Ethnic/Racial differences in trauma experiences of women who have substance use disorders and are homeless/near homeless and their application to trauma-informed services

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The Need for Trauma Informed Care

- Substance Use Disorder (SUD) rates are 12x higher in homeless women than the general population (Polcin, 2016)

- 80%-90% of women seeking SUD treatment have experienced victimization and traumatic events

- This trauma is related to increased severe and complex clinical presentations and decreased treatment engagement and retention
Study Design

851 participants
- 18 years+
- At or near homelessness
- Receiving SUD treatment or currently misusing substances

Subgroups
- White Only (non-Hispanic) (n=445)
- American Indian (n=145)
- Hispanic (n=226)
- African American (n=74)

Seven Trauma Types
- Sexual Abuse & Assault
- Physical Abuse & Assault
- Non-Interpersonal Threat to One's Physical Health
- Forced Displacement
- Traumatic Grief/Separation
- Victim of/Witness to Community Violence
- Justice Involvement
Results Overall

Percent of Participants Who Experienced Trauma During Lifetime

- At least 1 trauma type (n=851): 100%
- 5-7 trauma types (n=640): 75.3%
- All 7 trauma types (n=170): 20%
Traumatic Grief/Separation

Percent of Participants Who Experienced Trauma During Lifetime

- African American (n=74): 100%
- Hispanic (n=225): 99.6%
- American Indian (n=143): 99.3%
- White only, non-Hispanic (n=440): 99.1%
Sexual Abuse & Assault

Percent of Participants Who Experienced Trauma During Lifetime

- African American (n=56): 75.7%
- American Indian (n=100): 69%
- Hispanic (n=157): 69.5%
- White only, non-Hispanic (n=351): 79.1%
Victim of/Witness to Community Violence

Percent of Participants Who Experienced Trauma During Lifetime

- African American (n=31): 41.9%
- Hispanic (n=103): 45.6%
- American Indian (n=62): 42.8%
- White only, non-Hispanic (n=106): 24%
Applied Trauma-Informed Service

New Dawn-Warrior Women
Indigenous/American Indian culturally-tailored sexual health curriculum

• Response to American Indian experience and health related needs

• Eligibility requirements the same as this study

Acknowledge each participant's experiences/recognize your role in their lived experiences
• Land acknowledgment

Affirming trauma-informed care
• Anonymous questions
• Vulnerability activity practice
Conclusion

• Women with SUD of any ethnic background face a variety of traumatic events throughout their lifetime

• Provide affirming care by recognizing population trauma regardless of the individual experience

• Trauma-informed care can prevent further trauma by reducing revictimization while leading to improved healthcare outcomes
Questions: For questions about this presentation contact Josephine Korchmaros, PhD, jkorch@arizona.edu.

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