Incorporating Domestic Violence Screening into Workers' Compensation and Occupational Medicine Histories

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Defining the Problem

Domestic Violence is more than you think

Not just physical
Not always obvious
Not always visible
Not always women



Defining the Problem

Domestic Violence is multi-dimensional

- Physical Violence
- Emotional Violence
 - Verbal Abuse
 - Threats against others
 - Children
 - Pets
 - Family members
 - Cherished objects

Defining the Problem

Domestic Violence is multi-dimensional

- Financial "Violence"

- Limited access to funds
- Economic enslavement
- Bankruptcy
- Coercion
 - "Guilt Trips"
- Sexual Abuse
 - Forced sex

Impact on the Work Place

- Assaults frequently occur at work
- Homicide was 2nd leading cause of workplace deaths of women in 2000

DV causes missed time from work

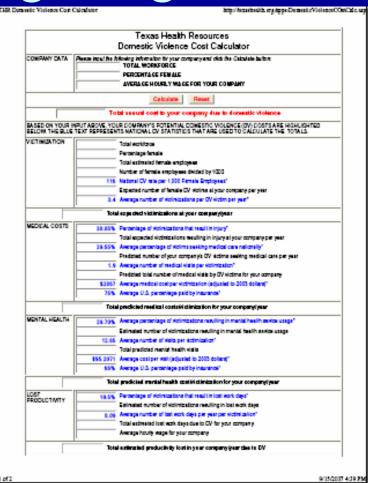
Magnitude of the Problem

- >4 Million women beaten or abused / yr
- Health related costs of sexual / physical assault by intimate partners >\$5.8 Bil
- Lost productivity and earnings \$1.8 Bil

Magnitude of the Problem

- Victims lose > 8 Mil days of work / yr
 32,000 FTE Jobs !
- 96% of victims have abuse related problems at work
 - 56% are late to work due to abuse issues
 - 28% leave work early
 - 54% miss whole days

Figuring the Costs



www.texashealth.org/apps/DomesticViolenceCostCalc.asp

How This Presents

Violence played out at workplace

Workers' Compensation Claim

Utilization of Employer Health Programs

How This Presents

- Head, Neck, Face injury
- Orthopedic Claim Upper Extremity
 - Distal Fracture / Spiral Fracture
 - Defensive wounds
 - Carpal Tunnel, Overuse Syndromes



Red Flag Indicators

- Headaches
- Chronic Pain Syndromes
- TMJ
- Extreme Weight Loss / Malnutrition
- Psychological Injuries

How This Presents

Often advanced warning

- Someone knows something is going on
- Victims often in denial
- Employers / Co-workers often in denial
 - "don't want to get involved"

- Screening for DV by Occ Med
 - Typically looks only for specific trauma
 - MVA
 - Slip and Fall
 - Accidental injuries
 - Typically doesn't look behind the workplace injury
 - Victims often deny / rationalize/ blame self

Occupational Medicine / Forensic History

- Pushed or shoved you?
- Thrown objects at you?
- Refused help or care when sick or injured?
- Threatened with a weapon?
- Threatened harm to loved ones or treasured objects?

- Use Established Screening Instruments
 - LifeSpan (<u>www.lifespan.org</u>)
 - JHSON (<u>www.dangerassessment.org</u>)
 - HITS (Sherin 1998, Fam.Med)
 - WAST (www.jfponline.com)

Have resource info at work and clinic

 Victims have limited access to communications at home

Risky for victims to have brochures
Can provoke violent reaction in abuser

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If you or someone you know is being abused, call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 800-799-SAFE (7233) or 800-787-3224 (TTY).

If you are interested in information, referrals, or funding opportunities related to domestic violence, visit OVW's Web site at www.usdoj.gov/ovw.



Working Together to End the Violence

Nearly 25% of surveyed women and 8% of surveyed men said they were raped and/or physically assaulted by a current or former spouse, cohabiting partner, or date at some time in their lives. Domestic violence is wrong. It affects not only the direct victims, but their children and families as well. Working together, men and women can change attitudes and perceptions about domestic violence.

For more information, contact the Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women at 202-307-6026, or visit our Web site at www.usdoj.gov/ovw.

Office on Violence Against Women



If you are being abused at home . . .

you are not alone.

Millions of women just like you are victims of abuse or violence in their homes.

Partner abuse is Remember: a health . Nothing you say or do causes your partner to act problem. violently It is impossible for you to prevent these attacks Partner abuse by being the perfect wife or girlfriend. impacts your No matter what, no one has the right to hurt you. children's Your healthcare provider can What you can do to protect yourself: Use your own instincts about what is safest for . you and your children. Local Services for Talk with a relative or friend about what is going .

Victims of Abuse or Violence: Contact your local domestic violence program to find out how they can help you. Tell you health care provider what is going on and make sure a record is kept of your injuries (bruises, scratches, black eyes, etc.). We care about your health and well-being.

health.

help.

Line:

1-800-799-SAFE

We are here for you. Call 911 if you Ask your doctor or nurse for a domestic violence safety plan or call a domestic violence 24-hour crisis are in danger or line. The call is free and completely confidential. need help. National Domestic Violence Hot

Decide and plan for where you will go if you have to leave home. Leave money, an extra set of keys, a change of clothes and copies of important papers and anything else

That kind of behavior is called

Domestic violence does not go away

on its own. In fact, it tends to get

worse over time, and it is harmful to

domestic violence.

It is against the law.

children as well.

Handout

you may need for you and your children with someone you can trust.

Source: Poster created by Mercy Healthcare, Sacramento & WEAVE

æ California Medical Training Center 04/14/03

Evaluation

- Identification of abuse cases / intervention
- Referrals to assistance organizations
- Reduced Group Health / Workers' Comp \$
- Reduced absenteeism
- Increased productivity

Justification

Uneasy about asking sensitive questions ?

US Preventive Services Task Force
 Asking questions about abuse is justifiable

- High prevalence of abuse
- Value in identifying victims
- Low cost to screen
- Low risk to screen in that setting

Justification

- Uneasy about asking sensitive questions ?
 - American Academy of Family Physicians
 - American College of Physicians
 - American Medical Association
 - Am. Col. Gynecologists and Obstetricians

Recommend screening for Domestic Violence

Justification

Uneasy about asking sensitive questions ?

– JCAHO

Mandates all hospitals screen for DV