

# Sample newsletter article/web posting

## [NAME OF FACILITY/SYSTEM/ASSOCIATION] TO [BEGIN/ANNOUNCE/ COMMIT TO] INNOVATIVE NEW PROGRAM TO SCREEN PATIENTS FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

As part of *Health Cares About Domestic Violence Day* [Date] [NAME OF FACILITY/SYSTEM/ASSOCIATION] is joining hospitals, clinics and other health care facilities across the country to begin routinely screening female patients for domestic violence. The program will be guided by materials from the Family Violence Prevention Fund, which has developed guidelines to help doctors, nurses and other health care providers screen patients for abuse and provide referrals and other help to those who are facing domestic violence. The materials are designed for providers working in the primary care, ob-gyn, family planning, emergency care, mental health and inpatient settings.

Domestic violence is a health care problem of epidemic proportions in [state] and

throughout this country. [INSERT LOCAL DATA]. Nationally, nearly one-third of American women (31 percent) report being physically or sexually abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives, according to a 1998 Commonwealth Fund survey. Thirty percent of Americans say they know a woman who has been physically abused by her husband or boyfriend in the past year. The rates of abuse among adolescents and within Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender communities are also staggering. And the U.S. Justice Department found that 1,320 women were murdered by their husbands or boyfriends in 1998 – more than three women every day.

**Health Care Providers Can Help!**  
“Many women who are murdered by their

husbands or boyfriends have seen their health care provider for routine care or to treat injuries from incidents of abuse,” said [name and title of spokesperson]. “But too often, health care providers miss this chance to help battered women because they don’t ask the right questions. Simply by routinely screening patients and giving them information and referrals, we can make an enormous difference for battered women and their children – and in some cases we can save their lives.”

Many experts say that properly trained doctors and other health care providers are uniquely qualified to intervene to help battered women. Yet, a study published in 1999 by the *Journal of the American Medical Association* found that less than ten percent of primary care physicians routinely screen patients for partner abuse during regular office visits.

In addition to implementing the screening policy, [NAME OF FACILITY/SYSTEM/ASSOCIATION] will [HOST A COMMUNITY FORUM ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE/TRAIN MORE THAN # PROVIDERS ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IDENTIFICATION AND INTERVENTION].

To get involved and learn more about screening, call [NAME] at [PHONE NUMBER], or e-mail [BLANK] at [BLANK]. To request a free “Screening to Prevent Abuse” packet, and further information on responding to domestic violence in the health care setting, visit the Family Violence Prevention Fund’s website: [www.endabuse.org](http://www.endabuse.org) or call the National Health Resource Center on Domestic Violence at: 1-888-Rx-ABUSE, TTY: 1-800-595-4889.

## Sample e-mail

Dear Colleague:

This Thursday, [NAME OF FACILITY/SYSTEM/ASSOCIATION] is participating in *Health Cares About Domestic Violence Day* – a day to promote routine screening of patients for domestic violence. Why is routine screening so important? A JAMA study found that 30-54 percent of female patients seeking emergency services, 21-66 percent of those seeking general medical care, and up to 20 percent of those seeking prenatal care report experiencing intimate partner abuse. A health care provider can help reduce these staggering numbers by implementing routine screening guidelines into their practice.

To get involved and learn more about screening, call me at [EXT.\*\*], or e-mail [BLANK] at [BLANK]. To download a free “Screening to Prevent Abuse” packet, and further information on responding to domestic violence in the health care setting, visit the Family Violence Prevention Fund’s (FVPF) website: [www.endabuse.org](http://www.endabuse.org) or call the FVPF’s, National Health Resource Center on Domestic Violence at 1-888-Rx-ABUSE, TTY: 1-800-595-4889 or e-mail: [health@endabuse.org](mailto:health@endabuse.org).



# Sample op-ed

## HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS CAN PLAY A KEY ROLE IN CURBING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

by  
[NAME OF SPOKESPERSON]

Domestic violence is a health care problem of epidemic proportions in [STATE] and throughout this country. Nationally, nearly one-third of American women (31 percent) report being physically or sexually abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives. The rates of abuse among adolescents and within Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender communities are also staggering. Thirty percent of Americans say they know a woman who has been physically abused by her husband or boyfriend in the past year. And approximately 1,320 women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends every year –more than three women a day.

[INSERT LOCAL DATA]

These numbers are startling. Just as startling are the wasted opportunities to help victims of domestic violence in the health care setting.

The health effects of domestic violence are staggering. Half of all female victims of intimate violence report an injury of some type, and about 20 percent of them seek medical assistance. In addition to the immediate trauma and injuries caused by abuse, domestic violence contributes to a number of chronic health problems (such as migraines, ulcers, back pain, pelvic pain and STIs) and interferes with the management of other illnesses. But too often, the source of these injuries and illnesses go undetected.

Although doctors and nurses routinely screen women for high blood pressure and cholesterol, they do not screen for the domestic violence that is more likely to affect their health and endanger their lives.

That needs to change. Experience and research have taught us that properly trained doctors and nurses are uniquely qualified to help battered women, who see them for both routine and emergency care. Yet, a study published in the August 4, 1999 issue of *The Journal of the American Medical Association* found that less than ten percent of primary care physicians routinely screen patients for partner abuse during regular office visits. This finding is deeply disturbing, considering the number of battered patients that health care providers see. A simple first step in addressing this problem is to encourage health care providers to routinely screen their patients for domestic violence.

