

Initiating Support for Female  
Victims of Human Trafficking in  
Toronto  
Findings & Recommendations



ending violence against women

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# About the Project

Initiating Support for Female Victims of Trafficking in Toronto (ISVTT) was a 12-month project aimed at:

- building supports for women who are survivors of human trafficking
- providing information to front line service providers from various sectors about the issue
- creating outreach materials informing survivors of the supports available.

“Victims of Trafficking in Persons: Perspective from the Canadian Community Sector”, a paper located on the Department of Justice Website indicates that very few organizations in Canada have experience working with victims of trafficking or have knowledge about the issue. “Secrecy, ignorance and misinformation regarding trafficking are challenging problems in the effort to improve service provision to this vulnerable population” (Hanley, Lacroix & Oxman-Martinez, 2005). Given public awareness and understanding of the issue of trafficking in persons (TIP) is minimal, it was identified that developing a workshop to provide frontline service providers information about trafficking and the particular circumstances faced by victims of trafficking would assist victims in accessing services that could respond to their needs. Prospective groups of trainees included: shelter and rape crisis workers, community health workers, settlement workers, legal clinic workers and sex worker advocates.

In the fall of 2007 an Advisory Committee consisting of service providers from various sectors that work with women who have experienced violence, met to review the project and provide Springtide Resources with information and expertise in the development of training and outreach materials.

A literature review as well as key informant interviews were conducted in order to facilitate the development of a workshop that provided service providers with accurate information as to: the international discourse of trafficking, a gendered, anti-oppression analysis of the issue, an overview of the various types and sites of trafficking, relevant legislation, barriers and obstacles faced by victims of TIP and approaches for intervention. In total 5 half-day workshops were delivered, with approximately 85 participants from various sectors. Power point slides from the workshop were made available on Springtide Resources website.

The second phase of the project was to create outreach materials in 6 languages to inform victims of trafficking of supports available to them. It became clear shortly after the beginning of the project that the lack of experience in most service organizations meant that the workshops needed to be delivered prior to the release of outreach material to women.

After much deliberation it was decided that the format of the outreach materials developed would be letters written from the perspective of women who were in precarious situations with a response from a helper; similar to a “Dear Abby” scenario. The letters were translated into 10 languages other than English and distributed to organizations from the various sectors represented on the advisory committee, in both hard copies and electronic copies. Additionally the letters were made available on the Springtide Resources website for download.

The final deliverable of the project was the creation of a report documenting findings and recommendations on how public-sector and voluntary-sector agencies can contribute to and collaborate on support to victims of TIP. The report identifies the learning experienced by the Project Coordinator and the Advisory Committee members, the barriers faced in the completion of the project and the rationale of the interventions recommended. This project report of findings and recommendations is also available on the Springtide Resources’ website for download.

# About the Report

This Recommendations Report is one of the final components of the Initiating Supports for Survivors of Human Trafficking in Toronto project. The findings are a summary of the learning that occurred during the course of this project by the members of the advisory committee and the project coordinator. It is hoped that the recommendations will assist in building supports for women who have experienced this particular form of violence.

Each recommendation point in the report begins with a “finding” that provides a rationale for the recommendation that follows. Some findings arose from the data and opinions collected from participants in the workshops and advisory committee members, others emerged out of the research, while others are observations based on the running of the project.

This report is designed for community-based agencies that wish to support women who have experienced violence through trafficking. It will also be useful to policy makers at both the provincial and federal levels of government who wish to understand how best to support vulnerable women who are currently residing in Ontario.

It is important to note that this report is meant to contribute to the discourse on trafficking, in the attempt to highlight issues that would be of importance particularly to service providers who work with women who have experienced violence. The lack of focus in this report on men who have experienced trafficking should not be regarded as an attempt to devalue or ignore those experiences; rather it is acknowledged that there are similarities and overlaps of much of the issues identified in this report that would be true for other genders as well. In addition the focus on adults was deliberate as there are special circumstances and considerations in cases of child trafficking that this report does not address.

