Not Just a Criminal Justice Issue: Why is Trafficking a Health Issue?

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So Why is it a Public Health Issue?

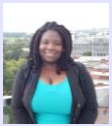
- "While law enforcement is important, so is providing adequate support for trafficking victims' recovery."
- "You see, trafficking is not a short-term affliction—it affects a survivor's whole life, families and even entire communities."
- "I often visited the doctor for numerous unexplained, very grown-up health problems, not one asked whether I was being abused."
- "Later, I struggled with the physical and psychological wounds resulting from more than a decade of sexual and physical abuse at the hands of my trafficker."
- "I have struggled with blindness, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), an eating disorder, peripheral neuropathy and adrenal insufficiency."

Have you seen her?

Jade – 21 yo w/ seizures, headaches

Marina – 33 yo w/ painful bladder syndrome, requent UTIs and pelvic pain.

Alexis – 28 yo with a fractured ankle


And boys too!

- **?50% of the commercially sexually exploited children in the U.S. are boys** (The John Jay College and the Center for Court Innovation study "The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in New York City" 2008)
- Boys appear to be largely recruited by friends and peers and do not commonly have "pimps." The 2008 study on CSEC in New York City suggested the term **"market facilitator"** better represented the relationship.

Have you seen him?

Marty – 24 yo w/ a hand laceration

Diego – 27 yo w/ a cough for 3 months

Who is at increased risk? - ST

Child sexual abuse survivors

- 70-90% of ST survivors have history of childhood sexual abuse

Foster care, runaway/throwaway youth

- 85% of trafficked youth have prior child welfare involvement
- In 2016, an estimated 1 out of 5 endangered runaways reported to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children were likely child sex trafficking victims. Of those, 74% were in the care of social services or foster care when they ran.

LGBTQ

- LGBTQ youth are 7x more likely to have engaged in survival sex than heterosexual youth
- 48% of transgender people reporting involvement in sex work also report homelessness.

Psychiatric Vulnerabiltiy

- Learning Disabilities/Cognitive Delay
- Psychosis, Depression, Personality Disorder
- Substance Dependence

Trafficking and the opiate epidemic

- **Familial Sex Trafficking:** Parents addicted to opioids selling children to feed their addiction
- **Increase in Foster Youth:** After a decade of significant decline, between 2012 and 2016, the number of children in foster care nationally has increased by more than 10%. There is a broad agreement that the ongoing opioid epidemic has been a primary contributor to those increases.
- **Opiates More Available to Traffickers**: Traffickers may use opioids as a means of control over their victims, continuing the vicious cycle of dependency and abuse.

https://aspe.hhs.gov/system/files/pdf/258836/SubstanceUseChildWelfareOverview.pdf

Force, Fraud and Coercion in ST

Social Stigma: "You walk home from work as people are just starting their day and they look at you and they know what you do, and the way they look at you, you feel as though you don't belong in this world."

Physical and Psychological Abuse: Repeated rapes, verbal threats, physical abuse, lies about surveillance, comments about your self-worth, followed by days or weeks of love and kindness. **Inconsistent high.**

Love/Need for the trafficker: Relationship often begins as romantic and the survivor feels that no one loves them or understands them like the trafficker. May rely on the trafficker to fulfill their substance use or as the only stable means of shelter or food.

Force, Fraud and Coercion in LT

Immigration Status: Immigrants – whether documented or not – can be vulnerable to exploitation due to language barriers, unfamiliarity with their legal rights in the US, or the lack of a local support network.

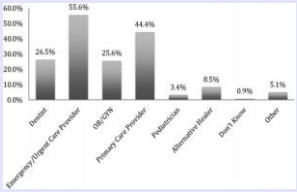
Undocumented workers are particularly vulnerable to threats of deportation, and are often unlikely to seek help from the police.

Recruitment Debt: Many migrant workers are asked to pay illegal fees to a recruiter, visa sponsor, or employer to get the job. Oftentimes, workers have to borrow money at high interest rates or mortgage their family's home, to pay the fee. This debt, coupled with the fact that workers with J-1 or H-2B visas are restricted to certain employers to maintain their immigration status, leave workers vulnerable to exploitation.

