



Acts of violence spike at Austin State Hospital

170 percent increase eclipses 22 percent rise for all state hospitals.

By Andrea Ball
aball@statesman.com

Patient-on-patient violence at Austin State Hospital has soared more than 170 percent over the past five years, one of the most dramatic increases in a system seeing an escalating number of such episodes at all of its inpatient psychiatric facilities.

According to an American Statesman analysis, incidents of violence at all of the state-run hospitals have increased 22 percent since 2008, rising from 2,700 to 3,300 in fiscal 2012.

Hospital staffers are also being injured by patients. Although the overall number of patient-inflicted injuries has hovered at about 2,000 over the past five years, workers' compensation claims by hospital staffers have increased 40 percent, rising from 448 in 2008 to 629 in 2012.

The vast majority of incidents at all 10 hospitals, 97 percent, required only first aid or no treatment at all. But records from the Health and Human Services Commission's Office of Inspector General offer details on the kinds of violence occurring at the hospitals. In November, an Austin State Hospital patient sleeping on the floor was kicked in the head and face by another patient. In August, an Austin

Violence continued on A11

“... 22% rise [in violence] for all state hospitals.”

More state funding for safer state jobs!

Join the union TODAY!

WE ARE FIGHTING FOR:

more staff and safer working conditions.

We also need hazardous duty pay and a pay raise!

Add your voice to those demanding justice on the job - JOIN TSEU!

TEXAS STATE EMPLOYEES UNION / www.cwa-tseu.org