

Modeling how violence permeates health and healthcare

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Data show that violence against health care workers is becoming more common. But while violence resulting from wars or civil conflicts is a documented occupational hazard for health care workers, little is known about the impact on these workers and corresponding health services as a result of violence caused by widespread organized crime activity.

New research from the School of Nursing articulates a dynamic process of the spread and permeation of violence on Mexican [health care services](#) and providers. The study, published in the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, is among the first to focus on how violence outside of an official war zone impacts local [health care](#) service providers. It also makes a case for violence as a structural contributor to health and health disparities in Mexico.

"Our study focuses on health care services and health in the context of widespread organized crime violence. Our research sheds more light on what we know about the multilevel impacts of violence on health care and health, which can

inform the development and testing of interventions for providers, patients, and communities struggling everyday with violence," says Laura Vargas, vice provost postdoctoral fellow at the Penn Injury Science Center at Penn Nursing and lead investigator of the study.

The investigators also developed a model to illustrate how violence permeates health care services over geographic space and time. The model describes a process that begins by looking at how violence spreads over geographic space and time, with enduring consequences for [health services](#), providers and communities. In this process of permeation, [violence](#) impacts health care centers and providers, leading to adaptations of both, and ultimately has consequences for the health of community members.

The article is titled "The Permeating Effects of Violence on Health Services and Health in Mexico."

More information: Laura Vargas et al. The Permeating Effects of Violence on Health Services and Health in Mexico, *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* (2021). [DOI: 10.1177/0886260521990832](https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260521990832)

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