Tool 6.8   Health-care providers' tool for identifying victims

Overview

This tool, developed by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, contains key sample questions health-care providers should consider asking to determine whether someone is a potential victim of human trafficking.

Method

As with domestic violence victims, if you think a patient is a victim of trafficking, you do not want to begin by asking directly if the person has been beaten or held against his or her will. Instead, you want to start at the edges of his or her experience. And if possible, you should enlist the help of a staff member who speaks the patient's language and understands the patient's culture, keeping in mind that any questioning should be done confidentially.

You should screen interpreters to ensure they do not know the victim or the traffickers and do not otherwise have a conflict of interest.

Before you ask the person any sensitive questions, try to get the person alone if they came to you accompanied by someone who could be a trafficker posing as a spouse, other family member or employer. However, when requesting time alone, you should do so in a manner that does not raise suspicions.

Suggested screening questions:

- Can you leave your job or situation if you want?

- Can you come and go as you please?

- Have you been threatened if you try to leave?

- Have you been physically harmed in any way?

- What are your working or living conditions like?

- Where do you sleep and eat?

- Do you sleep in a bed, on a cot or on the floor?

- Have you ever been deprived of food, water, sleep or medical care?

- Do you have to ask permission to eat, sleep or go to the bathroom?

- Are there locks on your doors and windows so you cannot get out?

- Has anyone threatened your family?

- Has your identification or documentation been taken from you?

- Is anyone forcing you to do anything that you do not want to do?

> **i** *Source*: United States Department of Health and Human Services, at:
> www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/campaign_kits/tool_kit_health/screen_
> questions.html