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Patient Education: Sexual Violence, Intimate Partner Violence, and Healthy Relationships

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PATIENT EDUCATION: SEXUAL VIOLENCE, INTIMATE
PARTNER VIOLENCE, AND HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Site: Evergreen Family Health

Student: Elise Prehoda, MS3

Rotation: March/April 2022

Mentor: Dr. Paul Reiss

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND DESCRIPTION OF NEED

- Every 68 seconds, someone in the United States experiences sexual assault.³
- 1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men* in the United States have experienced some form of physical violence from an intimate partner.⁴
- The total estimated number of annual survivors of domestic and sexual violence in VT equals 41,829 individuals as of 2021²
 - This includes 30,944 adults and 10,885 children per year
 - These numbers reflect approximately 6.7% of the Vermont population **annually**
- These numbers are likely underestimated due to lack of survivor presentation
- Despite these numbers, in 2021 only 7,430 individuals presented for assistance with domestic and sexual violence related issues²
- Primary care offices are often a lone point of safe contact for survivors

*Aggregate data not currently available for individuals who identify outside of the gender binary.

PUBLIC HEALTH COST AND UNIQUE COST CONSIDERATIONS IN HOST COMMUNITY

- Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence 2021 Economic Impact Report revealed¹:
 - total cost of public expenditure in VT related to domestic and sexual violence= \$111,082,996.17 annually
 - total cost of health care in VT related to domestic and sexual violence= \$35,931,171.76 annually
 - average annual public cost for VT Forensic Nursing Program= \$181,219
- Public expenditure estimates include costs of healthcare, victim support services, law enforcement, the judiciary system, and the corrections system as they pertain to survivors¹
- Although Evergreen Family Practice is physically located in Williston, VT, they serve a vast number of patients throughout Chittenden County and surrounding areas

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE ON ISSUE AND SUPPORT FOR PROJECT

How would the existence of patient education materials related to sexual and intimate partner violence at your primary care office affect your willingness to discuss these topics with your physician?

- “It would increase the likelihood, because I would then know that my PCP visit is a place I could discuss it, if I needed to.”
~Ana (Williston Resident)

What do you think the role of a healthcare provider is with respect to screening for sexual and intimate partner violence?

- “For providers it’s about meeting people where they are at in that moment, while being open and ready for the possibility of a deeper conversation if the patient is ready and so desires.” ~Lurcia (Director of Outreach/Prevention/Education, H.O.P.E. Works)
- “For me it is an uncomfortable question even though it is not something I have experienced... you have to have a comfortable relationship with the person you are attending.” ~Nina (Patient at Evergreen Family Health)

Where in the primary care office do you feel patient education materials related to sexual and intimate partner violence would be most effective at reaching at risk individuals?

- “In the exam room next to where the patient is sitting” ~Nina (Patient at Evergreen Family Health)

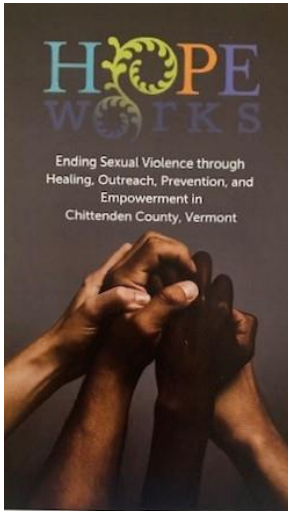
INTERVENTION AND METHODOLOGY

- We partnered with H.O.P.E. Works VT, Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, and Steps to End Domestic Violence VT to obtain patient education materials.
- We introduced new patient education materials to the Evergreen Family Health Clinic for distribution in exam rooms on the subjects of:
 - Sexual Violence
 - Domestic Violence
 - Consent
 - Healthy Relationships
- We introduced new patient education materials to the Evergreen Family Health Clinic for distribution in bathrooms on the subject of:
 - Domestic Violence aid hotlines

RESPONSE DATA

- Brochures provided by H.O.P.E. Works offered succinct but critical information on patient rights and resources in the setting of sexual or intimate partner violence.
- Brochures and pocket handouts additionally offered clear information on building healthy relationships and asking for and giving consent
- Fliers provided by Steps VT provided tear-off contact information for patients experiencing intimate partner violence

• Examples:



HOPE WORKS

Ending Sexual Violence through Healing, Outreach, Prevention, and Empowerment in Chittenden County, Vermont

24-7 Confidential Hotline
802-863-1236

Online Confidential Chatline
www.hopeworksvt.org

f @hopeworks73

Advocacy Services

HOPE Works offers affirming and inclusive support services to survivors and their loved ones at any point after an experience of sexual violence. Advocates are here to listen and help you figure out next steps. All services are free and confidential.