# About Trafficking

## Definition of Human Trafficking

Human Trafficking is defined in the “Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children”, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (“Trafficking Protocol”), which has widespread international support with 147 signatories, including Canada:

(a) “Trafficking in persons” shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs;

(b) The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used;

(c) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered “trafficking in persons” even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article;

(d) “Child” shall mean any person under eighteen years of age

In plain language trafficking in persons involves each of the following elements:

**Acts:** recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a person

**Means:** threats, use of force, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception or abuse of power

**Purpose:** forced labour or services, slavery or servitude

## Canada's Response

After the ratification of the UN Trafficking Protocol, signature countries were obliged to create domestic policy. The trafficking of persons first became criminalized in Canada under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA), in June 2002 (Department of Justice Canada, 2005). And in November 2005, Bill C-49, an act to amend the criminal code to specifically prohibit trafficking in persons came into force.

In May 2006 the Department of Citizenship and Immigration announced a new policy to provide temporary residence permits specifically for trafficked persons. The policy was updated in June 2007 to allow immigration officers the ability to issue the temporary residence permits to trafficked persons for up to 180 days. Recipients of the permits are exempt from the processing fee and are eligible for essential medical care, counselling assistance and other health benefits under the Interim Federal Health Program. Recipients may also apply for a work permit and are exempt from the processing fee. In some cases the temporary residence permit can be renewed.

## Background on Trafficking

The issue of human trafficking is not new. The issue first surfaced in public discourse in the nineteenth century in connection with newly emerging migration patterns after the abolition of slavery in the Americas, closely associated with the emergence of globalized capitalism. Poor people, people of colour hoping to create better circumstances for themselves moved and were moved across borders and experienced systems of slavery, bonded labour and indentured servitude that positioned and maintained them as cheap labour. A primary role for women in this economy was to perform domestic and sexual labour.

The term "white slave trade" was a racialized concept developed in response to the migration of women engaged in sex work, specifically American or European white skinned women. "The early international definition of trafficking was exclusively attached to activities in the global sex trade". This discourse resulted in the "International Agreement for the Suppression of the White Slave Trade" in 1904. Following this agreement came the "Convention for the



Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others” in 1949 (Kempadoo, 2005).

The issue of trafficking re-emerges on the public scene in Canada and internationally in the early 1990’s and was largely framed by the media as women victimized by organized crime “sex slave” rings (Department of Justice, 2005). The issue of trafficking people became closely linked with reports of increasing transnational organized crime activities, specifically drug and weapon smuggling. As a result the UN developed its most recent protocol, the “Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children” in addition to the “Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air”, both of which are supplementary to the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (Kempadoo, 2005).

## Human Rights Perspective

Trafficking is more than a criminal offence; it is a violation of human rights, freedom, the right to earn a decent wage, the right to live free from violence, the right as an adult to migrate in your own time and by your own decision.

It is important to recognize trafficking as a human rights issue in order to create effective policy to combat this type of violence. Approaches to address trafficking that focus primarily on crime and punishment are limited in their ability to address the issue because they do not focus on the systemic and structural issues that create vulnerabilities to trafficking in the first place. Criminal legislation can only be enacted *after the fact*. Effective approaches to address trafficking must recognize the political, social and economic factors that create trafficking opportunities:

Conceptualizing irregular migration as a criminal justice problem obscures not only the political, social and economic context out of which the trade emerges but also renders the complicity or ‘reputable’ non-criminalized employers and consumers in receiving countries outside of the discourse (Department of Justice, 2005).

As noted in the previous section, trafficking in persons involves three elements, one being the exploitation of labour. High demand for certain types of labour as well as a drive for profitability in a highly competitive marketplace creates a

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demand for a supply of workers who can be exploited. Globalization, privatization, war, gender and racial inequality, human rights violations, natural disasters and the like create conditions of displacement, economic instability and poverty which results in increased vulnerability to trafficking and other harms (Sanghera, 2005).

Another element of trafficking is migration or movement from one jurisdiction to another. Very little attention has been focused on the movement of people within the borders of a country, from rural to urban areas, from city to city, or even within a city. Instead the primary focus of trafficking legislation is the movement of goods or persons across international borders. Internal trafficking has been mentioned by some social justice groups as a possibility in reference to a large number of missing First Nations women in Canada, but there has not been a serious undertaking to investigate this possibility.

