

Caring for Human Trafficking Victims and Survivors in the Emergency Department Setting

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Why the Emergency Department?

- 87.8% of trafficking survivors reported accessing healthcare services during their trafficking situation. Of this, **68.3% were seen at an emergency department.** (Lederer &Wetzel, 2014)
- Only 5% of EM physicians feel comfortable identifying and treating possible victims of HT.

- “During the time I was on the street, I went to hospitals, urgent care clinics, women’s health clinics, and private doctors. No one ever asked me anything anytime I ever went to a clinic.” – Lauren, survivor

Patient Barriers

Shame or guilt

Fear of
retaliation by
trafficker

Fear of arrest or
deportation

Lack of
transportation
or controlled
movement

Fear of a report
to social services

Lack of
understanding of
U.S. healthcare
system

Common ED Presentations

Musculoskeletal and ergonomic injuries

Malnutrition/Dehydration

Lack of routine screening and preventative care

Poor dental hygiene

Untreated skin infections/Inflammations

Injuries or illness from exposure to harmful chemicals/unsafe water

Ophthalmology issues or Vision complaints

Somatization

Multiple or recurrent STIs

Abnormally high number of sexual partners

Trauma to vagina and/or rectum

Impacted tampon in vagina

Signs of physical trauma

Somatization symptoms (recurring headaches, abdominal pain, etc.)

