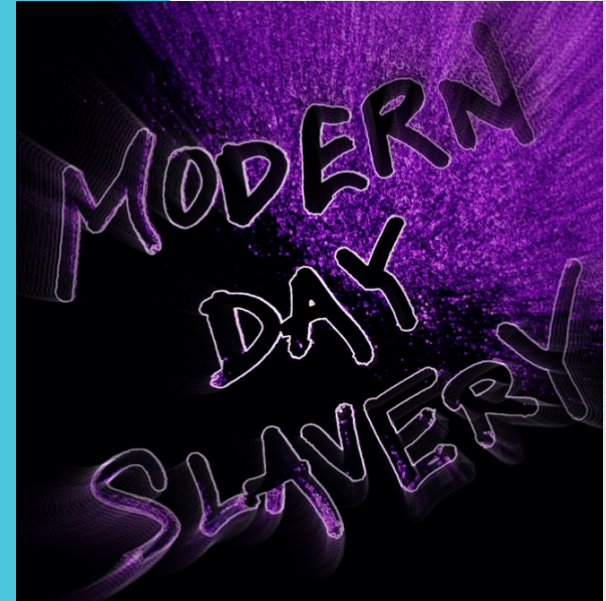


# Human Trafficking

The Role of the Healthcare Professional



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***NO DISCLOSURES***

# Objectives

- Review the definition of human trafficking
- Identify risk factors and ways in which healthcare professionals come in contact with victims of trafficking
- Describe key indicators and other warning signs
- Provide general guidelines for the approach to a trafficking victim and resources for the patient/provider

# Human Trafficking Defined

- US Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA) defines **SEVERE** forms of trafficking in persons as
  - Sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion, **OR** in which the person induced to perform such act *has not attained 18 years of age*; or
  - The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or **obtaining of a person** for labor or services, through the **use of force, fraud, or coercion** for the **purpose of subjection** to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

## The Scope of the Problem

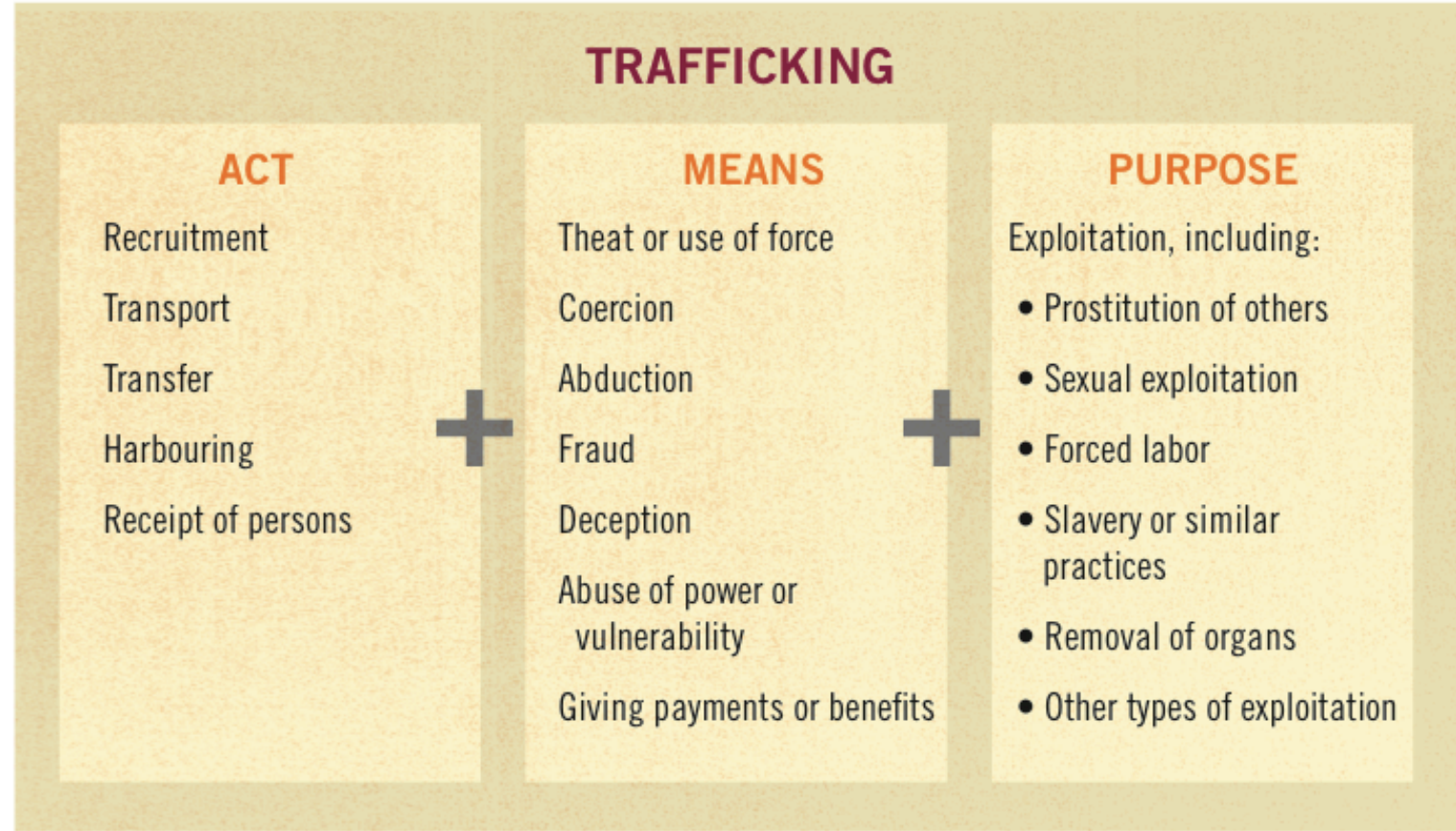
- More than 20 million people living in slavery worldwide
- 600,000-800,000 trafficked across international borders
- 85% of trafficked victims in the United States are US citizens, and about half are minors
- Women and children comprise the majority of forced labor (55%) and sex trafficking victims (85-90%)
- 100,000-300,000 U.S. children per year at risk of being sex trafficked
- Average age of entry into commercial sex trade is 12-14 for girls and 11-13 for boys