Isolation: Rural, sparsely populated areas. Live in housing provided by their employer, reducing the likelihood of identification by community members. Traffickers may keep them confined to the property, sometimes with the use of locks, armed guards or dogs.

Health Outcomes of Trafficking

Survivors Interactions with Healthcare



Chisolm-Straker, et al. Healthcare and Trafficking: We are Seeing the Unseen. Journal Healthcare for the Poor and Underserved.
Vol 27, No 3. Aug 2016

- ❑N=173 survey respondents
- ❑**79% labor trafficking** (55% sex trafficking)
- ❑**68%** survivors saw a healthcare provider
- ❑32% Unable?
  - Inability to pay
  - Fear
  - Prevented by other

L. Lederer, C. Wetzel. **The health consequences of sex trafficking and their implications for identifying victims in healthcare facilities**. Annals of Health Law, 23 (2014), pp. 61-91


Journal of Pediatric Health Care

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: Health Care Use and Case Characteristics

- A retrospective chart of all adolescents 12 through 21 years of age presenting to the ED or Child Advocacy Center of a large, tertiary care, Midwestern U.S. pediatric hospital located in Columbus, Ohio, with **concerns of suspected CSEC** from October 2014 through December 2016.
- N= 63 adolescents
  - 62 (98.4%) were female
  - 34 (54%) were African American
  - 17 (27%) identified as bisexual
- **Chronic medical concerns** were noted in 18 (28.6%) adolescents
  - most common chronic medical conditions – asthma (42%) and obesity (35%)
  - A developmental delay/individual educational plan/speech delay was noted in 18 (28.6%) patients.
  - Nearly all of the adolescents had a history of running away (61 [96.8%]), involvement with CPS (61 [96.8%]), and involvement with law enforcement (60 [95.3%]).
- **Health outcomes:**
  - Over two thirds of the adolescents (44 [69.8%]) had positive test results for an STI on at least one occasion
  - Urinary tract infections (14 [22.2%]), pelvic inflammatory disease (12 [19%]), and pregnancy (14 [22.2%]) were less common.
  - Drug and alcohol use was noted 50 (79.3%) of adolescents, with the most common drugs being marijuana (40 [63.5%]), alcohol (31 [49.2%]), and opiates (16 [25.4%]).


Journal of Pediatric Health Care

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: Health Care Use and Case Characteristics

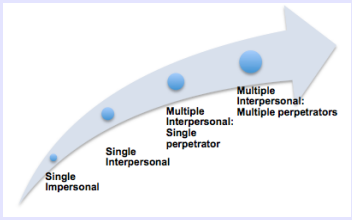
Following screening, 27 of the 63 adolescents (42.9%) gave a history of solicitation for sex and 21 (33.3%) gave confirmatory history of being trafficked by a pimp.

Mix of Multiple Severe Traumas

1) early onset trauma, such as childhood abuse
2) chronic trauma, as a result of prolonged exposure to sexual exploitation and violence
3) ongoing intimate partner violence

Hom & Woods, Trauma and its Aftermath for Commercially Exploited Woman, Issues in Mental Health Nursing, 34:75-81, 2013.

Trauma Events Continuum



Complex trauma leads to dysfunction in individuals' emotional regulation, self-perception, perception of others, and identifying meaning in life

NCTSH: http://www.nctsnet.org/trauma-types/complex-trauma

Behavior of the Trafficked Individual

Traumatic stress tends to evoke two emotional extremes: feeling either too much (overwhelmed) or too little (numb) emotion.