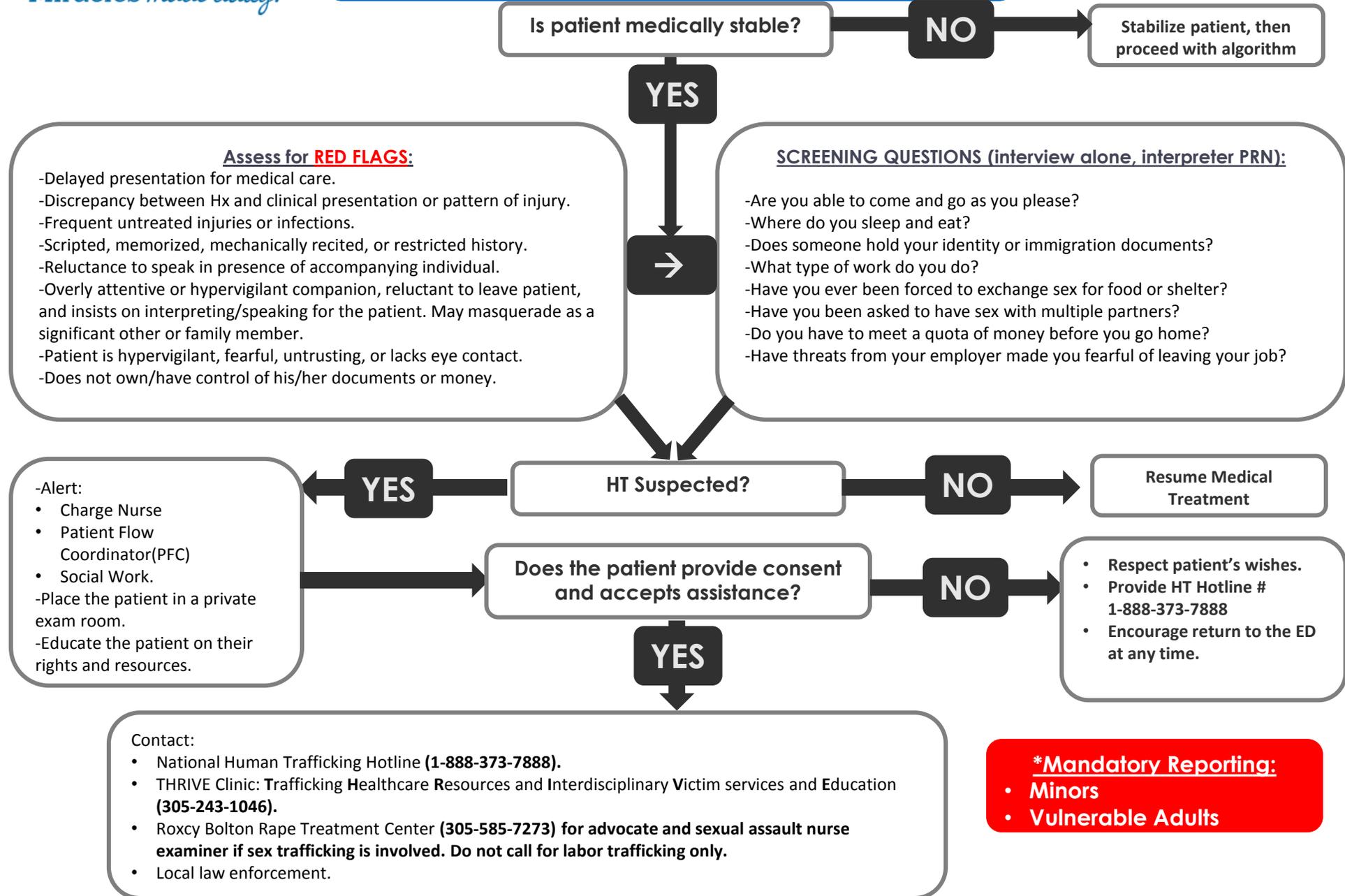
RED FLAGS

- Delayed presentation
- Discrepancy between history and presentation.
- Frequent untreated injuries or infections.
- Scripted, memorized, mechanically recited, or restricted history.
- Reluctance to speak in presence of accompanying individual.
- Overly attentive or hypervigilant companion, reluctant to leave patient, and insists on interpreting/speaking for the patient. May masquerade as a significant other or family member.
- Patient is hypervigilant, fearful, untrusting, or lacks eye contact.
- Does not own/have control of his/her documents or money.

Screening Questions (THRIVE Screening Tool)

- Are you able to come and go as you please?
- Where do you sleep and eat?
- Does someone hold your identity or immigration documents?
- What type of work do you do?
- Have you ever been forced to exchange sex for food or shelter?
- Have you been asked to have sex with multiple partners
- Do you have to meet a quota of money before you go home?
- Have threats from your employer made you fearful of leaving your job?

JMH Emergency Services Human Trafficking (HT) Algorithm



Pearls

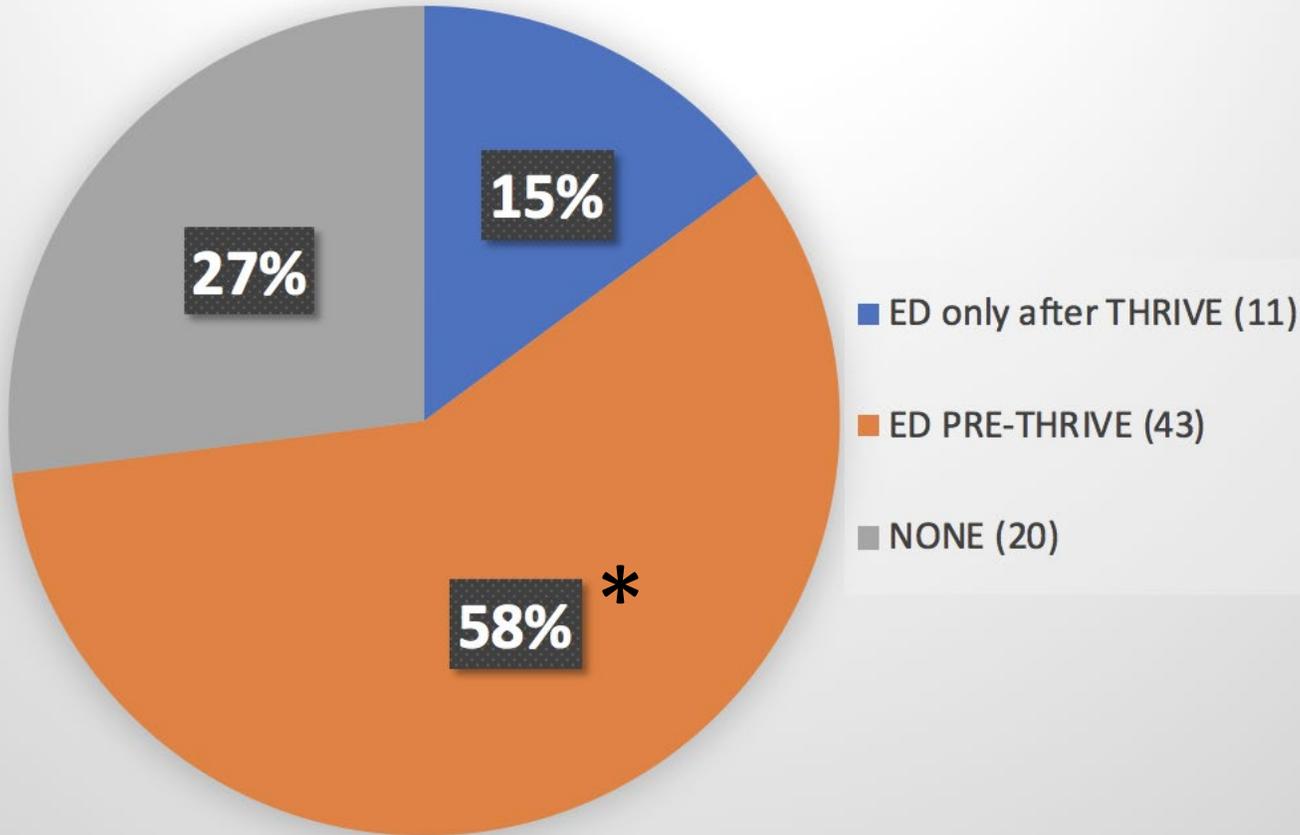
- Speak with the victim ALONE.
- Educate the patient on their rights and resources.
- Respect the patient's wishes. Do not interrogate or re-traumatize.
- Offer and disguise resource phone numbers.
- Encourage them to return to the ED at any time.
- HT Survivors will still present to the ED → RESOURCES.
- EDUCATION of staff is KEY.

