Talking to your patient about Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking

Do No Harm: take care to not re-victimize the patient

- Create and maintain a safe environment
- Use an authentic (real) and therapeutic presence
- Be open, honest and non-judgmental with the patient
- Do not promise anything you cannot deliver
- If you are concerned or unsure whether the support person is the trafficker, find a way to speak privately with the patient
- Provide resources and information regardless of whether the patient discloses being exploited
- Address immediate patient concerns

Open up Dialogue with Statements and Open-Ended Questions

"I'm concerned about you…
Name your concern, based on what you are observing

- For example if you are concerned the "support" person is really the trafficker: "I'm concerned about your friend who brought you here. I notice she keeps answering questions for you."

"What is your biggest need or concern right now?

"How can I help you today?

Help with Safety planning

- For example, to an adolescent who is couch-surfing: "I am so glad you came in today, and that you are taking care of yourself. I see there's a lot going on for you right now and I'm concerned about you when you leave here… Who are some people in your life who can offer you support?"
- "I'm concerned that you don't have a cell phone; if you are ever in a situation that becomes an emergency, how do you think you can get help?..."

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