

Managing Safety and Security Across Combined Healthcare and Higher Education Campuses

A New Program of Collaboration Between **IACLEA** and **IAHSS**.

Introduction

Leading healthcare and higher education organizations around the world are looking to collaborate, to ensure the wellbeing of the people for whom they have a shared duty of care.

In some settings, the line of responsibility overlaps or is blurred.

In some cases, there is close physical proximity, with health and education institutions sharing buildings, or operating facilities

on the same campuses; in other cases, there is a regular flow of people between their premises, even though they are geographically distant. There are examples where institutions share the same name, but are administratively separate. Others have different names but share the same management umbrella. Campus police sometimes have full responsibility, elsewhere private security also has a role, and officers move between 'jurisdictions'.

Striking Similarity

No two situations are quite the same, but there is striking similarity in the challenges organizations face in protecting their people - students, trainee medics, researchers, clinical and non clinical staff, members of the public, emergency teams, and staff more generally.

So, it's welcome news that, for the first time, a regular program of collaboration is being established between IACLEA and IAHSS, two of the leading professional bodies in their respective sectors.

For a long time there have been close links between the two, and we've seen great examples of career progression whereby security directors and police chiefs move from one sector to the other, bringing their expertise and experience with them.

We are also seeing new strategies being developed in both sectors, and new answers being found to the most pressing challenges, from violence and aggression to extreme weather events, from communications, to loss prevention.

Webinar Series

On June 6th, the first of a series of webinars got the collaboration between IACLEA and IAHSS off to a great start. This report highlights some of the key discussion points, with contributions from a distinguished panel comprising: William (Bill) Adcox, Vice President, Chief of Police and Chief Security Officer at UT Police at Houston; Doug Johnson, Superintendent and Executive Director, Department of Public Safety at Indiana University Health; Mary Paradis, Chief of Police & Executive Director of Public Safety at The University of Mississippi Medical Center; and Tommye Sutton, Deputy Chief of Police at the University of Chicago Police Department.

[A full recording](#) of the webinar is also available to members of both IACLEA and IAHSS, and it's recommended listening for anyone with an interest in this topic.



SafeZone
by criticalarc

Sharing Our Expertise, Facing the Same Threats

Some Key Take-Aways from The Webinar

Managing safety and security across shared health and education settings is a balancing act, and in the webinar Doug Johnson and Tommye Sutton highlight some of the multiple challenges.

“There’s a lot of room for overlap and interoperability, and at times that can be both a blessing and sometimes a curse, depending on the size of the organizations and the particular issue,” said Doug.

Opportunities to collaborate, he says, include training and accreditation, policy planning, shared jurisdictions, compliance, and continuity of operations planning.

He points out that a major incident, such as a tornado, that affects one building, will probably impact neighbouring facilities too, so there’s a strong case for joint planning.

Communications Across Jurisdictions

Tommye Sutton points out that the opposite scenario can also apply: the need to communicate across facilities and jurisdictions, in cases where an incident affects one building but does not impact the campus overall.

“Making sure that we can communicate across all platforms and all precincts to keep people in the loop, even when there’s only a perceived threat and not an actual threat and making sure that we’re communicating that to the public, [is important],” he says.

With new technology platforms such as [SafeZone](#) making communications more robust, and enabling coordination between response teams, major incidents can be tackled in new ways, to achieve better outcomes.

It can be beneficial to streamline access control, to make life easier for those whose work involves moving between facilities. And Doug highlights one issue that seems small, but that can become a problem without collaborative planning: parking.

“If you have parking and students, and faculty, and doctors, and nurses are all vying for the same terrain, then that can be a problem.”

Protecting a Diverse Community that Includes Students and Experience Workers

Mary Paradis points to the particular challenge that medical schools have in safeguarding students working on placement in clinical settings. In many ways, she says, it’s a unique situation.

“The folks that are working side by side with may have started their careers in 1986, like me, so what they perceive as workplace violence, compared with a student who was born 30-years later, is very different.”

As leaders in law enforcement we have to be inclusive of all of those people.”

Tackling workplace violence and aggression is an issue that her own organization, the University of Mississippi Medical Center, is really paying attention to, she says.

