



On Campus Hospital Armed Assailant Case Study

March 2023

Mercy Hospital & Medical Center Armed Assailant Incident

- November, 2018 Chicago, IL
- A gunman killed a Chicago police officer, an emergency room doctor, and a pharmacist
- He fired about 40 shots before dying in a shootout with a SWAT officer
- He carried multiple magazines for his 9mm Glock 17 handgun
- He first killed his ex-fiancé (the ED physician) outside the hospital (claiming he was there for his engagement ring) before going in and killing the pharmacist, who was getting off an elevator
- He next exited the hospital, only to return back inside to flee from police
- He then played “peekaboo” with the officers firing the gun in the hallway, and that’s when the officer was hit and killed
- In total, it was a 20-minute confrontation with police, only gunfire from police came from a SWAT team member who fired four or five shots, with one hitting the gunman
- After shooter was hit by officer, he then shot himself in the head
- SWAT officers arrived to the hospital within two or three minutes of the shooting, because they were already in the area
- Officer that was shot was on a mail run with his partner – they saw all the squads drive by and followed, despite not knowing what was happening because they were tuned to a radio frequency that did not mention the shooting
- Gunman had legally purchased his gun and had a concealed and carry license
- Gunman had threatened to “shoot up” the Chicago Fire Department Academy nearly five years ago, around the time he was fired for failing to show up to work, while facing allegations of “improper conduct” toward women there
 - His ex-wife had gotten a temporary order of protection from him in 2014, alleging that he slept with pistol under his pillow and had pointed the gun at someone with ill intent

National Facts:

- Joint Commission released a report in June 2021 stating that from 2010-2020 they received reports from its accredited organizations of 39 shootings that resulted in 39 deaths
 - 21 that were killed were staff members (10 shot by a patient, 5 shot by a visitor, 4 shot by family member, and 2 shot by a current or former staff member)
 - 18 that were killed were patients (15 shot by a family member, 2 shot by a visitor, and 1 shot by another patient)
 - Of the 39 killed, 12 were murder/suicides, mostly mercy killings that results in the deaths of the patient and the shooter, who was the patient’s spouse/significant other
 - Other “suicide” deaths result from contact with security (“suicide by cop”) involving an active shooter scenario

- Active shooter situations are often over within 15 minutes

Impacts:

- Patient and visitor safety/evacuation
- Incoming ambulances and walk-ins during incident
- Staff, responder, patient and hospital visitor recovery
- Media

Preparedness:

- Involve local law enforcement in your plans
 - Discuss your plans with them and how you can control access and egress to your building or area, while allowing law enforcement to move about
 - Make sure they are familiar with your building's layout
 - Have an organization contact to act as liaison with law enforcement
- Develop a communication plan
 - Establish a primary communication method with law enforcement
 - Develop an employee hotline with recorded message
- Assess and prepare your building
- Establish processes and procedures to ensure patient and employee safety
- Train and drill employees
 - How to report and respond to active shooter events
 - What to expect when law enforcement arrives
 - How to protect patients
 - Awareness of high-risk security sensitive areas (such as ED, OR, and pharmacy)
 - Train leadership in the IC role
 - Conduct periodic drills and exercises
- Plan for post-event activities

*This is not an all-inclusive list

Sources:

<https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/breaking/ct-met-chicago-mercy-hospital-shooting-details-20181121-story.html-story.html>

<https://6abc.com/juan-lopez-chicago-shooting-suspect-mercy-hospital/4725117/>

Resources:

ASPR-TRACIE

<https://files.asprtracie.hhs.gov/documents/on-campus-hospital-armed-assailant-planning-considerations.pdf>

Joint Commission

<https://www.jointcommission.org/resources/news-and-multimedia/newsletters/newsletters/quick-safety/quick-safety--issue-4-preparing-for-active-shooter-situations/preparing-for-active-shooter-situations-addendum-february-2017/#.Y8AuJ-zML1w>