

Michigan Human Trafficking Health Advisory Board

2016 Annual Report



February 1, 2017

Pursuant to the Human Trafficking Health Advisory Board Act, MCL 752.991 et seq., the members of the Michigan Human Trafficking Health Advisory Board developed this annual report to detail the board's activities and recommendations for improving health and mental health services for victims of human trafficking. The report is submitted to the chairs of the committees concerned with health policy of the Michigan Senate and House of Representatives.

Message from the Chair

Dear Lawmakers,

Thank you for your foresight in recognizing that human trafficking is an emerging public health issue and in creating the Michigan Human Trafficking Health Advisory Board (the only one of its kind in the country). The board is dedicated to understanding and addressing the serious health challenges that victims/survivors of human trafficking face during their victimization and as survivors.

Many thanks go to board members who understand the unique role they play in addressing these challenges by attending quarterly meetings, participating in various subcommittees, *and* also volunteering additional time to educate their communities and peers about human trafficking.

Board members representing the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services also deserve special thanks for being proactive in addressing policy issues pertaining to human trafficking.

A lot of administrative work is done behind the scenes by MDHHS analyst Jonathan Breems. His efforts in putting this report together and keeping the board on task and focused are deeply appreciated.

Finally, a heartfelt thanks to you for giving me the opportunity to serve as chairperson of this special board.

Respectfully,

Jayashree (Jay) Kommareddi, Chair
Michigan Human Trafficking Health Advisory Board

Board Members

Chairperson Jayashree Kommareddi, of Grand Blanc, represents individuals with experience and expertise in the fields of human trafficking prevention and intervention and the treatment of human trafficking survivors.

Vice Chairperson Elizabeth Hertel, of East Lansing, is the former senior deputy director of the Policy, Planning, and Legislative Services Administration at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. Ms. Hertel served as a designated representative from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

Matt Lori, of Constantine, is senior deputy director of the Policy, Planning, and Legislative Services Administration at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. Mr. Lori serves as a designated representative from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. *(Replaced Elizabeth Hertel in January 2017)*

Jeffrey Jackson, M.D., of Grand Rapids, represents mental health professionals.

Lori Ryland, Ph. D., of Battle Creek, represents mental health professionals. *(Replaced Jeffrey Jackson, M.D., in June 2016)*

Sheila Meshinski, R.N., of Macomb, represents registered professional nurses with experience in an emergency department, emergency room, or trauma center of a hospital.

Dena Nazer, M.D., of Detroit, represents individuals licensed to practice medicine and was recommended by the Speaker of the House.

Brigette Robarge, of Belleville, represents human trafficking survivors.

Ruth Rondon, of Wyoming, represents human trafficking survivors.

Subburaman Sivakumar, M.D., of Northville Township, represents individuals licensed to practice medicine and was recommended by the Senate Majority Leader.

Steve Yager, of Lansing, is executive director of the Children's Services Agency at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. Mr. Yager serves as a designated representative from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

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Executive Summary

Human trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transporting, providing, or obtaining of a person for compelled labor or commercial sex acts through the use of force, fraud, or coercion, or if the individual induced to perform a commercial sex act is under 18 years old. In short, human trafficking is the exploitation of our society's most vulnerable members. Human trafficking exists in every state across the country, including Michigan, and victims of trafficking can be anyone—male or female, child or adult, domestic or international. Human trafficking is also a serious public health issue, and the healthcare community can play an integral role in confronting it. In order to do this, health professionals need the training, tools, and resources to properly identify, treat, and support victims and survivors of human trafficking.

In October 2014, Governor Rick Snyder signed the Human Trafficking Health Advisory Board Act into law. The act established the Michigan Human Trafficking Health Advisory Board, a public advisory body housed in the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and comprised of health and mental health professionals, human trafficking prevention experts, government agency representatives, and survivors of human trafficking. The Michigan Human Trafficking Health Advisory Board's mission is to improve the quality of and access to health and mental health services for victims of human trafficking.

This is the Board's second annual report to the legislature on its activities. The report includes a summary of activities from 2016 and new projects for 2017.