“We have developed a behavioral response team; we are calculating our workplace violence stats; we are looking at the environment that these events are occurring in... is there something in the environment that is enhancing workplace violence? Are we doing everything we can?”

Circling Back

“Where I find my biggest challenge is that healthcare workers do not want to prosecute the offender. So, our office of advocacy needs to work with them to ensure they know what their right is as the employee.”

Incident review hot washes must include the person involved, she emphasizes, be that a student or a nurse manager.

“And we have to go full circle. It doesn’t end after the court case. You have to circle back to the employee and check their wellbeing. Not once, twice - to make sure they’re OK.”





How Rules Drive Strategy

The Joint Commission TJC standards for workplace violence prevention and response in healthcare (January 2022) really raised the bar and shed light on the issue in the same way that domestic violence was highlighted years ago, said Mary Paradis. For her, the standards now serve as a template for what her department needs to be doing. And that helps with budget planning.

“At the University of Mississippi Medical Center, we really went full throttle with making sure that... we are paying attention to it,” she says. “I like rules; as a police officer I like to follow rules.”

Transparency

That also makes openness vital, she says.

“The big light on us, as law enforcement, is to be transparent and truthful. We’ve learned that - society expects that of us.

My officers wear BWCs (body-worn cameras) and the clinical side has become our partner on this, with our office of wellbeing... We’ve been very successful.”

Building Partnerships and Increasing Influence

Bill Adcox says that implementing a combined protection model around “what we call our shared purpose of protection, preparedness and prevention” makes it easier to integrate services within both organizations, The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center and The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston.

This combined model covers the five service areas: healthcare security, investigator services, police services, risk management, and workplace violence prevention.

“As part of that we have a shared purpose council, we are part of all the tiered briefings, we have our intervention teams for both campuses, we sit on the leadership committees, and it’s really about communications and about relationships.”

Mary Paradis agrees: *“If I don’t know the chief executive officer of each one of my hospitals, I’m not doing my job. If I’m not on a first name basis with everybody, whether it be on the clinical side, the education, or the research side, I’m not doing my job.”*

Close to the C-Suite

Bill Adcox says if you don’t have a seat close to the c-suite, and you are not part of the strategic decisions that are being made, it will be difficult to succeed.

“It’s important to build those relationships as you go along,” he says – for example the chief executive of the policing or security organization should be answering to the highest level, the president or CEO, or no more than one level below that.

And the relationships include all the other stakeholders, such as heads of faculty, who have their own expertise to offer, and will help to make a prevention model work. *“So, you don’t have just a police solution or just a security solution.”*

Doug Johnson agrees about the importance of leveraging partnerships: *“We in law enforcement don’t have to be in charge of everything all the time! You know we’ve got wonderful emergency management folks, and environmental health & safety folks, and physical security and access control folks... get to know them, and make them part of your network.”*

This extends to threat assessment, adds Tommye Sutton. *“It’s really important that the police aren’t the only people making the decision.”*

Collaboration Opportunities and Better Technology

The panellists move on to discuss the new opportunities for collaboration across the health and education sectors, finding ways to improve personal safety and deal better with major incidents.

