

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 20, 2017

Contact Info:

Martina E. Vandenberg, President, The Human Trafficking Legal Center, (202) 716-8485
Hanni Stoklosa, Executive Director, HEAL Trafficking, (858) 522-0023

Human Trafficking and Health Care: Joint Paper Explores Case Studies in the United States

Lessons learned from federal criminal indictments and civil trafficking cases

WASHINGTON, D.C. AND LOS ANGELES, CA -- The Human Trafficking Legal Center and HEAL Trafficking jointly announce the release of a new medical fact sheet, "Human Trafficking & Health Care Providers: Lessons Learned from Federal Criminal Indictments and Civil Trafficking Cases."

The medical fact sheet aggregates reports of health-care presentations of trafficking. The Human Trafficking Legal Center identified the cases by searching the organization's comprehensive civil and criminal federal trafficking case databases. The cases provide vivid examples of trafficking victims presenting in emergency departments, hospital facilities, and other medical settings. The central lesson of the case studies is clear: with proper training, health care providers can play a significant role in identifying and caring for trafficking victims.

"Trafficking victims pass through our doors every day, undetected, because health professionals do not know how to identify them," said Dr. Hanni Stoklosa, Emergency Medicine physician at Brigham and Women's Hospital, Harvard Medical School and Executive Director of HEAL Trafficking.

Martina E. Vandenberg, an attorney and president of the Human Trafficking Legal Center (HT Legal), stated, "These case studies point to significant red flags in medical settings. Doctors and nurses alert to these red flags can identify and support trafficking victims. Whether they are held in forced labor or trafficked into the sex industry, trafficking victims need allies in the medical profession who can recognize these warning signs."

The fact sheet also identifies cases in which health care personnel have themselves been trafficked into forced labor, most often as caregivers. Susie Baldwin, MD, MPH, President of HEAL Trafficking, noted, "Labor trafficking is alive and well in the medical sector. As the U.S. population ages, it is important to prevent abuses in nursing homes and home care. Low wage workers and immigrants are particularly vulnerable to forced labor in this sphere."

Generous funding from the Jewish Women's Foundation of the Greater Palm Beaches and Humanity United supported the research and publication of this Fact Sheet.

About HT Legal:

The Human Trafficking Legal Center (HT Legal) connects human trafficking survivors with highly-skilled pro bono attorneys nationwide, holding traffickers accountable for their crimes through civil litigation and criminal restitution. HT Legal, formerly HT Pro Bono, maintains databases of civil and criminal federal trafficking cases filed in the United States. The Human Trafficking Legal Center conducts in-depth research on human trafficking trends and victims' rights. For more information, please visit www.htlegalcenter.org.

About HEAL Trafficking:

HEAL Trafficking is a network of professionals ending human trafficking through public health approaches. For more information on HEAL Trafficking and its services, please visit www.HEALtrafficking.org

###