



**FAMILY
HEALTH
CENTERS**
AT NYU LANGONE

Family Health Centers at NYU Langone

Human Trafficking

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Goals of Workshop

- Increase knowledge of human trafficking
- Learn to identify potential signs of human trafficking and respond in a non-judgmental and supportive manner
- Address health and safety concerns
- Make appropriate referrals

What is Human Trafficking?

Human Trafficking is the use of power and control to force, trick, or coerce someone into engaging in providing labor or services, including commercial sex.

Anyone can be trafficked, including U.S. citizens, foreign nationals, and adults and children of any age, gender identity or sexual orientation.

Prevalence of Human Trafficking

- In 2021 there were 404 reports of human trafficking in New York involving 639 victims.
- Industries in which trafficking is most common:
 - Agriculture
 - escort services
 - domestic work
 - food service
 - massage parlors
 - construction

How traffickers maintain control over people

- Threaten to **harm family members** of victim
- Use victim's **financial debt** as a means of coercion
- **Take away victim's documents** and legal papers
- Take advantage of victim's **isolation and lack of awareness** about options/resources
- Use **abuse** and/or instill a fear of retaliation
- Victim may be afraid of **deportation** if undocumented

Possible Signs that a Patient is Being Trafficked

- Overdependence on an accompanying person or insistence that other person accompany the patient.
- Repeated unwanted pregnancies and abortions (reproductive coercion)
- Dietary issues (malnutrition, dehydration, loss of appetite)
- Signs of physical abuse (burn, bruising, cuts, blunt force trauma, fractures)
- Responses of patient seem scripted or explanations of injuries seem unlikely.
- Depression, cutting, hyper vigilance, depersonalization or derealization.

Screening for Trafficking

- Patients should be **interviewed privately** alone or with a interpreter if possible
- Develop rapport before bringing up sensitive topics
- Do not make promises you can't keep
- Make sure not to sit too close to the person being interviewed as this may make them uncomfortable or serve as a trigger.

How to Validate When Patients Disclose Human Trafficking

- *I believe you.*
- *Thank you for telling me – I know it was difficult to do.*
- *You are not alone.*
- *You don't deserve to be treated this way.*
- *You are not to blame*
- *There are people who can help you.*
- *I'm sorry you have been hurt.*
- *I'm very glad you told me. I care. I'm concerned about the health and safety of you and your children.*

Documenting Human Trafficking

Written documentation of the patient assessment should be conducted by a health care provider who is authorized to record in a patient's medical record:

- **Document all injuries with photos** if possible, including appearance, location, size, and other related symptoms
- Document **results of lab** or other **diagnostic procedures**
- **Avoid judgmental** or subjective comments
- Write “patient declined services” rather than “patient refused services”. Write, “patient states” rather than “patient alleges”
- Use the **patient's own words**
- **Document any referrals** provided

Reporting Requirements

People 18 and older that have experienced human trafficking ***have the right to decide whether they want an incident to be reported to the police...***

Exceptions to this policy are:

Injuries that are the result of **gunshot or stabbing** with a knife or sharp object

- **Death** of a person that is suspected to be the result of abuse or violence by an intimate partner
- **2nd or 3rd degree burns to 5% or more of the body**
- Any maltreatment or **abuse of a child** in the home should be reported to Administration for Children's Services (ACS)

Reporting Requirements

Children under the age of 18

- All mandated reporters that suspect that a child's guardian or parent has enabled them to be trafficked should **call the NY State Central Registry (800) 342-3720**.
- If a child is believed to have run away, contact the runaway hotline (1-800-RUNAWAY).

Referrals and Resources for Victims of Human Trafficking

In the event of a positive screening (disclosure of or suspected human trafficking)

- ✓ If **Social Worker on site**, the Medical Provider is to alert the on site Social Worker who will assess, and if needed create safety plan and connect patient to services.
- ✓ If there is **no Social Worker on site**, it the Medical Provider's responsibility to assess for immediate risk and then seek consultation on next steps by calling:
National Human Trafficking Hotline: (888) 373-7888 or text to 233733.

Questions to ask if you suspect human trafficking

“Have you or your family been threatened? ”

“Can you leave your job if you want to? ”

“Are you being paid”

“Has your identification been taken from you?”

“Have you ever been deprived of food or water?”

“What are your living conditions like? ”

“Is anyone forcing you to do things that you do not want to do? ”

“Are there locks where you live that prevent you from coming and going freely”

The Role of Health Care Providers

Medical providers are often the first line of defense for victims of human trafficking and medical offices can sometimes be the only place a victim is allowed to go outside of the home.

Healthcare workers make a difference. YOU can help break cycles of violence and offer resources to help.



Questions? Comments?

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