



Re: Strategic Action Plan - Human Trafficking Victim Services

The Christian Medical Association (CMA) agrees with the four overall goals of the Federal Strategic Action Plan on Services for Victims of Human Trafficking in the United States, 2013-2017 and applauds this comprehensive effort. Fighting human trafficking within the United States hinges on increased coordination and collaboration within all affected federal agencies as well as with nongovernmental organizations, including faith-based NGOs.

Studies suggest that a significant percentage of **victims of human trafficking will visit healthcare professionals**, yet virtually **none is reported** as a result. Several federal agencies, recognizing this gap, have produced general guidelines for health professionals.

However, existing government materials in this area are not adequate to fully engage health professionals in the ways that physicians, nurses and other medical professionals are used to obtaining education--which is through medical institutions, organizations and specialty colleges (e.g., American Medical Association, American Academy of Emergency Physicians, American College of Physicians, Christian Medical Association, etc.).

For this reason, CMA members with extensive experience in human trafficking projects have been raising awareness of the issue of human trafficking among healthcare professionals. Besides conducting **medical missions**, which provides our members with first-hand experience treating victims, CMA has also produced **comprehensive online education modules** that carry Continuing Medical Education (CME) Category One credit. These training resources (www.CMA.org/tip) are helping healthcare professionals (a) to grasp and understand the causes and effects of human trafficking and (b) to identify victims of human trafficking within the healthcare setting. CMA's courses provide an example of how hundreds of thousands of health professionals can be reached through medical specialty colleges and organizations.

CMA agrees with the Plan's goal to improve short and long term health outcomes of victims of human trafficking and also supports the goal of expanding access to services, recognizing that there is a dearth of specialized services required by victims of human trafficking. Through medical missions to trafficking victims and online training resources, CMA has been mobilizing 16,000 members to recognize, report and provide necessary medical and dental services to these traumatized victims.

Recommendations

1. Federal agencies tasked with developing awareness raising resources should make use of existing resources, such as those offered by CMA, for the healthcare community. Agencies such as ACF can greatly increase awareness by disseminating such resources widely to the healthcare community and offering them as templates for additional resources.
2. To assist in meeting Objective 6 outlined in the Plan, with minimal funding CMA would be able to establish a nationwide "train the trainers" program that would prepare, equip and train healthcare professionals from across the United States who would in turn train healthcare professionals in their community to identify victims of human trafficking.
3. Engaging medical specialty colleges provides an opportunity to reach hundreds of thousands of medical professionals, most of whom belong to and rely on medical specialty colleges for education. Hold a one-day White House human trafficking conference for leaders of national medical specialty colleges and other key medical organizations. Review existing resources and data, demonstrating how medical organizations themselves can raise awareness among and mobilize their members by providing educational resources similar to those produced by CMA.

Thank you for your consideration of these views, and for your initiative and commitment to eradicating human trafficking. We would be happy to discuss any of the recommendations further with appropriate officials.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey J. Barrows, D.O., M.A. (Bioethics)
Health Consultant, Human Trafficking
Christian Medical Association
H-(937) 599-3050
C-(937) 210-1503
jeffreybarrows@yahoo.com

Jonathan Imbody
Vice President for Government Relations
Christian Medical Association
P.O. Box 16351
Washington, DC 20041
703-723-8688
www.cmawashington.org
jonathanimbody@me.com