Work Summary:

1. Hospital/Emergency Department Human Trafficking Protocol
2. Screening Tools for Human Trafficking in the Child and Adolescent Health Center Program
3. Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health Services Workgroup
4. Human Trafficking Awareness, Education, and Training Opportunities
5. MDHHS "Human Trafficking of Children Protocol"

2017 Projects:

- Improve access to federal and state benefits for non-citizen victims of human trafficking
- Develop a speakers bureau for the board
- Partner with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to schedule a "Stop. Observe. Ask. Respond to Human Trafficking (SOAR)" training session in Michigan
- Develop best practice guidelines for organizations providing health services to victims of human trafficking

Introduction

In 2013, the Michigan Commission on Human Trafficking was created to study human trafficking in Michigan and develop recommendations for a comprehensive approach to the issue. A 21-bill legislative package overhauling the human trafficking chapter in Michigan's laws was developed from the Commission's recommendations, and the bills were signed into law by Governor Rick Snyder in 2014.

One of these bills, Public Act 461 of 2014, established the Michigan Human Trafficking Health Advisory Board within the (now) Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). The nine-member board is comprised of representatives from the MDHHS, medical professionals, human trafficking survivors, and human trafficking prevention and intervention experts. Public Act 461 of 2014 charges the Board with five essential duties:

1. Collect and analyze information about available health services for trafficking survivors;
2. Identify government agencies that are involved with issues related to human trafficking and coordinate the dissemination of information about health services to trafficking survivors;
3. Meet with local health agencies to review health services and establish a program to make survivors more aware of available services;
4. Establish a program to improve public awareness about available health services for survivors; and
5. Review existing state laws and administrative rules relating to health services for survivors.

Over the past year, the board met four times:

- **March 24, 2016**
- **June 29, 2016**
- **October 15, 2016**
- **January 12, 2017**

Several guest speakers gave presentations to the board at the meetings. Suelyn Scarnecchia from the University of Michigan Law School Human Trafficking Law presented on labor trafficking in Michigan, and Judge David Newblatt spoke about the Girls Court program that was established in Genesee County to serve female youth who are involved with the criminal justice system and are at-risk for being trafficked.

The board formed three subcommittees to focus on the board's mission: 1) Education, Training, and Awareness; 2) Victim Services; and 3) Policy and Legislation. Each subcommittee is charged with carrying out one or more of the board's duties as defined in statute.

Education, Training, and Awareness Subcommittee

Members:

- Jay Kommareddi

- Sheila Meshinski
- Dena Nazer
- Ruth Rondon
- Subburamman Sivakumar

Duties:

- Identify government agencies that are involved with issues related to human trafficking and coordinate the dissemination of information about health services to trafficking survivors
- Establish a program to improve public awareness about available health services for survivors

Victim Services Subcommittee

Members:

- Jeffrey Jackson
- Brigette Robarge
- Lori Ryland (*Replaced Jeffrey Jackson*)
- Steve Yager

Duties:

- Collect and analyze information about available health services for trafficking survivors
- Meet with local health agencies to review health services and establish a program to make survivors more aware of available services

Policy and Legislation Subcommittee

Members:

- Elizabeth Hertel
- Jay Kommareddi
- Matt Lori (*Replaced Elizabeth Hertel*)
- Steve Yager

Duties:

- Review existing state laws and administrative rules that affect the medical needs of survivors of trafficking and make recommendations to the legislature and state agencies to improve those laws and rules

Background

The issue of human trafficking has received increased attention by the public in recent years. While the number of human trafficking cases in the United States remains unclear, we know that people are being trafficked in communities—large and small, affluent and poor, rural and urban—across the country. Members of our communities are being exploited at the hands of profiteers and robbed of their most fundamental right—freedom. Michigan is no exception to this crime.

Human trafficking is no longer viewed as only a law enforcement issue. Rather, experts on human trafficking now recognize that healthcare professionals can play an important role in both identifying and assisting victims of trafficking. Studies have shown that a majority of human trafficking victims report seeing a healthcare professional at some point while being trafficked. Unfortunately, many healthcare professionals lack the training to identify victims. We must change this. Every day healthcare professionals have an opportunity to empower victims to leave their traffickers, and we should give them every possible resource to do this.