Focusing on transnational organized crime as the cause of trafficking feeds sentiments of nationalism by identifying trafficking as a threat to national security, thus allowing states to further tighten their immigration policies to strictly control who is allowed within their borders, for what purpose and for how long. As "legitimate" immigration becomes more and more restricted it results in people having to look for alternative and sometimes underground ways to migrate to countries where they might have better economic and social opportunities, resulting in people being more at risk of violence and exploitation (Kempadoo, 2005).

The focus on crime and punishment also severely limits who is identified as a victim of trafficking and the resulting supports they can receive. Trafficking has gained great attention in the general public through media such as movies, television shows and news reports. Most often the victims of trafficking portrayed are women who have been kidnapped and held as sex slaves in a brothel. Often the traffickers are brown men who are part of an international or foreign gang – they are almost always immigrants to North America, complete with "foreign accents".

This concept not only furthers a racist perception of trafficking, it implies the capture of "an innocent" who is then forced to perform sex. Women who have different experiences of migration and labour exploitation are then not recognized as "true" victims of trafficking and their experiences of violence and

oppression are rendered invisible. Women who are not victims of trafficking are designated as illegal immigrants and criminals (Department of Justice, 2005).

## Gendered Analysis

The issue of trafficking is a gendered issue, with a particular context for women that is important to identify and address. Gender is evident in how trafficking is discussed, the sites of trafficking and the legislation created by many countries aimed at stopping trafficking. Sexism is an issue for women in some shape or form, from every country around the world. Women's subordinate social, economic and political status creates additional vulnerabilities to violence and exploitation, including trafficking.

Women continue to battle sexist stereotypes that deem them readily available for domestic duties, care-giving and sex:

Global demand for labour whose core component consists of "woman's work exceeds the supply of female citizens of affluent states willing to provide these services either as unpaid labour or for the wages and working conditions offered in the market (Macklin, 2003).

Women in many countries around the world are primarily responsible for providing for their families and extended families. While women have played almost no role in the decision making that has led to globalization, they have disproportionately bore the brunt of its consequences. In the globalized economy many public resources and services are being privatized leaving families without their primary sources of income. Products, companies and money move easily across the borders. Workers are often forced to travel to places where they can get jobs. Often there is little or no protection against exploitation in the places they move to. Racism and nationalism contribute to the vulnerability of racialized women in the labour market and their ability to receive protection from abuse and violence, including trafficking:

Increased poverty is forcing greater numbers of women worldwide to migrate in search of work. Seeking economic opportunities abroad, women turn to a variety of resources, including newspaper ads, acquaintances, marriage agencies, labour recruiters and modelling agencies. They accept positions as

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nannies, maids, sex workers, dancers, factory workers and hostesses. (van Struense, 2000).

Without adequate labour protections in place, workers are vulnerable to debt-bondage, slavery like conditions, unsafe work conditions and sexual exploitation from employers or family members who may use sanctioned means to recruit cheap or free labour.

Another area of trafficking important to women in particular is how trafficking interventions are constructed. Portrayal of trafficking in the media is very gendered. The stories we see are most often of young women lured by traffickers, sexually exploited and rescued by police or well-meaning social workers. The exploitation of women and children is almost always linked. Women are seen as victims in need of rescue; the view invokes sentiments of innocence, ignorance and the inability of women to participate in decisions affecting their lives. This interpretation is apparent in many of the interventions to address trafficking by both government and non-government organizations. Interventions informed by this perspective often result in limiting women's choices regarding where they will work and in what capacity. Women migrating for work are under intense scrutiny as the terms 'trafficked women' and 'female migrant workers' have become almost mutually exclusive.

The above understanding of trafficking is damaging to women as it reinforces women as passive and renders their resistance to gender inequality as invisible. The reality is that women are active agents in their choices, even though their options are limited. They may be willingly or unwillingly moved, they may migrate for one job and may willingly or unwillingly take another, they may choose to leave an exploitative situation or they may choose to endure the situation with an end goal in sight or they may be held captive and unable to make a choice to leave. Agency and choice in decision making should not be confused with consent to abuse. Women are not consenting to being abused when they make decisions to migrate for work even though they may decide to remain in a situation of abuse out of necessity. In a research study conducted of how Canadian courts, specifically immigration proceedings, responded to irregular migrant women in the sex trade, the data demonstrated that perceptions of "consent" were a factor in the determinations (Department of Justice Canada, 2005). Women who were perceived to have had consented to

risky or criminal activity were unsuccessful in their appeals to remain in Canada on protected grounds.

