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Closing Borders on Sexual Slavery

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Closing Borders on Sexual Slavery

Background: Human trafficking (HT) is a \$150 billion industry impacting approximately 40.3 million internationally. The Windsor-Detroit border is the busiest in North America with over 20,000 vehicles crossing daily, making this a crucial corridor for human traffickers. Healthcare providers (HCP) are the first point of contact for sex trafficked victims seeking care and yet, HCPs have the least amount of specialized training compared to other stakeholders such as law enforcement.

Objective: To our knowledge this is the first academic statistical analysis of HT. Our aim is to inform the public of the concealed pandemic in our community and to propose the innovative integration of trauma informed care (TIC) within the healthcare profession to increase victim identification.

Method: We systematically reviewed multiple studies for current statistical analysis of HT and the implementation of TIC in other disciplines.

Results: Our statistical analysis indicates an alarming lack of precision and rigor in quantitative methods used for identifying HT victims. Due to the nature of the crime, the statistics available are significantly unreliable because HT is highly underreported. We detected critical gaps in the identification of HT victims and a scarcity of Canadian studies.

Conclusion: Current knowledge of HT amongst HCPs hinders the identification of victims therefore, existing statistical data is inaccurate. Future studies should focus on incorporating TIC to identify victims, while also being statistically rigorous. We will present methods by which TIC can be systematically implemented on both side of the border, and discuss how the lack of reliable data currently hinders effectively addressing this humanitarian crisis.