Hospital Emergency Rooms and Effective Protocols for Victims of Domestic Violence

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Literature Map

Victimization

Violence (U.S)

Public Health Issue

Types of Violence

Domestic-Interpersonal Violence

Perpetrators
Models of Emergency Room Protocols

JCAHO

Referrals

Best Practices

Interdisciplinary Approach

Effectiveness Criteria

Rates of Satisfaction

Healthcare Staff Response

Management of Culture

Outcomes/Costs

Recidivism

Best Practices

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Referrals

JCAHO
Types of Violence

- Homicide
- Rape/sexual assault
- Robbery
- Aggravated assault
- Simple assault
- Domestic interpersonal violence
On an Average Day in the U.S.

- 53 people die from homicide
- 84 people commit suicide
- Approximately 3,000 people attempt suicide
- At least 18,000 people survive domestic assaults
Domestic Abuse Victims:

- Comprise 22% to 35% of women seeking care for any reason in hospital emergency rooms

- Account for 75% Recidivism rate (3/4 will go on to suffer repeated abuse caused by perpetrator who is the “Recidivist”)
Domestic Violence is a Public Health Issue

- In the past was considered to be a “Social Problem” but....

Domestic Violence:

- Impacts on Health Status
- Is Preventable and Avoidable
- Requires Collective Action to Protect, Promote and Improve the Health of the Population
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE = A DISEASE
Diseases Can be:

- Diagnosed and treated.
- Prevented through diagnosis of particularly dangerous environments where domestic violence is common.
Public Health Approach suggests that:

- Many domestic-related injuries are NOT accidents but are controllable, predictable and therefore PREVENTABLE.

- If Healthcare professionals in the U.S. can predict risk factors involved in DV, we can increase the chance of preventing future DV.
Solutions

- High-risk groups can be identified and treated to prevent recidivism.

- Programs for detecting and reporting intentional domestic injuries can be constructed for use in Emergency Rooms to alleviate this public health problem.
Emergency Rooms in the United States

- Treat more than 1.3 million people a year for injuries caused by violent attacks
- This is an increase of 250% over previous years.
The Definition of Domestic Violence:

- A generic term used to refer to abusive or assaulting behavior between people who know each other.

- Other Terms include: Interpersonal Violence and Violence Among Intimates.
Types of Psychological Abuse

- Threats of physical harm
- Possessiveness
- Humiliation and degradation
- Insulting language
- Physical Isolation
- Intimidation
- Constant Criticism
Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO)

- Not all hospitals in the U.S. are accredited by JCAHO.
- Hospitals not accredited by JCAHO do not generally offer procedures for assessment of DV.
Best Practices: Sacred Heart Hospital, Spokane, WA, USA

- Responded to JCAHO mandate by creating a comprehensive policy and training program.

- Addressed the following 3 areas: public education, medical profession education and patient care.
Results of Sacred Heart Medical Center’s Efforts:

- Hospital records of domestic violence rose from 4% TO 35% of patients that presented in the Emergency Room.

- Sacred Heart Medical Center earned the Catholic Health Association’s Achievement Citation in 1995 due to the impressive results of this program.
Costs of Domestic Violence in the U.S:

- Domestic Violent Injuries represent a **loss** of 8 million days of paid work per year in the U.S.

- Translates into 32,000 full-time positions.

- National healthcare costs for victims of domestic violence are **estimated** at 1.4 billion/year
Hospital Emergency Rooms

- Are situated in strategic areas throughout the country and place thousands of healthcare workers in direct contact with victims of DV.

- Need to provide training on domestic violence awareness and intervention to ALL employees.
Referral Flow

Domestic Partner Victimized

Victim Receives Medical Care

Domestic Victim Presents at Hospital for Treatment

Referral to Victim Prevention Program

Referral to Rape Crisis Center

Discuss Reporting Domestic Abuse to Authorities
National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS)

- Nationally representative sample survey of 50,000 households and 100,000 individuals over the age of 12.

- Requests information reported as well as not reported to police on domestic victimization.

- Survey concluded that most emergency rooms do not have adequate systems for conducting epidemiologic surveillance of interpersonal violent acts.
Recommendations:

- Develop a “Risk Factor” scale to identify “High Risk” cases that could be entered into a WEB-based information system.

- Develop a survey that would measure the satisfaction of the program which would include victims and trained hospital staff.
Performance Measures

- Hospital Policies and Procedures
- Environment of the Hospital
- Culture of the Hospital
- Training of Staff
- Screening and Safety Assessment
- Documentation
- Intervention Services
- Evaluation Strategies
Formal Measurements for Assessing Domestic Violence Programs

- Determine the effectiveness of the Program in the Emergency Room.
- Compare Programs from Different Sites
- Define the Aspects of the Program that Produce Positive Outcomes
CHANGE CAN BE MADE:

...WHATEVER YOU DO, OR DREAM YOU CAN, BEGIN IT.

BOLDNESS HAS GENIOUS AND POWER AND MAGIC IN IT.

-Goethe