

FUNDAMENTALS OF PROVIDING SERVICES TO SURVIVORS OF TORTURE: CORE CONCEPTS AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Lesson Summary

Torture Relief Act and Definition

The Torture Victims Relief Act of 1998 recognizes the pervasive damage wrought by torture; the need for and value of healing service for survivors; and the role of treatment providers & organizations supporting survivors & in preventing torture.

US Legal Definition of Torture is an act...

- Committed by person acting under color of law
- Specifically intended to inflict severe physical or mental pain or suffering
- Upon another person
- Within the perpetrator's custody/physical control

Survivors of Torture (SOT) Programs

Services offered by torture survivor rehabilitation programs include: psychological, social, medical, and legal.



Common Structures of SOT Programs

- Free-standing non-profit organization
- Embedded within or hosted by a larger health, human services or educational institution
- Collaborative project among two or more organizations



Common Forms of Delivery in SOT Programs

- In house
- In the larger health, human services or educational institutions within which the programs are embedded/hosted
- Through referred, contracted, or pro-bono services in community
- Co-located in primary care clinics

Torture Impact and Survivor Resources

Torture can result in a variety of consequences, but survivors have resources that can help promote their healing.



Common Survivor Traumas

- Severe physical pain or suffering
- Severe mental pain or suffering
- Prolonged physical and psychological pain and suffering that can, if left unaddressed, linger long after the torture has ended



Survivor Resources to Help Promote Healing

- Personal
- Spiritual
- Indigenous healing
- Interpersonal
- Community
- Resilience

Core Principles of Service Provision

- Survivor-centered focus that includes children & families
- Holistic, integrated service model
- Focus on strengths, resilience & healing
- Recognize & use the power of healing relationships
- Focus on cultural, spiritual & linguistic dimensions of experience
- Attention to best, promising & emerging practices
- Ensure self-care for providers