

Q. What resources are available for child sexual assault training?

A. A provider at an I/T/U site asked the above question. I posed it to members of the MCH listserv and found that there are several resources available.

There is training on child physical and sexual abuse through the Making Medicine project. This project is funded by the Administration for Children Youth and Families through an interagency agreement with IHS. University of Oklahoma psychologists, Dr. Barbara Bonner and Dr. Dee Bigfoot provide the training. The training includes an initial 40 hours of didactic sessions and seminars as well as clinical consultation (usually by phone) over a period of six months. There is examiner and interviewing training, as well as child counseling.

This training should be available by making arrangements with Dr. Bonner or Dr. Bigfoot at (405)271-8858.

Ms Ramona Williams in Rockville, MD phone via OPH 301-443-3024 should be able to answer the questions regarding the IHS Child Abuse Training Programs. The AAP and AAFP have programs available as well... these are directed toward Physicians / Clinical Providers and information about them can be obtained via their respective web site.

The best sexual assault program I am aware of is based in California. The contact person is Sally Montoya 310-222-3091. The midwives at Pine Ridge have attended their sexual assault training for adults and it was excellent. They also have a child sexual assault program.

There is a CE course in Anchorage this Jan. The course is sponsored by Providence Medical Center. They have a sexual assault program.

I attended a two day conference given by *Contemporary Forums* last May in Atlanta where one of the topics was sexual abuse. Other topics were related to the aftermath of sexual abuse like Post Traumatic Stress disorder, depression. Contemporary Forums has a web page just enter the words "Contemporary Forums" in the search engine of your choice.

There is a great program in January that is put on by the San Diego group annually- it is usually the end of Jan. They also do week long mini internships for providers to train them on how to do forensic exams. There is also a group in Alabama that does the same- I will try to find the info for you. There is also an annual conference in Phoenix on child maltreatment but I think it is in the Fall of each year.

Outside of IHS one center of excellence is University of California San Diego that has both formal courses on Child Physical and Sexual Abuse and specific training in colposcopy. I do not have contact numbers, but would probably come up on websearch e.g., Center for Child Maltreatment.

I want to warn of some people, one in particular, who has set up a program that is less than ideal, here in S.Dakota. And he is giving national workshops. I had the opportunity to observe him, and actually ended up testifying for the defense. But his process is not objective, nor do they do complete exams. Maybe he has changed in the last few years.

We had 2 sessions at Pediatric Conferences held here in the Phoenix Area that Dottie Meyer arranged. Specifically covered was the differences in the pediatric gynecologic exam vs. the adult gynecologic exam that we GYNs have all trained with. However, the session was oriented for pediatricians, who often are not as comfortable with the gynecologic exam, especially when it may have forensic purposes. The last presenter was a pediatrician who regularly does these exams here locally, testifies in court relative to her findings, and is on staff at Maricopa Medical Center. The other was a pediatrician who has done some "high profile" exams and testimony.

We are lucky enough to have an arrangement with the university to do these exams...it helps in court cases to have the expert testimony and the child only has one exam...

Some thoughts on the Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) evaluation:

- Each IHS SU should think carefully as to how they wish to address this issue with a protocol in place.

- The CSA examination is a very specialized examination which includes both an interview and a medical examination. The goal is to perform a one time examination, so that the child is not exposed to multiple examinations and re-victimization.

- CSA medical examinations are generally divided into two time frame categories: less than 72 hours or after 72 hours post incident. The majority of CSA incidents are reported after 72 hours at which point the forensic interview becomes the most important aspect of the CSA examination. After 72 hours, a colposcopy examination is essential for proper evaluation. This requires specialized training and maintenance of examination skills. In the PX area, we have selected performing minimally 12 examinations per year for maintenance of skills. We have nothing to support this number, and Sylvia Strickland and I just pulled it out of the air.

Acute/emergent care evaluation should be provided by clinicians at every SU. In the PX area, we have held a yearly pediatric meeting for the past 14 years where an updating of both acute skills and discussion of CSA is provided. (Except last year, when I couldn't get it on the national agenda.) In cases where expert testimony is required, this also provides documentation of ongoing training.

- If an IHS SU wishes to provide medical evaluations in cases of allegations after 72 hours, telemedicine is an excellent alternative. In the PX area, we have been fortunate to have Jane Powers, FNP, at the U&O Service Unit who has developed, with the support of her SUD/CD and the MCH Program, a program with Astrid Hegar (LAC+USC Medical Center) and Liah Lamb (CARES Unit, St Lukes Regional Medical Center, Boise Idaho), funded by the OVC. This program provides, not only exceptional training for the individual clinician, but also direct access to these two of the top CSA experts in the US for evaluation of colposcopy examinations.

Personally, for multiple reasons, I believe that examinations of children, in the after 72 hour category, belong in specialized centers where a comprehensive examination can be performed. In more isolated geographical areas where these centers are not accessible and available, I believe Jane's Program is a reasonable and acceptable alternative. It provides not only an in-depth 4 day didactic training, but also, accessibility to and ongoing training/skill building from national experts. In this past fiscal year, 12 IHS physicians took part in this training. Interestingly, one was from the Northern Cheyenne Clinic in Lame, Deer, Montana, (Melissa Broomhall). Jane may be reached at 1-800-635-3324 ext 6839 or by the IHS e-mail.

- At least in AZ, Nevada, and Utah, the US Attorney's Offices have definite ideas as to how they wish examinations to take place. All protocols/plans need to be discussed with these offices for input and coordination.

- Finally, Dean Effler developed an education slide program on CSA. Each SU in the IHS should have received a copy of this slide series. This are a good review of acute physical presentations of CSA. It would seem helpful that, after initial training, these could be reviewed at intervals. Hopefully, these are still available at each IHS site.