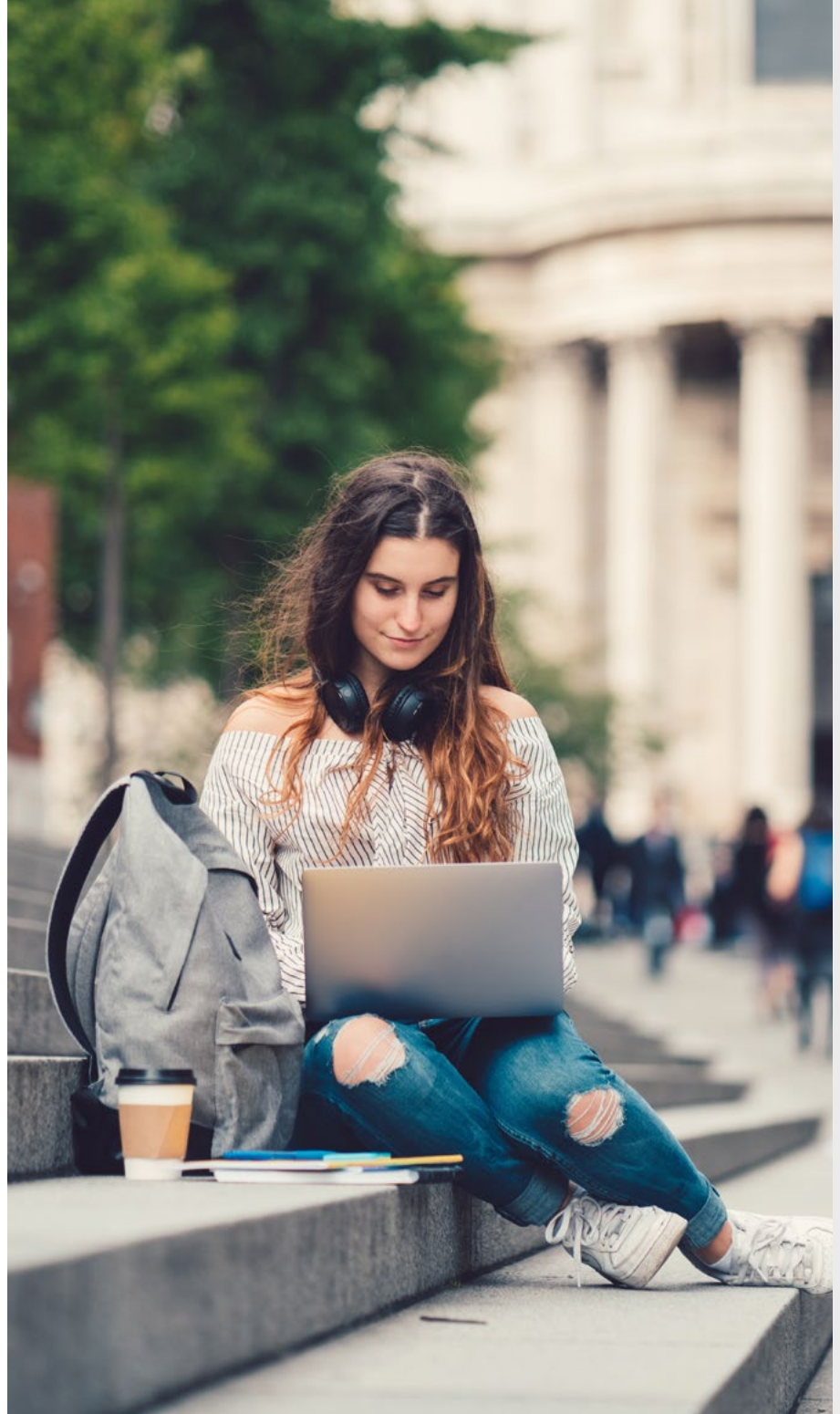
"I'd like to see a sharing of best practices," says Doug Johnson. "I think university police do a lot of things well that municipal agencies for example could learn from."

Tommye Sutton agrees that a source of best practice guidance for handling critical incidents across these boundaries would be helpful. Mary Paradis says she loves the idea of a more frequent round-table working group, not just bringing in senior leaders but also team members the next level down.

Conclusion, an Opportunity to Come Together

Bill Adcox concludes that there's now a wonderful opportunity for institutions to come together to look at the different accreditation programs and requirements, not just for policing but for security: *"how can we take the best of those organizations and meld them together?"*

And he thanks CriticalArc for supporting the closer working between IAHS and IACLEA, which he says will help both sectors do a better job.



About CriticalArc

CriticalArc provides SafeZone®, the unified safety, security and emergency management solution that helps large organizations keep their people safe and respond more effectively to critical incidents so they can fulfil their duty of care and mitigate risks. SafeZone fundamentally transforms the ability to manage personal safety, security, and emergency situations so organizations can respond faster and more effectively to protect their most important asset, their people. Through real-time visualization, communications, and response coordination, SafeZone streamlines operations, is easy to use and quick to deploy.

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