



Estimating the Prevalence of Human Trafficking in Delaware

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Introduction

Delaware has recently begun attempting to raise awareness and develop means of reducing the impact of human trafficking in the state. As part of this response, the Human Trafficking Interagency Coordinating Council (HTICC) was formed. One of the issues that was quickly identified by the HTICC was the lack of information about the extent of trafficked victims in the state, as well as any assessment of the state of data systems and reporting mechanisms. The Council saw as true the old saying that “it is hard to know where one is going if one doesn’t know where one is.” In regard to the extent of human trafficking in Delaware, the Council realized it did not know where it was. Understanding the nature of existing human trafficking data and obtaining an estimate of the prevalence of human trafficking in the state were deemed important so policy makers can best identify priorities and how to allocate resources.

In order to determine the extent of human trafficking data in Delaware and begin to determine the prevalence of trafficking in the state, the research team at the Center for Drug and Health Studies (CDHS) at the University of Delaware was asked to assess the nature of data in the state and provide an initial estimate of human trafficking prevalence. The CDHS research team attempted to do this in the spring and summer of 2020 by implementing the *Victims of Human Trafficking Data Assessment Project*. The goals of the project were twofold:

- 1) Conduct an assessment of data sources focused on human trafficking in Delaware
- 2) Provide initial projections as to the extent of trafficked persons in Delaware as well as projections of persons potentially at risk for trafficking.

This report provides 1) background information about human trafficking, nationally and specifically related to Delaware, 2) an outline of the procedures used for this project, 3) reported

findings, and 4) recommendations based on the findings.

Human Trafficking: A National Perspective

In the last 20 years, landmark national legislation has been enacted to define and criminalize human trafficking, and to prosecute traffickers. The Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection (TVPA) Act of 2000 was the first federal law to prevent trafficking, protect victims, and prosecute traffickers (Jordan, Patel, Rapp, 2013; U.S. Department of Justice, 2019). The TVPA was reauthorized under the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA) in 2003 and 2005 (U.S. Department of State, n.d.), later under Public Law 110-457 as the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 (Jordan et al., 2013), and most recently under the Violence Against Women Act (U.S. Department of State, n.d.). Further underscoring the significance of the need to eradicate trafficking, President Barack Obama proclaimed January 2012 the first National Slavery and Human Trafficking month to be observed in the United States (The White House, 2011).

Trafficking, broadly, takes the form of labor or sex trafficking, but can be an amalgamation of both. As defined by the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) (2019)

Human trafficking, also known as trafficking in persons or modern-day slavery, is a crime that involves compelling or coercing a person to provide labor or services, or to engage in commercial sex acts. The coercion can be subtle or overt, physical or psychological. Exploitation of a minor for commercial sex is human trafficking, regardless of whether any form of force, fraud, or coercion was used.

There is no single profile of a trafficking victim (DOJ, 2019). Labor trafficking is estimated to affect nearly 21 million individuals worldwide. Of that total, 11.8 million (56 percent) are forced into labor exploitation or state-imposed forced labor in their place of origin

(International Labour Organization, 2012), yet only 5 percent of federal criminal human trafficking cases active in 2019 were characterized as forced labor trafficking cases (Feehs & Currier, 2020). The difficulties in identifying acts of trafficking and the victims adds complexities to responding to the needs of survivors.

In 2018 alone, the Polaris Project received information on 23,078 survivors, a 25 percent increase over the previous year (Polaris, 2019, July 31). Of the total number of trafficking cases reported by Polaris, 422 individuals contacted the National Human Trafficking Hotline (NHTH) between 2007 and June 2019 and signaled Delaware as the location of trafficking. Separated into two types of cases, 193 were identified as ‘moderate’ and did not show signs of force, fraud, or coercion, while 232 cases contained a high degree of likelihood trafficking was taking place (Polaris, 2019), which is 55 percent of all cases reported for Delaware. This, however, does not take into account the possibility of multiple reports for the same survivor.

