



The Health Care System

The healthcare system has a unique and important role in reducing the physical, emotional, and social problems that contribute to violence in our communities. This role goes beyond providing direct care services. It includes responsibilities related to partnership with communities and health care clients to provide health-related education and employment opportunities. Members of the health care system are called upon to take the following actions to heal the wounds caused by violence and reduce the violence in our communities.

Individual Health Care Providers:

- **Attend** to the entire person in a culturally sensitive manner. Ensure that clinical evaluations address the physical, psychological, and social factors that cause or result from violence.
- **Develop** a treatment plan collaboratively with the client, family supports, and other health care providers that take into account the client's unique needs, values, and resources.
- **Identify** and develop relationships with community service providers in order to refer victims of violence to appropriate community resources.
- **Partner** with community stakeholders to identify the social services that would be beneficial for addressing the root causes of violence in the community. Advocate for resources to provide these needed services and participate in efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of these interventions.
- **Provide** confidential and culturally sensitive screening for alcohol and/or substance abuse. Screen for signs of emotional abuse or violence during all episodes of care.

Health Care Oriented Businesses:

- **Display** public service information in waiting areas regarding community agencies providing services to reduce violence including help-lines, shelters, and emergency services. Provide business cards or other pocket sized items with local agency contact information.
- **Develop** tracking systems to evaluate the adequacy of mental health and violence screening programs and the effectiveness of referrals. Seek feedback from clients regarding satisfaction with the care system and suggestions for improvements.
- **Support** efforts to provide access to comprehensive health care regardless of the individual's insurance coverage or ability to pay.
- **Partner** with community members to identify services desired by community members and to design culturally sensitive programs to address community needs.
- **Hire** health care professionals and support personnel that reflect the diversity of client populations.

Health Insurance Organizations and Agencies:

- **Provide** the same level of coverage for mental and physical health care services.
- **Fund** mental health case management services to increase continuity of care and reduce non-compliance with the treatment plan.
- **Consult** with representatives of the communities impacted by violence when identifying service priorities and developing new services.

Government and Foundations:

- **Provide** comprehensive mental health and social services to people transitioning from prison or institutional settings.
- **Locate** publicly funded mental health and wellness care services in the communities most impacted by violence.
- **Support** efforts to achieve universal access to comprehensive health care.

Health Care Educational Institutions:

- **Increase** amount of needs-based financial assistance to people of color in order to achieve greater diversity in the health care professions and increase the number of culturally diverse role models.
- **Partner** with community health care/wellness providers to identify local needs for violence reduction education programs. Provide continuing education programs directed toward health care professionals as well as programs designed for the lay public.
- **Develop** relationships with health care providers and social service agencies in the communities impacted by violence in order to provide diverse opportunities for student clinical education and service learning activities.
- **Support** research focused on violence and the conditions that contribute to high levels of violence in the local community.
- **Encourage** faculty providing clinical services to individuals impacted by violence to partner with existing local community agencies and organizations to bring needed services into the communities affected by violence.

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