

Survivor Health Connection Project (SHCP)

A Collaboration between ACF, HRSA, and the National Domestic Violence Hotline

Survivor Health Connection Project (SHCP) is supported through a collaboration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services partners, including the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Family and Youth Services Bureau; Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Bureau of Primary Health Care (BPHC); and HRSA Office of Women's Health. The National Domestic Violence Hotline (The Hotline), funded through FYSB's Division of Family Violence Prevention and Services (FVPSA Program), serves as the technical lead.

HRSA is the primary federal agency for improving health care to people who are geographically isolated, economically and/or medically vulnerable. FVPSA is the primary federal funding stream ensuring domestic violence shelter and supportive services are available for survivors and their children, including provision of training and technical assistance to the advocates and programs who serve them. The Hotline is a vital service whose mission is to answer the call to support and shift power back to those affected by relationship abuse — 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

Through SHCP, The Hotline will collaborate with the FVPSA Program and BPHC to train HRSA-funded Community Health Center (CHC) staff on how to safely assess and refer patients to needed services, including The Hotline and local providers. The Hotline will train its entire advocate staff on the unique services provided by CHCs and on the **Find a Health Center tool**. By equipping Hotline advocates with training and information on the CHC's scope and services, they can support survivor connections to a local health care provider, regardless of their ability to pay. These bi-directional referrals are particularly important for those who contact The Hotline presenting an increased need for medical assistance related to the abuse (e.g. strangulation, traumatic brain injury) or reporting other critical health needs such as being pregnant or postpartum.

Intersections of Health and Domestic Violence

One in four women and one in seven men aged 18 and older in the U.S. will have been the victims of severe physical violence in their lifetime (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey 2010). Physical and mental health are essential components of a survivor's ability to be safe and recover from the physical and mental trauma experienced.

- It is estimated that the U.S. spends \$4.1 billion each year on the medical and mental health care costs stemming from domestic abuse (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States 2003).
- Women in violent relationships are significantly more likely to experience mental health concerns than women in nonviolent relationships; specifically, depression, anxiety, and PTSD (Temple, Weston, and Marshall, 2010).
- Overall poor health and chronic health problems—including headaches, memory loss, chronic pain, and gastrointestinal disorders—are common among women who have experienced abuse (World Health Organization, Understanding and Addressing Violence Against Women 2012).



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This project has four primary objectives:

- Develop high-quality training and technical assistance materials to increase CHC staff awareness of domestic violence advocacy programs, including those that are local and/or culturally specific for tribes and tribal populations.
- Develop high-quality training and technical assistance for Hotline advocates to enhance their ability to support contact's stating they have critical health needs, and/or have a need for a primary care provider, and refer to a HRSA Community Health Center.
- Strengthen referral system by encouraging referrals between The Hotline and HRSA-funded CHCs.
- Collect and analyze user data that can inform programmatic activities, policies, and decision-making.

For more information contact Crystal Justice, Chief External Affairs Officer at the National Domestic Violence Hotline at cjustice@thehotline.org.



The Power of Partnership

Hotlines are a core element of a coordinated response to domestic and dating violence. National, state, and local hotlines work together to ensure that victims can locate and receive compassionate support, safety planning, information and referrals, and direct connection to resources. Funding administered by the FVPSA Program reaches thousands of local communities and over 250 federally recognized American Indian/Alaska Native Tribes providing emergency shelter and supportive services to 1.2 million victims of domestic and dating violence, and their dependents, annually. FVPSA also provides funding for operation of the National Domestic Violence Hotline and StrongHearts Native Helpline.

Established in 1996 and headquartered in Austin, Texas, The Hotline, is the only national 24-hour domestic violence hotline providing compassionate support, life-saving resources, and safety planning services via phone, online chat, and text to anyone aged 13 and up affected by domestic violence. **Since their inception, The Hotline has answered 5.5 million calls, chats and texts.** The heart of The Hotline is their highly-trained advocate staff, who provide high-quality, trauma-informed education, validation, and connection to services that empower victims and survivors to make life-changing decisions with dignity and respect. They maintain a robust database of approximately 5,000 carefully vetted providers and resources, including shelter and transitional housing, counseling, culturally and linguistically specific programs, and legal services.

HRSA programs help those in need of high quality primary health care regardless of ability to pay. As of 2019, HRSA funds nearly 1,400 health center grantees nationwide operating approximately 13,000 sites including mobile units, providing affordable primary and preventive care on a sliding fee scale to more than 30 million patients. HRSA also supports the training of health professionals and the distribution of providers to areas where they are needed most to increase health care access.

Given their deep subject matter expertise, scope and national reach, through strengthened partnership, these three organizations can significantly impact the health outcomes of those affected by relationship abuse and prevent future abuse by supporting those experiencing or at risk for domestic violence.

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