It is highly likely that what is reported via the NHTH does not capture the true number of people who experience trafficking. There are impediments to obtaining services, lack of training by criminal justice stakeholders or service providers on signs of trafficking (Farrell, Owens, & McDevitt, 2013; Farrell, Dank, de Vries, Kafafian, Hughes, & Lockwood, 2019), and hesitancy of victims to engage with law enforcement (Love, Husseman, Yu, McCoy, & Owens, 2018), especially because of negative perceptions of survivors (Aronowitz, 2017; Jordan, 2002) and mistreatment in the criminal justice system (Aron, Zweig, and Newmark, 2006). Moreover, individuals who interact only tangentially with service providers are unlikely to be counted (Anderson, Kulig, and Sullivan, 2019). Therefore, an accurate number of victims will never be known until better mechanisms are in place to accurately identify risk factors and address needs that may be factors in exploitation.

While a true number of victims of sex trafficking remains unknown, nationally 51,919 reports of sex trafficking have been reported to the NHTH since its inception in 2007 through 2018 (Polaris, 2019). In the United States, sex traffickers are often known to the victim as their intimate partners or family members (Polaris Project, 2019, July 31). Sex trafficking happens to children, adolescents, and adults and no matter in which stage of life this occurs, the vast majority of those who have been sex trafficked come from families and/or communities with high levels of sexual violence, interpersonal violence, and neglect (Office for Victims of Crime [OVC] Training and Technical Assistance Center, n.d.). In some instances, individuals being sex trafficked do so at the behest and encouragement of their community connections (Dank, Khan, Downey, Kotonias, Mayer, Owens, Pacifici, & Yu, 2014).

Many victims of sex trafficking were victims of child sexual abuse and other forms of abuse or neglect in childhood, which tend to continue throughout adolescence; victims of sex trafficking may have been targeted after fleeing these circumstances. No matter the pathway into trafficking, victims of sex trafficking tend to be vulnerable in some way. For example, traffickers tend to target those with mental illness, addiction, disability (U.S. Department of State, 2019), and/or those who are being abused or neglected at home and desire love and affection. Experiencing such abuse beginning from a young age significantly affects a person's brain, body, and emotional and relational development (Countryman-Roswurm & Shaffer, 2015). This often results in what scholars have termed "complex trauma".

An added layer of complexity is that boys and men also experience complex trauma, (Raney, 2017) and are often overlooked by authorities who believe misconceptions that sex trafficking is limited to only girls and women (U.S. Department of State, 2019). Boys and men can also have histories of being trafficked because of family members' drug addictions. And, by

being trafficked, the abuse experienced by boys and men creates situations where the victims' sense of manhood is compromised (Raney, 2017). In terms of victims identified in federal labor trafficking cases in 2019, 50.6 percent were male, while only 2 percent were male in federal sex trafficking cases (Fees & Currier, 2020). Understanding optimal ways to provide resources and services is crucial to ensuring all members of the population are effectively served.

Further, situations can result in governmental and criminal justice authorities believing stereotypes and punishing the victim rather than the trafficker (Srikantiah, 2007), thus causing psychological harm to victims (Countryman-Roswurm & Shaffer, 2015), which reduces the likelihood that victims will come forward to report their trafficker (Love, Hussemann, Yu, McCoy, & Owens, 2018). As law enforcement is often the first entity victims intersect with in the criminal justice system (Love et al., 2018), the negative effects on victims lead to a lack of trust that makes it difficult for caseworkers to establish rapport when trying to assist trafficking survivors (Goździak & Lowell, 2016).

Virtually all of the concerns of national policy makers and practitioners in the field are reflected in Delaware. Policymakers in the state have begun the process of increasing an understanding of trafficking in Delaware in order to more appropriately respond to it. A brief description of some of this process follows below.