Need to feel in control of others or desire to control a situation by making others feel scared or anxious

- Angry
- Abusive in language or physical acts
- Demanding

Or

- Withdrawn, quiet, does not interact
- Does not react to painful or irritating stimuli

Health of Trafficked Women

- 192 female survivors of sex trafficking interviewed within 14 days of entry into post-trafficking services
- 59% pre-trafficking abuse
- 95% physical or sexual violence while trafficked

- Multiple post-trafficking physical and psychological problems
  - 63% had ≥10 or more concurrent physical health problems
  - 57% had PTSD
  - 39% had SI within the previous 7 days
  - 62% had memory difficulties

Zimmerman C, et al. T he Health of Trafficked Women: A Survey of Women Entering Post-trafficking Services in Europe . Am J Public Health. 2008;98:55–59.

Health of Trafficked Women

Table 1. Physical Health Problems

Category	% of respondents reporting at least one symptom[26]
Any Physical Health Problem	99.1% (N=106)
Neurological	91.7% (N=106)
General Health	86.0% (N=105)
Injuries	69.2% (N=102)
Cardiovascular/Respiratory	68.5% (N=106)
Gastrointestinal	62.0% (N=106)
Dental	54.3% (N=105)

Lederer L and Wetzel C. 2014

Health of Trafficked Women

Table 2. Psychological Health Problems

	During Trafficking (N=106)	After Trafficking (N=83)[28]	Change in % reporting
Reported at least one psychological issue	98.1%	96.4%	-1.7%
Average number of psychological issues	12.1	10.5	-1.6
Depression	88.7%	80.7%	-8.0%
Flashbacks	68.0%	63.9%	-4.1%
Shame/guilt	82.1%	71.1%	-11.0%
PTSD	54.7%	61.5%	+6.8%
Attempted suicide	41.5%	20.5%	-21.0%

Lederer L and Wetzel C. 2014

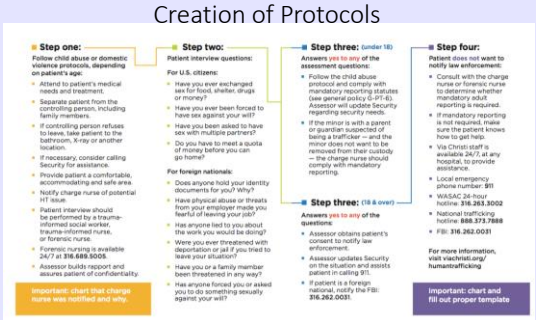
"Occupational" Injuries in LT

Agriculture	Machine injuries, pesticide toxicity, dehydration
Cleaning	Chemical burns, toxic inhalation of chemicals
Construction	Machine injuries, lacerations, sprains, hearing loss
Mining	Respiratory illness, Vit D deficiency, lead poisoning
Factory Work	Chemical ingestion, machine injuries
Hospitality	Musculoskeletal injuries, falls, infections from cleaning without proper protective equipment
Domestic Labor	Musculoskeletal injuries, burns

Recognizing the Signs of Trafficking

History	*Physical*	*Behaviors*
Untreated chronic conditions – diabetes or HTN or autoimmune diseases that the patient has not followed up for	Late/Acute presentation to care for chronic diseases (asthma, diabetes, etc)	Seems very interested in getting care but then does not follow up
Multiple pregnancies or pregnancy terminations; poor obstetric history, has not been getting prenatal care	Vaginal lacerations or vaginal wall thinning due to excessive shearing and trauma. Rectal injuries. STI.	Have items that appear too expensive for their overall socio-economic status. (May be a gift from a trafficker)
Multiple or frequent sexually transmitted infections	Sexually explicit tattoos or tattoos of names on their neck, gang symbols, or barcodes	Inappropriately dressed for the weather
Lack of knowledge of whereabouts and/or of what city she is in or has numerous inconsistencies in his/her story	Signs of drug abuse, especially cocaine, heroin, meth, alcohol	Is not allowed or able to speak for themselves (a third party may insist on being present and/or translating)
History of child abuse or domestic violence	Somatic manifestations of stress: IBS, chronic pain, migraines, interstitial cystitis, etc.	Chronically fatigued
Reference to "the life," "the game," "the track," etc.	Broken bones, concussions, traumatic brain injuries, cigarette burns, dental trauma, bruises or other traumatic injuries in typically protected areas (inner thighs, mouth, neck)	Truancy from school, mental illness/psych hospitalization (suicide attempt, self-injury), foster care, ACS involvement
Discrepancy between reported age and apparent age	Malnourished	Has a fearful, anxious, or depressed affect - use your own sense of countertransference - what are YOU feeling?