## Sites of Trafficking

As noted in the previous sections, trafficking discourse has always included debates and discussion of sex work so much so that the term trafficking has been conflated with “the sex trade”. This is especially problematic on several fronts and unfortunately serves to increase women’s vulnerability to harm through trafficking.

Sex work is deemed as inherently exploitative and women working in the sex trade are portrayed as either women who don’t know any better, or as unwilling participants; victims without agency in either case. This portrayal has led to a moral panic about sex work with trafficking as the primary means of capturing women in its net. Many countries have laws that either criminalize prostitution or criminalize various acts in order to create barriers to working as a prostitute. Other types of sex work while not criminalized under law, are rendered deviant and outside of normal society and therefore criminally suspect. Women’s agency and their right to sexual self determination and autonomy are policed and criminalized, limiting their ability to safely migrate for sex work (Kempadoo, 2006 p xxii). Limiting women’s legitimate paths of migration has resulted in forcing women to find underground ways of travel for work, leaving them vulnerable to trafficking and labour exploitation. Many countries, including Canada are creating laws that deliberately target women working in the sex trade, including exotic dancers, to limit their entry into the country. The common rationalization is that countries can reduce trafficking by restricting women who would travel for this type of work.

The focus on the commercial sex trade as the primary if not only site of trafficking has rendered other sites invisible. Women are trafficked for a variety of reasons including: industrial work, agriculture work, farm work, marriage, domestic work, commercial sex trade, internal organ harvesting and pan handling. Women are vulnerable to sexual exploitation as a result of their trafficked status in any of these areas of work. Women can be trafficked by organized crime gangs, independent organizers, employers, family members and friends. A common scenario is women being invited to come to Canada by family members and promised education, work and support to build a better

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life only to find they are forced to provide complete domestic service including childcare for little or no money.

Trafficking is a process that is not determined by the type of work; the act of trafficking may take place at the beginning, middle or end of the process (Sanghera, 2006 p 7). For example, a woman may set out to work as a live-in caregiver and find work through a legitimate recruiting company. An employer may use this company to hire domestic workers in from overseas and abuse them once they arrive. This scenario does not become a trafficking scenario until the woman arrives at her workplace and is abused. This makes trafficking very difficult to address criminally and necessitates broader intervention strategies.

## Impacts and Barriers

Trafficking is a form of violence. It involves controlling the victim by use of threat, force, assault, manipulation, fostering of drug and alcohol dependencies, coercion and abuse of power. Women can have injuries from assaults, such as broken bones, burns and other wounds. They can experience a variety of illnesses from deprivation of food, water and sleep. Women are vulnerable to unwanted pregnancy, gynaecological problems and STI's from sexual abuse. They can experience a range of emotional health issues such as: post traumatic stress disorders, panic attacks, depression, addiction and feelings of fear and shame. As with women who experience other types of violence, there are long term affects of the violence that may result in long term illness or disability.

While women who have experienced trafficking may be in need of supports it is very difficult to get the information about where they can get help directly into their hands. The very nature of this type of violence is covert, whether women are trafficked to engage in criminal enterprise or domestic work; very little of the actual work takes place in a public place or business. Women who have been trafficked most often have little contact with the community they have been trafficked to which makes it very difficult to find and access help. Women who have been trafficked at a young age or by family members often can't name the exploitation they have endured, as they have little information about their rights. Often women are isolated and not allowed out in the community alone.

For many women who have been trafficked fear of police and other authority is a primary barrier. Sometimes the fear of police is fostered by the trafficker, by holding her documentation or by telling the woman that she will be arrested or deported. Some women have had hostile or life-threatening experiences in their past with the police or military which have left them fearful of interacting with government authority. Women are suspicious of professionals that appear to be sponsored or work for the government such as health professionals, social workers and teachers. Furthermore some women's actions are deemed criminal or deviant and as such they are at risk of arrest.

