VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: GLOBAL PICTURE HEALTH RESPONSE

PREVALENCE

1 in 3 women throughout the world will experience physical and/or sexual violence by a partner or sexual violence by a non-partner

HEALTH IMPACT: Women exposed to intimate partner violence are

Mental Health

Twice as likely to experience depression

Almost twice as likely to have a low birthweight baby

1.5 times more likely to report that they have visited a doctor 5 times or more in the last 12 months

42% of women who have experienced physical or sexual violence at the hands of a partner have experienced injuries, as small as

38% of all injuries to women globally were endured as being caused by intimate partner violence

GUIDELINES FOR HEALTH SECTOR RESPONSE

WHO's new clinical and policy guidelines on the health sector response to partner and sexual violence against women emphasize the urgent need to integrate these issues into clinical training for health care providers. WHO has identified the key elements of a health sector response to violence against women, which have informed the following recommendations:

- Women-centered care
- Training of health-care providers on intimate partner violence and sexual violence
- Identification and care for survivors of intimate partner violence
- Clinical care for sexual violence
- Mandatory reporting of intimate partner violence

HEALTH-CARE WORKER INTERVENTION

Violence against women is a global public health problem of epidemic proportion, requiring urgent action. Health-care providers are in a unique position to address the health and psychosocial needs of women who have experienced violence, provided certain minimum requirements are met:

- Health-care providers are trained
- Standard operating procedures are in place
- Confidentiality is guaranteed
- A referral system is in place to ensure that women can access related services
- Health-care settings are equipped to provide a compassionate response, addressing both physical and mental consequences
- Health-care providers factor violence when needed

All statistics can be found in the report entitled "Global and regional estimates of violence against women: Prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence", by the World Health Organization, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and the South African Medical Research Council, last seen online.