Human Trafficking in Delaware

Delaware is the second smallest state by geographic size and sixth smallest by population, and is in many ways a microcosm of the United States. Per a 2019 report from the Delaware Population Consortium (2019b), using U.S. Census Bureau definitions, there is only one urbanized area in the state with additional urban clusters located in New Castle County. The City of Dover, located in Kent County, is surrounded by rural agricultural land, an attraction for

migrant and seasonal workers who come to the area for work. The National Center for Farmworker Health (2012) estimates there are approximately 1,256 farmworkers in Kent County alone. Geographically, Delaware's three counties stretch from a more densely populated environment in the north through to a countryside environment south of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, especially in the southwestern corner of the state. Beyond this, the nearest urbanized areas to the state are a one-hour drive or more to Philadelphia, PA, Baltimore, MD, Washington, DC, and New York, NY. We highlight these well-known facts because migrant workers, in addition to being at risk of trafficking themselves, are often clients who utilize trafficked individuals. The geographical nature of Delaware makes it logical that trafficking would occur here.

Delaware's total population of 972,332 is represented by 361,735 households (Delaware Population Consortium, 2019a). 75 percent of the state's population is over the age of 18. Approximately 60 percent of residents are concentrated in New Castle County, the northernmost, and geographically smallest, of the state's three counties. As a result of New Castle County being both the most populous and most densely populated of the three counties, health care and social services are more available and accessible than in the counties to its south. According to the 2018 American Community Survey, 68 percent of Delaware residents are White, 23 percent are Black, and 9 percent reported being another race. 10 percent of residents identify as Hispanic, and 7 percent of residents reported primarily speaking Spanish at home. Of those who primarily spoke Spanish at home, 37 percent reported not speaking English very well (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). The cultural and language differences in any location must be taken into account when providing services, as without appropriate mechanisms in place to foster legitimate trust and respect of victims and survivors, there will be fewer individuals willing to

engage with those social service providers and criminal justice stakeholders (Busch-Armendariz, Nsonwu, Heffron, 2011). These complex issues have very real implications for estimating the number of victims and survivors of human trafficking. Migrant populations and persons with language barriers are less likely to utilize services, report crimes to authorities, and reach out for help if being victimized.

Delaware's legislators recognized the state was not immune to human trafficking occurring within its borders or in transit corridors such as I-95 and passed House Bill 116 in 2007. This created Title 11 §787 of Delaware code pertaining to "[t]rafficking an individual", forced labor, sexual servitude, and establishing such acts as felonies.

A diversion court for human trafficking was established in 2012 in order to enable a more robust response for individuals who were arrested for street level prostitution. At any time, there were 20 to 25 individuals, usually women, engaged with services. Once in the court, individuals remained involved for periods of time longer than what is typically seen in standard court proceedings. Further, in order to graduate, sobriety needed to be achieved, and wraparound services were standard for individuals in the diversion court. After five years, a decision was made to close the court.

Legislatively, a Human Trafficking Coordinating Council (HTCC) was started under Title 11 §787 to be attended by state agency representatives. However, the council was unsuccessful in maintaining the political capital needed to move forward on actionable items/goals. House Bill 164 dissolved the HTCC and created the Human Trafficking Interagency Coordinating Council (HTICC) in its stead in 2017. While agency representatives are to serve on the current council, the breadth of membership was expanded to include advocates and individuals who provide services to victims. The responsibilities of the current HTICC include

action to:

- a. Develop a comprehensive plan to provide victims of human trafficking with services;
- b. Effectuate coordination between agencies, departments, and the courts with victims of human trafficking;
- c. Collect and evaluate data on human trafficking in this State;
- d. Promote public awareness about human trafficking, victim remedies and services, and trafficking prevention;
- e. Create a public-awareness sign that contains the state and National Human Trafficking Resource Center hotline information;
- f. Coordinate training on human trafficking prevention and victim services for state and local employees who may have recurring contact with victims or perpetrators; and
- g. Conduct other appropriate activities (Title 11 §787, 2017).

In order to begin making inroads into item c (Collect and evaluate data on human trafficking in this State) above, the council contracted with the research team at the Center for Drug and Health Studies at the University of Delaware to examine the state of human tracking data and to determine a preliminary estimate of the prevalence of human trafficking in the state.

