



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Satellite program on April 23 will educate health care providers about sexual assault FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Alabama Department of Public Health Office of Minority Health will observe National Minority Health Month and Sexual Assault Awareness Month during April by partnering in an educational program titled *Understanding the Role of Healthcare Providers in Treating Victims of Workplace Sexual Violence*. The satellite webcast will be held on April 23 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. central time.

Sexual harassment is a pervasive problem that impacts the lives of many women who earn low wages, especially immigrants. Women employed in agricultural work and other low wage jobs such as hotel housekeepers, restaurant employees and factory workers, face sexual violence in the workplace at alarming rates. For these women, sexual harassment ranges from inappropriate touching and comments to rape. These women are often unfamiliar with their rights and are usually non-English speakers, so many never admit to being harmed.

The Office of Minority Health is collaborating with the Bandanna Project of the Southern Poverty Law Center to tie together the health disparity and the need to address sexual violence in the workplace. The program will include a faculty of three attorneys who are heavily involved in addressing this problem. Monica Ramirez works with an Immigrant Injustice Project, Julie Samples is a coordinator with the Oregon Law Center and Bill Tamayo is Regional Attorney for the U.S. Equal Employment and Opportunity Commission, San Francisco District. In 1995, Tamayo was on the legal team that developed the immigrant battered women provisions of the Violence against Women Act.

Medical providers play a key role in identifying and treating low wage women who suffer from workplace sexual violence. However, sometimes protocols are not in place to help identify a woman who is suffering from this violence. This educational program is designed for persons involved in the delivery of health care services for women. This program will also be of interest to law enforcement, social service and other practitioners who serve migrant populations.

To find out more about the free satellite and webcast conference, go to the Alabama Public Health Training Network at www.adph.org/alphn/ and click on "[Satellite Conference and Webcast Schedule](#)" to see program information.

"By working together to bring attention to sexual assault awareness during the month of April, we want to raise public awareness and to educate communities and individuals on how to prevent sexual violence," said Julia Sosa, assistant director of the Office of Minority Health.

For more information on the National Partnership for Action to End Health Disparities, visit the Federal Office of Minority Health at <http://www.omhrc.gov/> or for additional information, visit the State of Alabama Office of Minority Health website at www.adph.org/minorityhealth/ and the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (www.ovw.usdoj.gov/), a center that serves as an information and resource center regarding all aspects of sexual violence.

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