Creation of Protocols



Sample Questions

- Do you know where you will sleep every night?
- Tell me about this tattoo… Did you choose to get your tattoo(s)?
- Show me any scars on your body. How did you get this scar?
- Has anyone hit you or hurt you (today, this week)?
- Has anyone forced you to do anything you didn't want to do?
- Do you ever carry a weapon to protect yourself?

If foreign:

- What made you leave your home country?
- In your home country, did you ever have problems because of religion, political beliefs, culture, or any other reason?
- Were you ever a victim of violence in your home country?

Don't be Afraid of the Real Questions

Have you ever traded sex for money, drugs, food or to avoid getting hurt?

Has anyone ever forced you to have sex so they could make money?

Do you feel you have a choice about when to work and what kind of work you do?

States with ST Education and/or Reporting Laws

Education Laws:

14 states, majority voluntary:

- Colorado
- Florida
- Kansas
- Louisiana
- Massachusetts
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- New Jersey
- New York
- North Carolina
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Vermont
- Washington

Mandatory Reporting Laws:

7 states now include trafficking as abuse under child abuse & neglect:

- California
- Colorado
- Florida
- Illinois
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- North Carolina

- Applies to minors only
- 4 of them (FL, IL, MA, NC) address both sex and labor trafficking
- 3 (CA, CO, MD) require reporting of only sex trafficking

Atkinson H, Curnin K, and Hanson N. U.S. State Laws Addressing Human Trafficking. J Hum Traffick 2016;2(2):111-138.

If you suspect a patient is trafficked:

1. Get the patient **alone & comfortable**
2. Ask only for **need-to-know** info **without judgment**
3. Disclose **mandated reporting** obligations
4. Inquire re: **immediate needs & safety → consider social admission**
5. **If the survivor is willing to make a police report or talk to law enforcement – call 312-421-6700 and ask for HT Agent on Call**
6. **Discuss the benefits of disclosure (legal remedies and restitution of funds)**
7. Provide verbally, **888-3737-888**
8. Obtain **follow-up** info and ***Prescribe*** follow-up appt
9. Involve Social Work
10. **DOCUMENT, including ICD 10 codes!!!!**

Importance of Documentation

Addition of ICD 10 codes eff 10/1/2018

- ***Under Adult and child abuse, neglect and other maltreatment, confirmed***
- T74.5 – Forced sexual exploitation, confirmed
- T74.51 – Adult forced sexual exploitation, confirmed
- T74.52 – Child sexual exploitation, confirmed
- T74.6 – Forced labor exploitation, confirmed
- T74.61 – Adult forced labor exploitation, confirmed
- T74.62 – Child forced labor exploitation, confirmed
- ***Under Adult and child abuse, neglect and other maltreatment, suspected***
- T76.5 – Forced sexual exploitation, suspected
- T76.51 – Adult forced sexual exploitation, suspected
- T76.52 – Child sexual exploitation, suspected
- T76.6 – Forced labor exploitation, suspected
- T76.61 – Adult forced labor exploitation, suspected
- T76.62 – Child forced labor exploitation, suspected
- ***Under Encounter for examination and observation for other reasons***
- Z04.81 - Encounter for examination and observation of victim following forced sexual exploitation
- Z04.82 - Encounter for examination and observation of victim following forced labor exploitation
- ***Under Problems related to upbringing: Personal history of abuse in childhood***
- Z62.813 - Personal history of forced labor or sexual exploitation in childhood
- ***Under Personal risk factors, not elsewhere classified: Personal history of psychological trauma, not elsewhere classified***
- Z91.42 - Personal history of forced labor or sexual exploitation