

# HUMAN TRAFFICKING

As a health care provider, you are in a unique position to recognize and provide help to victims of human trafficking. The emergency room or clinic may be the only opportunity victims have to get help.

## RED FLAGS

- ACCOMPANIER ANSWERS QUESTIONS FOR PATIENT
- ACCOMPANIER REFUSES TO LEAVE PATIENT
- INCONSISTENT HISTORY
- LACK OF MEDICAL FOLLOW-UP OR DELAY IN SEEKING CARE
- LACK OF PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION DOCUMENTS OR ACCOMPANIER HAS DOCUMENTS
- SIGNS OF ABUSE
- YOUNGER THAN STATED AGE
- CHILD/ADOLESCENT WITH NON-GUARDIAN
- MULTIPLE VISITS TO EMERGENCY ROOM
- ACCOMPANIER IS IN A HURRY
- INAPPROPRIATE DRESS FOR WORK/WEATHER
- AGE INAPPROPRIATE FAMILIARITY WITH SEXUAL TERM
- INABILITY TO LEAVE JOB
- FEAR OF DEPORTATION
- NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING DESPITE BEING IN CANADA FOR EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME
- AFRAID/SUBMISSIVE
- BEING CONTROLLED BY ACCOMPANIER
- TATTOO MARKING OWNERSHIP BY TRAFFICKER
- DOES NOT KNOW ADDRESS/UNFAMILIAR WITH LOCAL SURROUNDINGS

## PATIENT IS UNLIKELY TO IDENTIFY HIMSELF/HERSELF AS A VICTIM

*According to the United Nations, human trafficking involves Action, Means and Purpose. If one condition in each of these categories is met, a person has been trafficked.*

Traffickers undertake **ACTION** using **MEANS** for the **PURPOSE** of exploiting people.

recruitment  
transfer receipt  
**ACTION**  
transportation  
harbouring



abduction force  
threat/coercion  
**MEANS**  
abuse of power  
fraud/deception



servitude forced labour  
sexual exploitation  
**PURPOSE**  
removal of organs  
slavery or similar practice

## FIGHTING THE STEREOTYPES:

About 1 in 4 victims are male. Women and minors are not always victims - they can also be the traffickers.

Labour trafficking makes up close to half of the human trafficking cases in Canada. This includes work in construction, agriculture, retail, hotels, restaurants, nail salons, and in private homes as nannies/caregivers.

Victims are not only from outside of Canada. Although migrant workers, refugees, and immigrants are some of vulnerable populations, over half of the victims are Canadian citizens. Other vulnerable populations in Canada include indigenous women, homeless youth, and those who are socially or economically disadvantaged.



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# HUMAN TRAFFICKING

1.

LET YOUR TEAM KNOW THAT YOU ARE GOING TO SCREEN THE PATIENT FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING.

2.

TALK TO THE PATIENT WITHOUT THE ACCOMPANYING TRAFFICKER PRESENT.

3.

PROVIDE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT AND LET THE PATIENT KNOW THAT YOU ARE HERE TO HELP.

4.

ALLOW THE PATIENT TO DECIDE THE STEPS THEY WANT TO TAKE IN RECEIVING CARE.

- Request professional translation services if needed
- Do not refer to the accompanying person as "trafficker"
- Allow the patient to tell his/her story
- Avoid blaming statements e.g. Why are you staying with... when he/she obviously treats you poorly?
- Screen for violence after you have gained the patient's trust
- Use language that the patient is comfortable with
- Be able to explain why you are asking certain questions, and do not ask more than you need to.

## HELPFUL QUESTIONS TO ASK:

\*Some sites may have a forensic nurse complete the full screen once you have identified someone as a potential victim. You can also request the help of a social worker to complete the full screen.

- It is my practice to ask all of my patients about violence, is it alright for me to ask you a few questions?
- I would like to ask you some questions about your safety so I can take care of you, is that ok?
- Have you ever felt unsafe from someone else?
- Have you ever been physically hurt or threatened by someone?
- Do you feel like your family is threatened?
- Have you ever been forced to do something you did not want to do?
- Have you ever had your ID or legal documents controlled by someone else?
- Can you leave your job if you want to?
- What are your work/living conditions like?
- Have you ever had your money controlled by someone else?

If the victim is a minor, contact **Child Protective Services**.

For all other victims, offer to contact **911** or **Crime Stoppers**.

If the patient does not want to report the crime, offer a referral to a social worker and provide information for contacting local services/shelters assisting victims.

Document the patient's decision and your actions.

If you believe that the patient, yourself, or your health care team are in immediate danger, **contact the police** regardless of the patient's decision. If you ever suspect human trafficking, you can call Crime Stoppers anonymously, however you cannot provide any patient identifiers without his/her permission.



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