Women are also at risk from the traffickers themselves. Some women are brutally forced to comply with their captors' demands through violence and threats of violence; or violence to their families. They are threatened with exposure to not only the authorities and/or to their communities, from whom they may also experience threats, violence or stigmatization. There are also women who make decisions to stay in their situation in the hope of reaching their end goal of a better life for themselves and their families. They believe that if they endure the exploitation they can find their own way out of their situation.

## Summary

Trafficking is a complex problem with many layered issues, therefore strategies that are developed to stop trafficking and to support women who are victims of trafficking must be complex and multi-layered as well; and ultimately they must uphold the woman's human rights and her right to make her own decisions about her future.

To date there are very little supports offered to women in Ontario who have experienced trafficking. The temporary resident permit is a short term remedy that does not really allow women to recover from their experience and make decisions about their future. The federal health allowance is helpful in the short term but again it is too limited in both length of time and what services can be offered. There are no known supports offered provincially or regionally in Ontario or Toronto to support victims of trafficking.

The following pages of this report identify some strategies that must be undertaken in order to effectively address this issue.

# Findings and Recommendations

## Research/data

### Finding:

Accurate data of how many women are trafficked and in what circumstances does not exist; the numbers repeated in most reports are sensationalized, misrepresented, and/or guesstimated.

### Recommendation:

- Government bodies fund investigative and community based research projects to determine actual numbers and real life circumstances.
- Government bodies partner with not for profit, community organizations to conduct the research.
- Government funding for research must allow for protection of victims of trafficking, their identities and safety

### Finding:

The issues of migration for sex work and trafficking has been conflated resulting in a limited view of what circumstances constitute trafficking, as a result many women's experiences are not adequately represented in trafficking reports.

### Recommendation:

- Research should investigate all sites of trafficking; not limiting the scope to trafficking for the purposes of work in the commercial sex trade.

### Finding:

Women's organizations in Canada have raised questions about the possibility that First Nations women in Canada have been particularly victimized by trafficking and the possibility of a link between trafficking and the 500 missing and killed aboriginal women.

### Recommendation:

- RCMP should commission an investigation into missing women in Canada, specifically First Nations women to determine the possible links to trafficking.
- Fund Aboriginal Women's organizations to continue raising awareness of this issue.



## Systemic responses

### Finding:

Women who are newly immigrated to Canada, poor women, women living with disabilities, women without immigration status or with precarious status and other disenfranchised women are particularly at risk at their places of work because of the lack of enforcement of labour laws or the lack of any labour laws at all.

### Recommendation:

- De-criminalize sex work and enact appropriate labour protections in law to increase the safety of women working in the sex trade.
- Ensure all companies are upholding all labour protection and human rights laws at their work sites.
- Create and advertise “whistle-blowing” incentives and protections to encourage workers who are being exploited to come forward in safety.

### Finding:

Women without immigration status or with precarious status, who are swept up in raids targeting sex work, are afterward detained, jailed and deported. Women who have lived this experienced identified the police officers lack of sensitivity to women’s stories.

Women who have experienced traumatic events that involved police or military in this or other countries are afraid to report exploitation and abuse to the authorities.

Women without status or with precarious status who are discovered by the authorities often face detention and deportation.

### Recommendation:

- The police work to develop protocols with non government organizations working with women who have experienced trafficking and ensure that women who have been arrested, detained or identified as being trafficked are referred immediately to a worker from the community.
- As noted in the recommendations above: work to decriminalize sex trade work.
- Police should follow the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” Protocols.

### Finding:

Canada introduced Bill C-17, an amendment to the Immigration and Protection Act to allow immigration officers to refuse to authorize foreign nationals' entry to Canada if they are judged to be at risk of exploitation. This Bill was specifically aimed at restricting women from coming to Canada to work as exotic dancers. These types of restrictions infantilize women by limiting their ability to migrate for work of their own choosing. It also increases their vulnerability of exploitation forcing them to use irregular migration paths.

Recommendation:

- \* Rescind Bill C-17

Finding:

Immigration officers are reluctant to offer temporary resident permits and in some cases unaware of their power to offer the permits. As a result many women who are eligible for the permits do not receive them.

