Population and Global Health Legacy Project Summary

Database Development with Kankakee County Center Against Sexual Assault (KC-CASA) and
Iroquois Sexual Assault Services (ISAS)

KC-CASA and ISAS are a team of agencies that provide community health services to survivors of sexual violence, including but not limited to sexual assault and human trafficking, in Kankakee, Iroquois, and Ford counties, as well as community outreach. More specifically, the services they provide in these communities include counseling, medical and legal advocacy, and a preventative, educational arm that delivers teaching to local professional organizations and schools (K-12) regarding sexual harassment and sexual health. Counseling includes a case management component that brings in other local agencies as appropriate, all of which are available to survivors and their significant others at no cost. The medical and legal advocacy teams include employees and a group of trained volunteers who serve as advocates. Initial contact with interested survivors occurs through the 24/7 crisis hotline or when contacted by local hospitals' emergency department after report of an assault by a patient. At this point, if a survivor chooses to become a client of the agency, KC-CASA will then guide them through the process of receiving appropriate medical care and taking legal action. The next steps may include supporting clients through evidence collection, STI testing, obtaining prophylactic antibiotics or medications to prevent pregnancy, filing a petition for an order of protection, or preparing for a trial. All services receive financial support through federal and state grants or legislature and agency-sponsored fundraising.

Our team's objective for the Legacy Project was to develop a database of research resources for the agency to use in grant proposals, educational programming, and the 40-hours crisis intervention training that is the prerequisite for all volunteer advocates. The resources provided were mostly peer-reviewed journal articles and different media related to the agencies' initiatives, which promote hope and healing for survivors while working toward ending sexual violence. Conclusions from our experience are that as medical professionals, especially those in the emergency department and primary care, we have the potential to identify individuals who are being victimized and help initiate contact with agencies who can provide help. Agency use of an interdisciplinary Sexual Assault Response Team (SART), which includes police, sexual assault nurse examiners (SANEs), and other community members, provides a unique opportunity to promote community health outside of our professional role (Berry et al., 2016; Donahue et al.,

2019; Greenbaum et al., 2018). Finally, several of the research articles provided support that technology may hold the key to enhancing and increasing the breadth of services available to survivors (Decker et al., 2020; Konradi & DeBruin, 2003; Liu, 2018; Meunier-Sham et al., 2019; Schwab-Reese et al., 2019).

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