Background

Systematic evaluations of human trafficking data as well as prevalence estimates are lacking in the U.S; a sign of the relatively new focus on the area. The Delaware project was modeled after one of the only comprehensive assessment to date in the U.S., a report conducted in Ohio. The University of Cincinnati's report highlights the discussion of the legal definitions of human trafficking. The authors acknowledge that this definition is not all-encompassing because human trafficking is complicated, as is identifying and serving those victims. A major issue in

estimating the prevalence of human trafficking is that definitions of human trafficking and methods of identifying victims are both very inconsistent across agencies. Many victims never engage with any social service agencies or criminal justice stakeholders.

Ohio developed their estimate based on data received from 14 data sources, 8 of which were individual-level. Others were aggregate data or news reports. To develop their estimate, researchers matched cases in the individual-level data to remove duplicates, and then used the individual level data to remove likely duplicates from the aggregate data. In doing so, their team recognized a number of issues with the current data collection efforts in Ohio: specifically, systems are not set up for the collecting, sharing, or integration of trafficking data, and many victims are missing from these systems because they have never interacted with any of those systems. As such, they presented five recommendations: development of a uniform reporting system to be used across agencies; development of a de-identification scheme for said system that would allow matching individuals to avoid duplication/call up existing records without including identifiers; better collection of demographic information; use of strategies used in other research for reaching hard-to-reach populations, and use of an epidemiological framework in developing the uniform reporting system.

Using Ohio's research study as a framework, Delaware researchers identified two main goals to estimating the prevalence of human trafficking in the state. The first was to conduct an assessment of data sources focused on human trafficking in Delaware to identify key indicators and gaps in data collection and utilization. This was accomplished by conducting a series of qualitative interviews with key informants throughout the state. The second goal was to provide initial projections of the extent of trafficked persons in Delaware as well as of persons potentially at risk for trafficking. This was accomplished by gathering data from agencies identified through

the key informant interviews.

Methods

The project commenced in the fall of 2019, with exempt status from the University of Delaware's Internal Review Board (IRB) granted in December 2019. Upon IRB approval, the project's first qualitative interview took place in January 2020 and, due to delays surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, the last of the interviews concluded in July 2020. In order to set a metric for reporting, quantitative data sought on human trafficking was restricted to dates in which agencies and organizations interacted with human trafficking victims between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019. In addition to limiting the occurrence of duplicate counting, reporting data by year will begin to set the stage for comparison figures on trafficking over time. Of the limited number of agencies and organizations that collected any quantifiable data on human trafficking, interactions with suspected victims that fell outside of that date range are noted below but not counted within the 2019 estimate. For reporting purposes, the findings below are broken into two sections; first we report the findings from the qualitative interviews, then we present the quantitative findings.

Qualitative Interview Results

Interviewees asked to participate in the project were selected through snowball sampling, because of participants' required knowledge of human trafficking. Snowball sampling is used when, due to constraints in the size and number of interviews being conducted as well as the specificity in the interview topic, it is impossible to randomly select interviewees (Lavrakas, 2008). Initial interviewees for qualitative interviews were drawn from the members of the Human Trafficking Interagency Coordinating Council (HTICC) due to the expertise of the council's representatives. Because of the size and interconnectedness of agencies and

organizations in Delaware, snowball sampling enabled the researchers to identify additional key informants based on information obtain during interviews. Interviewees were asked for contact information for any other individuals in the state that, within their official capacities with an agency or organization, may have come into contact with victims and/or survivors of human trafficking. Individuals recommended to the research team were added to a list of possible interviews. At the point that two or more interviewees identified the same person as a possible key informant - and the person had not yet been interviewed – their name was added to the list of individuals for whom contact was attempted in order to schedule an interview.

At the conclusion of the project, 18 qualitative interviews with 21 different individuals had been undertaken. The discrepancy between the number of interviews and of total individuals is accounted for in three interviews where, due to scheduling and availability, two interviewees were present at a time because of their affiliation in the same agency or organization. Moreover, one interviewee worked in a state agency as well as being a representative of a non-profit and is accounted for in each role. Additionally, there were three Victims Services interviewees working within local and state police departments. The grouping breakdown of agencies and organizations represented is below in Table 1.