Recommendation:

- Develop training and a set of clear procedures for immigration officers to follow in regards to trafficked women.
- Ensure all immigration officers are properly trained and informed specifically about the temporary residents permit and about the issue of trafficking in general.
- Government to assess program and its effectiveness.

Finding:

Women who are migrating from other countries, as well as women who are migrating within Canada; between provinces or from rural to urban, are not aware of laws, customs and support services available if they require assistance. Women travelling to Canada for work or marriage are not aware of their rights and the risks.

Recommendation:

- Provide information about services, rights and laws of the region and put them online alongside information that women may access to migrate.
- Government can partner with community based anti-violence organizations to develop materials that are non-threatening and accessible for women.
- For example, require that all "mail-order bride" businesses and "domestic care-giver" recruiting companies provide information about intimate

Finding:

The temporary residence permit provides a woman with 180 days to recover from her experience of trauma and to make informed choices about her future. It is not enough time to make these kinds of life-changing decisions.

Recommendation:

- Extend the time period on a temporary residence permit from 180 days to 365 days.
- The federal government should work with the provincial government to develop more support services for women.
- Ensure that women have access to income supports, housing, legal aid and alternative health practitioners.

Finding:

Many women have migrated in order to find better opportunity for themselves and their family. Automatic repatriation to home country, province or region may not be her choice.

Women may face extreme penalties from their home communities depending on circumstance. Women who choose to return to their home location should be protected.

Recommendation:

- Provide for option to apply for permanent resident status (see a proposal about this issue from the Canadian Council of Refugees <http://www.ccrweb.ca/trafficking/home.htm>)
- Provide protection and income supports to women who choose to return to their home communities by collaborating with home country governments and NGO's.

## Services for women

### Finding:

Women experiencing trafficking require a safe place to stay with specialized supports. They may require short to medium lengths of stay (longer than most women's shelters mandates). It would also be beneficial to stay in a shelter with women who have similar circumstances in order to feel comfortable and build trust.

Women who have been trafficked do not have flexibility in their work-day in order to reach the services they require during "regular business hours".

### Recommendation:

- Government should fund the creation of specialized shelters and a 24-hour hotline for women who have been trafficked access to housing should not be dependent on cooperation with law enforcement officials.
- Victims of trafficking, once identified, should not be placed in immigration detention.

### Finding:

Women who have experienced trafficking have specialized needs for health and legal supports in the immediate and other supports after priority supports have been achieved, which requires various services. Fear, need for security of information, and lack of trust requires that the woman be provided with consistent support and information and should not have to repeat her story over and over to different service providers.

### Recommendation:

- Development of services for women who have experienced trafficking that includes: interpretation, health, legal, counselling, housing and settlement. Look at a 'wrap around' or 'case manager' style that has several organizations who communicate with each other and the woman with one worker/organization as the lead, so as to avoid cross purposes or inconsistent messages.
- Services need to be delivered by specialized professionals who understand the unique circumstances and needs of victims of trafficking

### Finding

Women will most often have physical and emotional health requirements and various cultures require various types of intervention. For example

women may require traditional native healing, Chinese medicines or acupuncture.

Recommendation:

- Ensure access to alternative and non-traditional health practitioners to allow for cultural differences.

Finding:

Various specialized needs in legal – criminal, family law and immigration law may overlap – may appear to be at cross purposes – lawyers need to be fully versed.

Settlement: women may need information about cultural differences, food and nutrition, job skills, English as a Second Language classes (ESL), etc.

Health: various health needs in regards to: nutrition deficiencies, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and gynecological issues, pregnancy, dental, etc as a result of trafficking or as a result of life circumstance prior to trafficking. Emotional health needs may be immediately apparent or as often the case after trauma, they show up after woman appears settled.

Recommendation:

- Provide in-depth training for settlement service workers, interpreters/translators, lawyers, health practitioners, alternative health practitioners on the specific health, lifestyle and legal needs of women who have been trafficked.
- Ensure all training addresses confidentiality and security of information.

Finding:

Women require housing after leaving the shelter, or instead of going to a shelter depending on her security needs. In addition, some women require job retraining for a new and different line of work. Some women are sending money home and their family depends on it for survival.

Recommendation:

- Women should have immediate access to applying for income supports and long-term affordable housing.

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