A5-7: Effectiveness of a Lethality Assessment Intervention on Repeat, Lethal, and Near Lethal Violence and Women's Health

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Abstract:

Introduction: Law enforcement agencies do not have evidence based strategies to intervene in intimate partner violence (IPV) cases. This research implements and evaluates the use of a brief lethality assessment and intervention protocol with 8 police departments in Oklahoma, a state where a substantial proportion of IPV victims are Native American, a segment of our society highly at risk for domestic violence and IP homicide.

Method(s): Telephone interviews with women who were at high risk for domestic violence homicide provided preliminary data about the severity of IPV on their physical and mental health as well as co-occurring injuries, disability, chronic illness, substance abuse, and utilization of health care. These women were part of a larger National Institute of Justice study evaluating the use of a Lethality Assessment Intervention with 8 police departments and collaborating advocacy agencies in Oklahoma, a state where women are at high risk for domestic violence/homicide.

Results: One hundred nine Caucasian, AI/AN, African-American, and Latino women were interviewed. The majority were single, legally separated or divorced, with a mean age, 32yo. Being punched, pushed, slammed into an object, and strangled were the most common forms of violence with tries to choke and threats to kill occurring with almost half the women. Almost half ranked their health as fair-poor, also claiming chronic illnesses and disability. Over 80% reported being sad/blue, anxious/nervous and a majority showed PTSD symptomology on the PC-PTSD Screen.

Discussion & Conclusions: Intimate partner violence is a significant risk factor for various physical and emotional health problems. Many of the physical and emotional health problems the participants described might appear as a constellation of non-specific physical and emotional symptoms that are difficult to diagnose and treat for primary care providers. This non-specificity should alert practitioners to probe with sensitivity for abuse in a health history to discover if the root cause could be intimate partner violence.
Abstract History:
This abstract has been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.
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