



BRIEF

# Time's Up Healthcare takes aim at sexual harassment, gender inequity

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## Dive Brief:

- Dozens of doctors, nurses and medical students have joined forces to combat sexual harassment and gender bias in the healthcare industry.
- Time's Up Healthcare — an affiliate of the Time's Up initiative, which launched last year — already claims a number of high-profile organizations that have promised their support, including Mayo Clinic, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Health, Brigham Health, University of Wisconsin and Yale.
- The group's mission is "to unify national efforts to bring safety, equity, and dignity to our healthcare workplace."

## Dive Insight:

Sexual harassment and gender inequity are pervasive across all workplaces, and healthcare is no exception. According to a Medscape survey last year, one in 10 female physicians said they had been sexually harassed in the workplace at some point in the past three years, versus 4% of male physicians

Moreover, 47% of physicians and 54% of residents said the person harassing them was another physician. More than half (54%) said

their organization "did nothing or trivialized the incident" when it was reported.

Between 1995 and 2016, 3,085 employees at general medical and surgical hospitals filed claims of sexual harassment with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, a 2018 BuzzFeed News investigation found. Charges of sexual harassment elsewhere in healthcare included 1,911 in ambulatory care services, 1,530 in nursing care facilities, 382 in physician offices and 314 in home healthcare services.

The problem is not just an ethical one. News of harassment issues can hurt an organization's ability to hire and retain good talent, not to mention the costs from lost productivity and turnover.

"Effective and interactive training in sexual harassment should be given to supervisors and support staff alike, including training on how bystanders may intervene when witnessing such behavior," Dan Eaton, an employment attorney and instructor of business at San Diego State University, told Healthcare Dive in an interview last year.

Meanwhile, nurses and other healthcare professionals across the country went on strike last year to demand better pay and benefits as more focus has turned toward hospital labor conditions.

In second half of November alone, 35 nurses struck at the University of Illinois Hospital and Clinics demanding higher wages and better job protections, 100 nurses and SEIU supporters in Lorain, Ohio, held a silent rally after contract negotiations with Mercy Health stalled and 300 nurses at Indiana Regional Medical Center in Pennsylvania called a one-day strike over contract negotiations.

Time's Up Healthcare has identified seven goals:

- Unite healthcare workers across fields.
- Improve care for targets of harassment and inequity.
- Raise awareness and knowledge of gender inequity and harassment in healthcare.
- Support healthcare organizations in bringing the issue center stage in their priorities.
- Provide a link to the Time's Up legal defense fund.
- Advocate for meaningful standards for workplace policies to prevent and respond to sexual harassment and gender inequity.
- Advance research on harassment and inequity.

### Recommended Reading:

 TIME'S UP HEALTHCARE

Our Mission: To unify national efforts to bring safety, equity, and dignity to our healthcare workplace. [↗](#)