However, the healthcare professional's role does not end once a victim has been identified. Viewing human trafficking from a health lens necessitates addressing the physical and behavioral health consequences of human trafficking. The needs of trafficking victims are complex, and the factors affecting physical, mental, and emotional health are often interrelated. To properly address these complex needs, healthcare professionals must collaborate with other resources and providers in their communities. The Human Trafficking Health Advisory Board recognizes this need for cooperation and the Board has made a conscious effort to partner with other government agencies, community non-profits, healthcare organizations, and, most importantly, survivors of human trafficking. No one person, provider, or organization can address all of the needs of trafficking victims, but through education, training, and coordination we can develop a network of services for survivors that can empower victims and survivors to live healthy, independent lives.

2016 Board Activities

Over the past twelve months members of the Human Trafficking Health Advisory Board have been hard at work on a number of projects. Much of the work by the board in 2016 is a result of recommendations from the board's 2015 report. For example, initiatives like the hospital/emergency department human trafficking protocol and the substance use disorder and mental health services workgroup were recommendations by the board in 2015. In addition to working on past recommendations, several board members also participated in a committee to update the MDHHS "Human Trafficking of Children Protocol" and advised MDHHS on its statewide human trafficking public awareness campaign. Below is a brief overview of board activities from 2016.

Hospital/Emergency Department Human Trafficking Protocol

In the 2015 Annual Report, the Human Trafficking Health Advisory Board recommended developing and implementing a standardized human trafficking protocol for hospitals and emergency departments. Human trafficking protocols in hospitals or emergency departments should include several key components: warning signs of human trafficking and questions to ask if the professional suspects human trafficking, treatment guidelines for victims of human trafficking, reporting and safety procedures for Child Protective Services or law enforcement, and resources to provide the individual if an adult does not want to report to law enforcement.

2015 Annual Report Recommendation
Develop and implement a standardized human trafficking protocol for hospitals and emergency departments

As the 2015 report noted, creating a standardized protocol for cases of human trafficking could have significant benefits for both providers and victims. First, a protocol would improve providers' ability to identify cases of human trafficking and provide proper treatment to victims. Second, a protocol would improve access to appropriate, trauma-informed health care services for victims. Currently, the ability of providers to meet the complex physical and behavioral health needs of victims is largely dependent on an individual provider's familiarity with human trafficking and its health consequences. Widespread implementation of a hospital/emergency department human trafficking protocols could help ensure victims have access to appropriate treatment throughout the state and improve the likelihood that victims will leave their traffickers.

Based on the board's 2015 recommendation, MDHHS issued a grant in 2016 for a hospital to pilot the development and implementation of a human trafficking protocol for their emergency department. The year-long grant was awarded to Genesys Health Foundation in Genesee County. While the board does not manage or oversee this grant, members have offered their expertise to Genesys Health Foundation, and the board anticipates working closely with them in the coming year to learn more about the protocol development and implementation process. As part of the grant, Genesys Health Foundation will submit a final report to MDHHS with

recommendations for developing and implementing human trafficking protocols in Michigan. The board looks forward to using feedback from the pilot to promote the development of human trafficking protocols in other hospitals and emergency departments across the state.

Screening Tools for Human Trafficking in the Child and Adolescent Health Center Program

The board recommended in 2015 that the department implement a child trafficking screening tool in its Child and Adolescent Health Center Program to identify children and adolescents who may be victims of human trafficking. The Child and Adolescent Health Center Program is a jointly-run initiative by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and the Michigan Department of Education to provide high-quality, accessible health and mental health services to children and adolescents up to age 21. The program administers 82 clinical and alternative clinical centers, 14 School Wellness Programs, and 4 Behavioral Health Service models throughout the state.

2015 Annual Report Recommendation
Implement a screening tool for child victims at Child and Adolescent Health Centers

Specifically, the board recommended piloting a screening tool like the tool currently being developed by Jordan Greenbaum, M.D., from Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta. Dr. Greenbaum is a leading healthcare expert on child victims of human trafficking and has been working over the past few years to clinically validate a child sex trafficking screening tool by piloting it at healthcare sites around the country, including several in Michigan. Members of the board reached out to Dr. Greenbaum and connected her with the Child and Adolescent Health Program at MDHHS to discuss using the screening tool in the program. While no program sites participated in Dr. Greenbaum’s study, the board is looking forward to meeting with the Child and Adolescent Health Program and explore implementing a clinically validated screening tool in the near future.

Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health Services Workgroup

In the 2015 annual report, the board recommended partnering with substance use disorder treatment programs to address barriers to accessing services for victims of trafficking. This year, the board decided to expand this recommendation to include behavioral health services. Research on the health consequences of human trafficking shows that a large percentage of victims are in need of both substance use disorder and behavioral health services as a result of being trafficked. Often traffickers will use addiction as a method of recruitment and control of victims, or victims may develop an addiction as a way to cope with the trauma of human trafficking.

2015 Annual Report Recommendation
Partner with substance use disorder treatment programs to develop a coordinated service plan for trafficking victims

Last fall, the board convened its first Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health Services Workgroup meeting. Members of the workgroup included representatives from the board, MDHHS Children’s Services, local MDHHS offices, and Michigan State Police. The meeting focused on improving access for minor victims of trafficking who are involved with the MDHHS child welfare system. The board intends to continue convening workgroup meetings in 2017 and is considering including additional experts from the mental health and substance use disorder field in the workgroup to address barriers to services for adults.

Human Trafficking Awareness, Education, and Training Opportunities

The board had two recommendations in 2015 for raising awareness of human trafficking in Michigan. First, the board recommended partnering with state healthcare organizations to create a coordinated statewide human trafficking awareness campaign for healthcare professionals. Second, the board proposed working with current labor trafficking awareness efforts to educate healthcare professionals on the health effects of labor trafficking.

This year, members of the board collaborated with MDHHS and the Michigan Department of Civil Rights (MDCR) to create a statewide human trafficking public awareness campaign. In addition to educating the general public, the campaign included two components specifically related to the board’s 2015 recommendations: 1) training for the MDHHS Office of Migrant Affairs on labor trafficking and its red flags and 2) placing information about resources for victims of trafficking at doctors’ offices across the state.

The board is looking forward to partnering with MDHHS in 2017 to develop additional communication materials for healthcare professionals on both sex and labor trafficking. Specifically, the board would like to work with the Department to raise awareness in Michigan’s free and migrant clinics where healthcare professionals are more likely to interact with victims of trafficking. The board also plans to continue working with the MDHHS Office of Migrant Affairs and the Michigan Office of New Americans in MDCR to identify additional opportunities to reach at-risk populations.

Finally, the education, training, and awareness subcommittee is creating standardized presentation materials that can be used by board members for speaking engagements, trainings, conferences, etc. The subcommittee is currently working with the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) to ensure any training materials the board uses can

2015 Annual Report Recommendation

Partner with state healthcare organizations and associations to create a coordinated statewide human trafficking awareness campaign for healthcare professionals.

Work with current labor trafficking awareness efforts to educate healthcare professionals on the health effects of labor trafficking.

fulfill the new human trafficking training requirement for healthcare professionals (PA 343 of 2014).

MDHHS “Human Trafficking of Children Protocol”

In 2013, Michigan’s Children’s Protective Services developed the “Human Trafficking of Children Protocol” to give guidance to CPS staff on cases involving suspected human trafficking of children. The protocol included a list of human trafficking “red flags,” procedures for investigating suspected trafficking cases and cooperating with law enforcement, and steps for connecting victims with appropriate services.

Recently MDHHS convened a committee to update the “Human Trafficking of Children Protocol” to reflect new legislation and research regarding human trafficking. Several members of the board were asked to serve on the committee and help update the protocol’s section on addressing the physical and mental health needs of child victims. In late 2016, the committee submitted its final draft of the revised protocol to MDHHS. The revised protocol is expected to become official MDHHS policy in 2017.

Board Projects for 2017

The Human Trafficking Health Advisory Board is excited for new opportunities to fulfill its mission in the coming year. In addition to continuing work from 2016, the board is considering the following projects for 2017. However, this list is not intended to be comprehensive, and the board may introduce additional projects not listed below.

Improve access to federal and state benefits for non-citizen victims of human trafficking

The board would like to work with MDHHS, federal partners such as the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and other state organizations to help non-citizen victims of human trafficking access federal and state benefits. For example, non-citizen victims of trafficking may not be aware they could be eligible for programs like Medicaid. The board plans to work with partners like the University of Michigan Law School Human Trafficking Clinic to help non-citizen victims enroll in Medicaid and access important physical and mental health services.

