



EMS Focus Webinar FAQ – The Blue Campaign to End Human Trafficking

January 25, 2016

1. When do you recommend calling the National Human Trafficking Resource Center?

The National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) hotline at 1-888-373-7888 should be called if one has questions about whether a situation they have witnessed or are witnessing may be human trafficking or to report a tip about human trafficking. Victims of human trafficking, or people who know someone who is a victim, are also encouraged to call the hotline for help. The hotline is available 24/7 and is completely confidential. More information about the NHTRC is available online at <https://traffickingresourcecenter.org/>.

2. If someone suspects to have encountered a victim of human trafficking, should they contact the Department of Homeland Security, the NHTRC or local law enforcement?

If someone suspects to have encountered a victim of human trafficking, they should call either the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Tip Line or the NHTRC. Anonymous tips may be reported to ICE over the phone at (866) 347-2423 or online at <https://www.ice.gov/webform/hsi-tip-form>. It is not recommended to contact local authorities unless you are sure that a crime has been committed. If appropriate, ICE or the NHTRC will contact local authorities.

3. What should be done if, in a healthcare setting, there is difficulty separating a victim from the pimp or human trafficker?

Should a suspected pimp or human trafficker not be willing to separate from the patient and possible victim, it is advised to immediately request local law enforcement to respond.

4. What kind of training materials are available to state EMS offices and educators to train providers?

The Blue Campaign website, <https://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign>, has toolkits, one-page information sheets and general awareness training materials for EMS. The Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) also produced a video specifically for EMS providers that shows a real-life human trafficking scenario and what providers should do

on the scene. The video is available online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0PbDuMP4-vM>.

5. Is reporting suspected human trafficking a HIPAA violation if it is not covered under mandatory reporting for one's state?

Mandatory reporting varies by state. To be sure, consult your local legal staff. In specific instances, HIPAA allows revealing protected health information to law enforcement in order to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of an individual or the public. For more information about HIPAA and law enforcement, visit <http://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/505/what-does-the-privacy-rule-allow-covered-entities-to-disclose-to-law-enforcement-officials/>.

6. If EMS providers suspect human trafficking, how should they document the situation within their narratives and still remain objective?

It is recommended that EMS providers follow the same incident report writing standards for suspected human trafficking cases as they do for documenting other suspected criminal behaviors.

7. What should EMS providers do if they suspect or know that they have encountered a human trafficking victim, but the victim does not want them to call law enforcement?

The EMS provider must follow the appropriate protocols and report the case, even if the victim does not want them to call law enforcement. If the victim is a minor, the EMS provider is covered from liability in the same way they are covered in child and sexual abuse cases. If the victim is an adult, call the ICE Tip Line or NHTRC. If the provider can articulate criminal behavior, they may also call local law enforcement.

Answers provided by Scott Santoro, DHS Blue Campaign Training Advisor