Florida #3



# Common Elements of Human Trafficking

Figure 1: Three Common Elements of Human Trafficking — Act, Means, and Purpose



(Source: U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime, [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/what-is-human-trafficking.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/what-is-human-trafficking.html))

## Who is at risk?

- Sexual abuse as children
  - 70-90% of commercially sexually exploited children have a history of sexual abuse
  - Children with sex abuse history are 28 times more likely to be arrested for prostitution at some point in their lives
- Foster care
  - 85% of trafficked youth have prior child welfare involvement
- LGBT youth
- Poor, minority youth
- Dating violence and rape



# Severe Harm: Physical & Psychological

- Physical issues:
  - Injuries from violence
  - Gynecologic
  - Untreated chronic conditions
  - Poor dentition
  - Malnourishment
- Psychological issues
  - Complex-trauma related PTSD
  - Anxiety
  - Depression
  - Suicidality
  - Trauma-bonding and Stockholm syndrome
  - Addiction
  - Eating disorders

## Health of Trafficked Women

- 95% report physical or sexual violence while trafficked
- 59% report pre-trafficking abuse
- 76% report never having personal freedom
- Most have multiple physical and psychological problems
  - 63% have 10 or more concurrent health problems
  - 57% PTSD
  - 39% suicidal thoughts in preceding week
  - 62% memory difficulties

# Health Outcomes in Minors

- Health outcomes strongly associated with trafficking
  - Suicide
  - Sexually transmitted infections
  - Unplanned pregnancy
  - Substance abuse
  - Injuries related to violence
- Leading cause of death in sexual exploitation victims
  - Homicide
  - HIV/AIDS

# Where do we see victims?

- Emergency departments
- Urgent care centers
- Primary care clinics
- Adolescent medical clinics
- School clinics
- Shelters
- Obstetrics/gynecology
- Psychiatry
- Community health centers
- Health department clinics
- Title X clinics
- Planned Parenthood
- Dental Clinics

# Victims' Perspectives

- Don't disclose status due to fear, shame, language barriers and short time with providers
- May not want to be rescued
  - Fear, threats, retaliation
  - Stockholm syndrome, traumatic bonding
  - Do not self-identify as victims
  - May have criminal records
  - Past traumas, notably sexual abuse

Complex  
Trauma

## Sexual Abuse – Assault – Rape

30  
Johns



7  
Days/Week



**210**  
**RAPES**  
**per**  
**WEEK**

# Incremental Disclosure



# Physical Indicators

- Signs of physical trauma
- Branding tattoos
- Unusual infections such as TB or immunizable diseases
- Multiple STIs
- Several somatic symptoms arising from stress
- Malnutrition, dehydration
- Multiple pregnancies or abortions
- Unusual occupational injuries





# Red Flags

- Inconsistent or scripted history
- Discrepancy between history and clinical presentation
- Unable to give address
- Doesn't know current city
- Minor trading sex for something of value (food, shelter, drugs, money)
- Unusually high number of sexual partners
- Late presentation
- Carrying large amount of cash
- Appears younger than stated age

# Control Indicators

- Accompanied by a controlling person
- Controlling person doesn't allow patient to answer
- Person interrupts or corrects patient
- Patient exhibits fear, nervousness, avoids eye contact
- Patient not in control of passport (foreign national)
- Patient frequently receives texts or calls during exam
- Patient exhibits hyper-vigilance or subordinate demeanor

# Interviewing

- Engage trust
- Non-judgmental
- Let your patient feel in control
- Understand
  - Sexual victimization is a learned behavior and not a choice
  - Victims, not offenders
- May fear deportation, distrust law/authority
- Unaware of rights
- Don't identify as a victim

# Intervention

- Have information ready, call social worker or case manager
- Say you may have a human trafficking victim
- Call DCF if victims is a child or vulnerable adult
  - mandatory reporters
  - 1-800-96-ABUSE

## Resources for Victims

- Domestic:
  - National Human Trafficking Resource Center
  - 1-888-3737-8888
- International:
  - U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Victim Assistance Program
  - 1-866-872-4973

## Resources for Providers

- AMWA's Physicians Against Human Trafficking  
<http://www.doc-path.org/>
- Comprehensive Human Trafficking Assessment by the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) and adapted by Polaris Project, 2012  
[https://polarisproject.adobeconnect.com/\\_a983384736/medical-module/](https://polarisproject.adobeconnect.com/_a983384736/medical-module/)
- Human Trafficking: Guidebook on Identification, Assessment, and Response in the Health Care Setting by MGH and MMS, 2014.  
<http://www.massmed.org/Patient-Care/Health-Topics/Violence-Prevention-and-Intervention/Human-Trafficking-%28pdf%29/>
- HEAL Trafficking  
<https://healtrafficking.wordpress.com/>

Questions?



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