AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution: 015
(A-18)

Introduced by: Oklahoma

Subject: Human Trafficking/Slavery Awareness

Referred to: Reference Committee on Amendments to Constitution and Bylaws
(Peter H. Rheinstein, MD, JD, MS, Chair)

Whereas, The United Nations has defined human trafficking as “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, or deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, as a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs;” and

Whereas, All 50 states have enacted laws criminalizing human trafficking activities; and

Whereas, AMA Board of Trustee Report 20, A-13, encourages its member groups and sections as well as the Federation of Medicine, to raise awareness about human trafficking and of resources available to help them identify and address the needs of victims; and

Whereas, The Polaris Project operates a 24-hour national human trafficking hotline which also provides assessment tools for healthcare professionals and on-line training; and

Whereas, Current AMA Policy H-65.966 will help encourage the education of physicians about human trafficking and how to report cases of suspected human trafficking to appropriate authorities to provide a conduit to resources to address the victim’s medical, legal, and social needs; and

Whereas, The January 2017 American Medical Association Journal of Ethics featured numerous perspectives on how physicians can respond for effectively to this vulnerable population and has brought awareness; and

Whereas, According to the US Department of State, Human Trafficking is the fastest growing criminal activity in the world, second only to drug trafficking. This modern-day slavery generates over $150 billion annually for organized crime; and

Whereas, Human trafficking continues to be an increasing substantial societal problem in Oklahoma and nationally; and

Whereas, Physicians are first responders in this epidemic and their education has been underwhelming compared to the rate of increase of this problem; and

Whereas, Health care providers are key stakeholders in the abolitionist movement. An estimated 28% of trafficked persons encounter the health care system while in captivity but
virtually none are ever detected. Only 1 in 100 trafficked victims are ever rescued. Recognizing red flags is absolutely essential. Without an awareness of human trafficking, victims will continue to go undetected by health care professionals; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association study the effectiveness of physician education to ensure that physicians are trained to report suspected cases of human trafficking/slavery to the appropriate authorities while assuring victims have the medical, legal, and social resources they need and develop a plan of action to improve recognition of victims of human trafficking/slavery to increase the identification, referral, and rescue rate. (Directive to Take Action)

Fiscal Note: Not yet determined

Received: 05/01/18

References
- Human Trafficking Into and Within the United States: A Review of the Literature. US Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation.

RELEVANT AMA POLICY

Physicians Response to Victims of Human Trafficking H-65.966

1. Our AMA encourages its Member Groups and Sections, as well as the Federation of Medicine, to raise awareness about human trafficking and inform physicians about the resources available to aid them in identifying and serving victims of human trafficking. Physicians should be aware of the definition of human trafficking and of resources available to help them identify and address the needs of victims.

The US Department of State defines human trafficking as an activity in which someone obtains or holds a person in compelled service. The term covers forced labor and forced child labor, sex trafficking, including child sex trafficking, debt bondage, and child soldiers, among other forms of enslavement. Although it's difficult to know just how extensive the problem of human trafficking is, it's estimated that hundreds of thousands of individuals may be trafficked every year worldwide, the majority of whom are women and/or children.

The Polaris Project -
In addition to offering services directly to victims of trafficking through offices in Washington, DC and New Jersey and advocating for state and federal policy, the Polaris Project:
- Operates a 24-hour National Human Trafficking Hotline
- Maintains the National Human Trafficking Resource Center, which provides
  a. An assessment tool for health care professionals
  b. Online training in recognizing and responding to human trafficking in a health care context
  c. Speakers and materials for in-person training
  d. Links to local resources across the country

The Rescue & Restore Campaign -
The Department of Health and Human Services is designated under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act to assist victims of trafficking. Administered through the Office of Refugee Settlement, the Department's Rescue & Restore campaign provides tools for law enforcement personnel, social service organizations, and health care professionals.

2. Our AMA will help encourage the education of physicians about human trafficking and how to report cases of suspected human trafficking to appropriate authorities to provide a conduit to resources to address the victim’s medical, legal and social needs.

Citation: (BOT Rep. 20, A-13; Appended: Res. 313, A-15)