and loose with the facts in a way that can only be harmful to the health of millions of British workers.' Unite general secretary Len McCluskey denounced David Cameron's 'callous and out-touch' comments. 'Strong health and safety regulations to protect workers, and the right to hold employers to account should be central to a modern and civilised society,' he added. 'David Cameron and his coalition government are dragging this country backwards. The government should be doing everything possible to protect the health and safety of workers in this country, not undermining it.' Mick Whelan, general secretary of the train drivers' union ASLEF, said: 'It is a sad reflection on our society that the words 'health' and 'safety' can be mocked by our prime minister. These are not dirty words. It is the basic mark of a civilized society that people should be protected from death and injury - and this must apply equally to the work environment as anywhere else.'