Organizational Affiliation	Number
Court	5
Hospital	3
Local police department	1
Non-profit	5
State agency	5
State police department	3

Within the types of organizational affiliations, the designation of ‘Court’ encompasses individuals interviewed from Family Court as well as individuals with positions in the Department of Justice. ‘Hospital’ denotes the nurses and social workers employed at public and private hospitals throughout the state. A single individual working in Victims Services within a local police department was interviewed. Due to

the multitude of local police jurisdictions throughout Delaware, it was not feasible to interview a representative of each. However, many departments do not employ their own Victims Services Specialist and instead have agreements with neighboring departments or the State Police for such services. Non-profit organizations were represented in New Castle and Sussex counties. All state agency affiliated interviewees were in New Castle County and did not include individuals who worked for the court system. Finally, key members of the State Police were interviewed due to the jurisdictional issues surrounding geographic area covered, as well as the provision of Victims Services as necessary to small, municipal departments.

Of the 22 agency and organizational affiliations, four had quantitative data to share on an individual level and two had aggregate data on known victims of human trafficking.

Emerging Themes

At the completion of the qualitative interviews, three main themes emerged across all of the organizational groupings regarding data. Repeatedly referenced were:

1. **Complete data is not collected** – When a victim of human trafficking interfaces with an

agency or organization, the type and quantity of information collected varies. For some non-profits, services and resources are provided on a 'no questions asked' basis so it is possible for a pseudonym to be given by the person seeking help due to their perceptions of privacy or the need to remain hidden. When identifiable data are collected, it may be only a first and last name, rather than additional demographic information such as birth date, race, gender, etc. that would help to verify where the person has been receiving services. Moreover, interviewees reported that often they could not verify the person with whom they were interacting had been trafficked. This was especially apparent when someone sought or were sent for services and/or resources for a reason other than those related to trafficking.

2. **No data sharing exists** – Participants reported that they did not share data either inter-agency or intra-agency. The limited data collected at the respective agencies and organizations were for internal use only. Memorandums of Agreement do not exist between the majority of entities represented by the interviewees. Intra-agency sharing between individuals is also by and large non-existent. In many instances, an ad hoc system on individual computers is how interviewees tracked victims and survivors of human trafficking. Interviewees were able to give approximate counts, when available, of how many individuals with whom they interacted were victims or survivors of trafficking, while also discussing that there was no way to know if their colleagues had collected any data without asking each individually.
3. **No system for data sharing** – Each agency or organization keeps the limited data collected on victims and survivors of human trafficking on the software system (i.e., Microsoft Excel, case note software, agency designed software, etc.) currently utilized by

staff. The software systems are not necessarily designed to interface with other software types, therefore there is no central repository to track and quantify known or suspected victims of trafficking. Further, even without a software system accessible to everyone, there is no one entity to collect the data for yearly tracking and reporting purposes.

The qualitative interviews highlighted some of the issues surrounding human trafficking data in Delaware. Below we report the quantitative data on human trafficking victims in 2019.

Quantitative Data Results

Two types of quantitative data are presented in this section. The first is data on individuals known to have been trafficked in the state. The second type of data are on persons believed to be at risk of being trafficked.

Known Human Trafficking Victims in Delaware in 2019

Known victims are those who come to the attention of law enforcement or an organization that conducts outreach to trafficked persons. Some organizations were able to provide the data on specific individuals, while others were only able to provide aggregate counts because they did not collect or could not share individual level data. Below, both types of reporting are listed separately.