This [DATE], [NAME OF FACILITY/SYSTEM/ASSOCIATION] is taking that step by joining dozens of hospitals, clinics and other health care facilities across the country to introduce a new domestic violence screening policy. The commitment by [NAME OF FACILITY/SYSTEM/ASSOCIATION] is part of *Health Cares About Domestic Violence Day*.

[DESCRIBE LOCAL ACTIVITIES]

We recognize that the health setting is often the only place for battered women to seek help and *if* doctors and nurses know how to detect abuse, and provide referrals and support, we have the opportunity to help the many hidden victims of domestic violence in our community. So we are giving our doctors and nurses the tools they need to screen effectively for abuse.

[DESCRIBE SCREENING POLICY].

Far too many women are facing abuse in [STATE] and around the country every day. The good news is that domestic violence is a problem we can solve – and health care providers and their patients can play an essential role in that critical effort. We are committed to doing our part and we hope that more health care providers will join us on [DATE] and throughout the year.

*[NAME (SIGNER OF OPED)] is the [TITLE] of [NAME OF FACILITY/SYSTEM/ ASSOCIATION]*

It is our hope that you can... support patients who are victims of domestic violence... if you have any questions and/or comments, please direct... Domestic Violence. We hope... supportive

# Sample news release

NEWS RELEASE  
[date]

CONTACT: [name]  
[phone number]

## **[NAME OF FACILITY/SYSTEM/ASSOCIATION] ANNOUNCES INNOVATIVE NEW PROGRAM TO SCREEN PATIENTS FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

***[Date] is [insert one: 2002 is the Fourth; 2003 the Fifth; 2004 the Sixth]  
Annual "Health Cares About Domestic Violence Day"***

[City -- ] [NAME OF FACILITY/SYSTEM/ASSOCIATION] announced that it is joining dozens of hospitals, clinics and other health care facilities across the country to begin routinely screening female patients for domestic violence at a [TYPE OF EVENT] today. The commitment by [NAME OF FACILITY/SYSTEM/ASSOCIATION] is part of the [INSERT: SEE TITLE] annual Health Cares About Domestic Violence Day – a day that promotes routine screening of patients for domestic violence.

Domestic violence is a health care problem of epidemic proportions in [STATE] and throughout this country. [INSERT LOCAL DATA]

Nationally, nearly one-third of American women (31 percent) report being physically or sexually abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives, according to a 1998 Commonwealth Fund survey. The rates of abuse among adolescents and within Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender communities are also staggering. Thirty percent of Americans say they know a woman who has been physically abused by her husband or boyfriend in the past year. And approximately 1,320 women are murdered by their husbands or boyfriends every year – more than three women a day.

"Many women who are murdered by their husband or boyfriend have seen their health care provider to treat previous injuries from abuse," said [NAME AND TITLE OF SPOKESPERSON]. "But too often, health care providers miss this golden opportunity to help a battered woman because they don't ask the right questions. Simply by routinely screening patients and by providing them with information and referrals, we can make an enormous difference for battered women and their children – and in some cases we can save lives."

Many experts say that properly trained doctors and other health care providers are uniquely qualified to intervene to help battered women. Yet, a study published in the August 4, 1999 issue of The Journal of the American Medical Association found that less than ten percent of primary care physicians routinely screen patients for partner abuse during regular office visits.

[more]



Serving Amador, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento and Yolo Counties  
**"FAMILY VIOLENCE AS A HEALTHCARE ISSUE"**  
**PART 1: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**  
 OCTOBER 2001

NUMBER 8

[Add One]

The effort will be guided by screening materials from the Family Violence Prevention Fund, which provide specific guidelines to help providers in primary care, ob-gyn, family planning, emergency care, mental health and inpatient settings screen effectively for abuse.

In addition to implementing the screening policy, [NAME OF FACILITY/SYSTEM/ ASSOCIATION] [WILL TRAIN XX PROVIDERS ON HOW TO IDENTIFY AND INTERVENE IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE/HOST A COMMUNITY FORUM/HOLD A BROWN BAG LUNCH ABOUT SCREENING, ETC.].

In addition to the activities in [YOUR CITY], the Family Violence Prevention Fund also leads a campaign through which women can encourage their health care providers to screen patients for domestic violence. Patients can order free postcards that urge their doctors to screen for abuse by calling, toll-free, 1-888-Rx-ABUSE, TTY: 1-800-595-4889 and requesting a patient card.

"These postcards can be a powerful tool in urging health care providers to help patients who are battered," said Family Violence Prevention Fund Executive Director Esta Soler. "If doctors hear from their patients as well as from leaders in the domestic violence and medical communities, they will be more likely to learn about abuse and intervene to help battered patients. We expect this campaign to have significant impact."

[ADD A PARAGRAPH DESCRIBING YOUR FACILITY/ASSOCIATION/SYSTEM – WHEN IT WAS FOUNDED, HOW MANY PATIENTS IT SERVES, WHAT KIND OF SERVICES IT PROVIDES, ETC.]

Founded in 1980 by Esta Soler, the Family Violence Prevention Fund is a leading national non-profit organization focusing on domestic violence prevention, education and public policy reform. The FVPF has developed pioneering strategies to address domestic violence in the public health, justice, child welfare, and public education fields.

# # # #

NOTE: Media review copies of the Family Violence Prevention Fund's domestic violence screening guidelines and the patient postcards are available from Lisa Lederer at 202/371-1999.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (10/08/2001)  
**CORMAN TAKES PART IN RALLY TO PROMOTE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS**  
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VOLUME 48  
**Domestic Violence Reporting**  
 Sacramento County Health Officer  
 By Glenn Trochet, MD, Sacramento County Health Officer  
 In August of this year, a Christian attorney  
 and four other