

Non Verbal Child Maltreatment Reporting

Patrick Cazilas MD, Catherine Scarfi MD
 Pediatric Emergency Medicine
 Newark Beth Israel Medical Center

Background

- In 2019, 656,000 cases of child maltreatment were reported nationally
- 877 sex trafficking cases in 2019, with almost all victims 17 years or younger
- Victims are more likely to present to the emergency department (ED) with their perpetrator
- We contend that the presence of the abuser limits their ability to report maltreatment
- In the ED, the restroom is one of the few places for a victim to be alone

Objective

- Implement a nonverbal system of reporting maltreatment to capture victims of abuse who present to the ED with their perpetrator

Methods

- An urban tertiary care center with an annual pediatric ED volume of 35,000
- Six months of prospective abuse reporting was collected via Research Electronic Data Capture (REDCap)
- After 6 months, English and Spanish signs were hung in the restroom of our ED
- Signs instructed victims of abuse to place a sticker on their urine cup to speak with a physician in private
- The physician was notified if a sticker was placed, all visitors were asked to leave the patient's room, and more history was obtained
- Cases were logged via Redcap questionnaire with an additional question of "Was abuse reported with a sticker on urine cup?"



Non Verbal Sticker Reporting

Please complete the survey below.
Thank you!

- 1) MRN _____
- 2) SEX Male Female
- 3) Gender Identity Male Female Other
- 4) Age In Years _____
- 5) Ethnicity American Indian/Alaska Native Asian Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Hispanic Black or African American White More Than One Race Unknown/Not Reported
- 6) Reported Abuse Physical Sexual Verbal Human Trafficking Neglect Other
- 7) Did The Patient Present With His/Her Abuser Yes No Unknown
- 8) Was Abuse Reported With A Sticker On Urine Cup? Yes No

Hypothesis

- We will capture otherwise missed abuse cases if a reporting system is implemented in the restroom of our ED

Results

- A total of 59 abuse cases during 6 months of baseline recording compared to 74 cases in the 6 months following our intervention
- Sticker reporting was used once, which resulted in physician follow up
- Victims were mostly female in sex and gender identity in baseline (64%) and intervention (73%) groups
- Baseline abuse (%): physical (68), sexual (36), verbal (20), human trafficking (2), neglect (2)
- Post intervention (%): physical (39), sexual (59), verbal (10), human trafficking (0), neglect (5)

Conclusions

- In our patient population, this system has not shown to be a useful tool for patients to disclose maltreatment. More research is needed to identify obstacles in reporting maltreatment

References

- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. (2022). Child Maltreatment 2020. Available from <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/data-research/child-maltreatment>
- Najman JM, Kisely S, Scott JG, Strathern L, Clavarino A, Williams, GM, Middeldorp C, Bernstein D. Agency notification and retrospective self-reports of childhood maltreatment in a 30-Year cohort: Estimating population prevalence from different data sources. Child Abuse Negl. 2020 Nov;109:104744. doi: 10.1016/j.chiabu.2020.104744.Epub2020 Oct 1.PMID:33011350.