Individual Level Data

Individual level data were collected from five entities throughout the state between March and July 2020. To protect the privacy of victims and survivors, the request for data was to have the initials for the first and last names, date of birth, gender, and race. One non-profit serving trafficking victims submitted individual level data in addition to four state entities: the state court system, Delaware State Police (DSP), Delaware State Police Victims Services, and the Department of Justice (DOJ). These five entities were the only organizations collecting data

on victims of human trafficking that were able and willing to share that information. The non-profit was able to provide data on 13 separate individuals using names as the primary identifier. The court entity pulled from their personal case files the minors who were believed to be victims of human trafficking. State Police identified victims through their cases and investigations. State Victims Services were able to provide information on victims based on data collected during their interviews. Finally, DOJ had information available from public records.

A problem that arises in this type of data assessment is that of duplicates. Because trafficked individuals can access multiple systems or agencies, one person can appear in multiple data sources. Without a system of identifiers, it is not possible to discern whether victims in one data source are also found in others. In order to address the issue, researchers attempt to obtain identifiable data, and when these data are not able to be shared, partial identifiers are utilized. This was attempted in the Delaware project. The researchers sent requests for data that included the first initial of the persons first name; the age or year of birth; gender (i.e., Male, Female, Trans/other designation), and race (White, Black, Hispanic, Other). This information would not enable one to identify an individual, but in a state the size of Delaware would make it possible to identify likely duplicates.

The individual level data provided for this report are presented in Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 2: Individual Delaware Human Trafficking ADULT Victims by Data Source, 2019					
Organization	Nonprofit	Court	Victim Services	State Police	DOJ
Adult Victims Identified in 2019	13	17	14	18	2

Table 3: Individual Delaware Human Trafficking MINOR Victims by Data Source, 2019					
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Organization	Nonprofit	Court	Victim Services	State Police	DOJ
Minor Victims Identified in 2019	0	9	0	1	unknown

Allowing for potential duplication, the number of identified victims with individual level data available to be shared is between 26 and 74. A minimum number of 26 victims was established as the largest number of victims identified by a single source. The maximum number of 74 individuals is the sum of all individuals identified as victims of human trafficking. Thus, the 26 unique individuals identified by the courts includes the assumption that all cases from the other source were in the court data (an unlikely but not impossible scenario), and the 74 figure assumes none of the cases were duplicated (also very unlikely but not impossible).

While analyzing the datasets, there were seven possible duplicates between DSP and DSP Victims Services data, and one duplicate between DSP and court data. Due to the limited number of variables being compared, there is no way to determine with complete confidence that those eight are duplicates. Further, only comparisons of data from the Court, DSP, and DSP Victims Services was possible due to incomplete data from the remaining sources.

The Department of Justice provided data on a total of 41 other individuals identified between 2016 and mid-2020, and the non-profit organization provided data on three other victims identified in early 2020. These are not included in the 2019 count.

Aggregate Count Data

Some organizations were unable to provide individual level data for this report but did submit aggregate counts of potential trafficking victims identified by their organization. These entities include the Baylor Women's Correctional Institution (BWCI), associated with the state's Department of Corrections, and the Division of Family Services (DFS) that provided aggregate

data on minors. The 2019 aggregate data are presented in Table 4 and Table 5.

Table 4: Aggregate Delaware Human Trafficking ADULT Victims by Data Source, 2019	
Organization	BWCI
2019 Aggregate	15

Table 5: Aggregate Delaware Human Trafficking MINOR Victims by Data Source, 2019	
Organization	DFS
2019 Aggregate	23

Allowing for duplicates, the number of human trafficking victims identified in 2019 by organizations that provided aggregate data is between 23 and 38. Because these numbers were reported in the aggregate, there are limited, unmatchable fields available to compare to the individual level data submitted, thus it was not possible to identify duplicates for removal. Once again allowing for duplicates, the number of identified trafficking victims in Delaware in 2019 is somewhere between 41 and 113.

While the problem of underreporting is addressed below, it is clear from the known data that human trafficking is occurring in Delaware fairly regularly. In addition to data on persons known to have been trafficked, we report data on those at risk of being trafficked below.