Emergency Department Goals

- ED HT Protocol
- Triage Screening Tool
- Staff Education → Hospital Wide → System Wide
- Simulation Training (MDs, RNs, med students)

JMH ED Experience

JMH ED UTILIZATION



2010 – PRESENT: (1st THRIVE patient May 2015)

- **74** HT survivors referred to THRIVE.
- **20/74 (27%)** did not utilize ED services at JMH.
- **11/74 (15%)** only began utilizing ED services at JMH after obtaining access to THRIVE.
- **43/74 (58%)** patients utilized ED services.

JMH ED Experience

(2010-2015)

(2015-2019)

	<u>PRE-THRIVE ED VISITS</u>	<u>POST-THRIVE ED VISITS</u>
TOTAL	221	85
AVERAGE	5.13	1.98
MEDIAN	3	1

<u>ALL ED VISITS</u>			<u>PRE-THRIVE ED VISITS</u>			<u>POST-THRIVE ED VISITS</u>		
		<u>%</u>			<u>%</u>			
Psych	65	19.76%	GI	42	19.00%	Psych	24	22.22%
GI	50	15.20%	Psych	41	18.55%	MSK	16	14.81%
MSK	37	11.25%	OB/GYN	22	9.95%	Pulm	16	14.81%
OB/GYN	35	10.64%	MSK	21	9.50%	OB/GYN	13	12.04%
Pulm	24	7.29%	Drug Abuse	15	6.79%	GI	8	7.41%
Skin/Wound	19	5.78%	GU	14	6.33%	Skin/Wound	7	6.48%
Drug Abuse	18	5.47%	Skin/Wound	12	5.43%	Neuro	6	5.56%
GU	17	5.17%	Trauma	11	4.98%	HEENT	4	3.70%
Neuro	15	4.56%	HEENT	10	4.52%	Cardiac	3	2.78%
HEENT	14	4.26%	Neuro	9	4.07%	Drug Abuse	3	2.78%
Trauma	12	3.65%	Pulm	8	3.62%	GU	3	2.78%
Med Refill	9	2.74%	Med Refill	6	2.71%	Med Refill	3	2.78%
Cardiac	8	2.43%	Cardiac	5	2.26%	Allergy	1	0.93%
Allergy	3	0.91%	Allergy	2	0.90%	Trauma	1	0.93%
Sexual Assau	2	0.61%	Sexual Assault	2	0.90%			
No DX	1	0.30%	No DX	1	0.45%			
TOTAL	329			221			108	