Another opportunity to improve access to federal and state benefits is to increase the availability of Immigration Medical Examinations for non-citizen victims of trafficking. All non-citizens are required to receive an Immigration Medical Examination from a certified healthcare professional when applying for legal permanent residence in the United States. In general, there are few healthcare professionals in Michigan who are certified to perform these examinations, and non-citizen victims of trafficking often have difficulty affording them. The board would like to meet with key stakeholders in Michigan to find ways to help non-citizen victims of trafficking obtain timely, affordable Immigration Medical Examinations.

Develop a speakers bureau for the board

The board would like to create a speakers bureau within the board that will help facilitate and organize presentations on human trafficking for healthcare professionals across the state. The speakers bureau will provide consistent, up-to-date information and presentation tools for members to use and will coordinate the requests for trainings, conferences, and other speaking engagements received by the board.

The education, training, and awareness subcommittee has started developing presentation materials for the speakers bureau. The subcommittee is working with LARA to ensure that presentation materials meet the human trafficking training requirement for healthcare professionals (PA 343 of 2014). The subcommittee will continue to update the presentation materials in the future as necessary. The board plans to start using these materials for speaking engagements in 2017.

Partner with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to schedule a SOAR training session in Michigan

The board is interested in partnering with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services to schedule a training in Michigan for its *Stop. Observe. Ask. Respond (SOAR)* human trafficking training program. SOAR is a program provided jointly by the Postgraduate Institute for Medicine and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to educate healthcare and social service professionals on how to identify, treat, and respond to potential victims of human trafficking. The SOAR program provides both virtual and in-person training sessions to healthcare and social service professionals across the country. The board would like to explore hosting an in-person SOAR training session in Michigan in 2017.

Develop best practice guidelines for organizations providing health services to victims of human trafficking

The board would like to collaborate with the Human Trafficking Commission and other state partners to develop best practice guidelines for organizations that provide health services to victims of human trafficking. In particular, the board would like to develop recommended standards for mental health and substance use disorder services. These guidelines could help organizations design services for victims of human trafficking that are trauma-informed and victim-centered. The guidelines could also help anti-trafficking coalitions and victim service providers identify health services in their communities that best meet the needs of trafficking victims.

One potential model for creating guidelines is the “Standards for Service to Trafficked Persons” developed by Ohio’s Human Trafficking Commission. The “Standards for Service to Trafficked Persons” were created to support communities in Ohio that are seeking to develop or strengthen their network of services for survivors of human trafficking. Included in the “Standards for Service to Trafficked Persons” are standards relating to health services for victims, including trauma-specific therapy and substance use disorder treatment. These health standards were created by Ohio’s Human Trafficking Commission to be consistent with the state’s licensing requirements and laws. The board would like to develop similar health services guidelines that are specific to Michigan’s laws and requirements.

Conclusion

The Board's activities described in this report represent one piece of the much larger picture of confronting human trafficking in Michigan. Healthcare professionals play a vital role in identifying and supporting victims/survivors of human trafficking. The mental, physical, and emotional consequences of human trafficking on victims/survivors are complex and creating victim-centered, trauma-informed services that effectively meets their needs requires collaboration and coordination across disciplines. To this end, much of the work in this report would not be possible without the essential input and cooperation of the board's partners throughout Michigan.

This report builds on best practices from across the country to ensure the board is implementing evidence-based, collaborative approaches to serving victims of human trafficking. The board believes that through the work described in this report, healthcare professionals will have the opportunity to achieve their field's highest aim: empowering some of our society's most vulnerable individuals to lead healthy, thriving lives.

Acknowledgements

The Human Trafficking Health Advisory Board would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their partnership in 2016:

- Judge David J. Newblatt, Family Division, Michigan 7th Judicial Circuit Court
- Michigan Department of Civil Rights
- Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
- Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs
- Michigan Human Trafficking Commission
- Michigan State Police
- Suellyn Scarnecchia, Clinical Professor of Law, University of Michigan Law School
- United States Department of Health and Human Services
- University of Michigan Law School Human Trafficking Clinic