- 24-hour hotline
- Ongoing emotional support
- Safety planning assistance
- Medical advocacy
- Criminal justice & civil legal support
- Housing advocacy
- Support groups & drop-in hours
- School & campus support
- Youth & family services

Therapy Services

Our clinical therapists provide short or long term individual therapy, to anyone who has been impacted by sexual violence, regardless of how long ago the sexual violence occurred. We have several clinicians specializing in a range of different therapeutic elements, including but not limited to; DBT, narrative therapy, cognitive behavioral therapy, and family systems theory. We accept most insurances and offer a sliding scale.

Education & Prevention

HOPE works educators create a community and culture of transformative spaces which explore how identities, power, and privilege can uphold and challenge systems that keep sexual violence in place. We invite you to imagine, vision and implement what it will take to build pleasure based consensual healthy relationships and expressions of sexuality.

STEPS TO END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Formerly Women Helping Battered Women

24/7 Hotline: 802-658-1996 or TTY 802-540-2992

24/7 Hotline
Emergency Housing
Economic Justice
Legal Advocacy
Children and Youth Services
Education and Prevention

Administrative Offices 802-658-3131 | PO Box 1535 Burlington, VT 05402 | stepsVT.org

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Have You Experienced a Sexual Assault?

You Have Rights.

People who have experienced sexual assault have the following rights, according to Vermont law:

- 1 The right to consult with a sexual assault advocate. An advocate can help you understand your options and, if you choose, be present with you during the medical examination, reporting to police and through the legal process.
- 2 The right to information about confidentiality.
- 3 The right to written information about how your sexual assault kit will be stored and preserved.
- 4 The right to be informed if there is a DNA match on evidence in your sexual assault kit. You can receive notification if DNA evidence is found and matches DNA on a national databank.
- 5 The right to your own medical records and toxicology results.
- 6 The right to request information about how long your sexual assault kit will be stored and to request that it be stored for a longer period of time.

continued on reverse ►

- 7 The right to a free medical examination, toxicology testing (testing for the presence of drugs in your body) and evidence collection even if you choose not to speak to the police. This examination can address any concerns you have about pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.
- 8 The right to information about protection orders (restraining orders). A judge can order that the offender has no contact with you.
- 9 The right to information about the victims' compensation fund. There are funds available that pay for expenses related to the sexual assault, including co-pays, counseling services and other expenses.
- 10 The right to have your sexual assault kit delivered to the Vermont Forensic Laboratory within 72 hours.

For assistance, please call the Vermont Sexual Violence Hotline:

1-800-489-7273

VERMONT NETWORK

This card was produced by the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence.

EVALUATION OF EFFECTIVENESS AND LIMITATIONS

- Effectiveness can be preliminarily evaluated by implementing a short 1 question Likert scale survey into regularly filled out patient paperwork asking:
 - If you were to experience sexual or intimate partner violence, how would the existence of educational materials and resources in the exam room affect your willingness to discuss this situation with your healthcare provider?
- Limitations of this project are as follows:
 - Annually, less than 20% of survivors of sexual and intimate partner violence present for assistance. This severely restricts the ability of a practice to truly know the effectiveness of interventions such as increasing patient education materials
 - Sexual and intimate partner violence are exceptionally multifaceted patient health concerns which require multifaceted longitudinal solutions
 - Due to time constraints, this project is limited in its scope and capacity to foster significant change. The writer of this presentation strongly suggests employment of the interventions and projects found on the following slide.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE INTERVENTIONS/PROJECTS

1

Continued partnership with local advocacy organizations including H.O.P.E.Works, VT Network, and StepsVT for the prevention of and response to sexual and intimate partner violence

2

Investigate partnership with the VT Department of Health Forensic Nursing Program with goals of developing pipeline referral program for survivors of sexual violence

3

Longitudinal evaluation of comfort levels patients experience with respect to discussing subjects of sexual and intimate partner violence via survey format

4

Incorporation of screening and education materials regarding building healthy relationships and asking for consent regularly into adolescent wellness visits

REFERENCES

1. *Barquist, Jessica, et al. The Economic Impact of Domestic and Sexual Violence on the State of Vermont a Report of the Vermont Network against Domestic and Sexual Violence. 2021.*
2. *VT Network 2021 Data Snapshot. Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, 2021, www.vtnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/2021_NW_Data-Snapshot.pdf.*
3. *Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, 2019 (2020)*
4. *National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Domestic violence in Vermont. 2021. www.ncadv.org/files/Vermont.pdf*

CONSENT FROM INTERVIEWS

Electronic interviews:

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. This project is a requirement for the Family Medicine clerkship. It will be stored on the Dana Library [ScholarWorks](#) website. Your name will be attached to your interview and you may be cited directly or indirectly in subsequent unpublished or published work. The interviewer affirms that he/she has explained the nature and purpose of this project. The interviewee affirms that he/she has consented to this interview.

Yes /

Name: Ana Homick 4/24/2022

Name: Lurcia Missakila 4/26/2022

No /

Name: _____

Name: _____