At-Risk Victims

Research on victims of human trafficking has identified numerous risk factors associated with trafficking. Found below is the 2019 count of individuals from organizations that provided services to at risk individuals. The Delaware Department of Services for Children Youth and their Families reported that at the end of 2019, 277 youth ages 13-17 were in DFS custody. The

aggregated number of minors were not victims of human trafficking; rather, these youths are considered to be at perpetual greater risk of being trafficked because they are in foster care (Hannan, Martin, Caceres, and Aledort, 2017; Lutzman, Biggs, Feinberg, Kluckman, and Aboul-Hosn, 2019).

Suspected Victims

Multiple interviewees estimated there are 80 to 100 illicit massage parlors (IMP) in operation throughout Delaware at any given point in time. Respondents noted that two to three women are potentially being exploited in each, which would add between 150 to 250 women to the probable victim count. The exploitation is likely both sexual and labor-based trafficking according to the interviewees. The women kept on-site at these IMPs may perform sexual acts with customers but are required to pay the trafficker for room and board which often violates labor laws.

Finally, during interviews with individuals from a variety of organizational affiliations, there were extensive conversations regarding the likelihood that most women charged with prostitution are actually being trafficked and coerced into sexual acts. Administrators of the Delaware Criminal Justice Information System (DELJIS) provided aggregate data on prostitution arrests in 2019 that totaled 94 individuals arrested for prostitution and three individuals arrested for human trafficking. However, human trafficking victimization is not tracked in DELJIS, so counts of victims are not available.

Data Totals

The data collected by agencies and organizations provide a limited snapshot into the total number of victims of human trafficking within Delaware. The totals displayed below in Table 6 and Table 7 are able to provide an estimated range, but are far from a complete count. This range

is broken down into minor victims and adult victims, and known and at-risk victims. The potential known victims' range is between 41 and 113, taking into account that there were at least 41 individuals identified and the sum of the maximum number of each of the individual and aggregate datasets. It is assumed that minors are not receiving services provided to adults and vice-versa.

Table 6: Estimated ranges based on type of data	
Known Victims	
Adult Individuals	18-64
Minor Individuals	9-10
Aggregate Counts	23-38
2019 Range Total	41-113

Table 7: Estimated ranges based on type of data	
At-Risk Victims	
DFS Foster Care	277
Illicit Massage Parlor	150-250
Prostitution Arrests	94
2019 Range Total	521-771

Data Limitations

For various reasons – mainly related to restrictions set through organizational policy – a number of agencies and organizations were unable to share their collected individual level data. Other organizations were unable to share data because it did not exist. In some instances, the

organizations were lacking a robust system for collecting data in a uniform and central location, while in others they simply were not collecting information on victims of human trafficking whatsoever.

Potential duplicates were found mainly between the DSP and DSP victim services. They are considered potential duplicates because full records were not used to make this determination; rather, records containing only the victim's year of birth, gender, race, and the first letter of their first name were used. These potential duplicates were 100 percent matches based on these fields. Because it is likely that victims identified by DSP may be handed off to DSP Victim Services, there is a high likelihood that these are duplicates. However, because the determination was made based on limited information, they are reported here only as potential duplicates. This logic also applies to the potential duplicate found between DSP and the court system.

In Delaware's major medical systems, for example, efforts to use ICD-10 codes to identify patients as human trafficking victims are in the very early stages. Currently, no major medical system is using ICD-10 codes or any other formalized method to track identified victims of human trafficking system-wide. Numerous questions surround the use of ICD-10 codes including: what capacity needs to be built in hospitals and their associated networks to be able to accurately use codes; who would be able to view a trafficking code in an electronic medical record once entered; staff questions regarding who would enter trafficking codes, and would trafficking codes ever be seen by insurance companies or the primary insurance holder, among others. One major medical system is tracking trafficking victimization through its emergency department only. Others are tracking trafficking victimization informally, not through their electronic medical record system. This tracking is done when a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner

(SANE) encounters individuals in emergency departments who have been sexually assaulted; these nurses are highly skilled and often recognize signs of trafficking. Because medical files associated with sexual assaults are kept separate from standard electronic medical records, SANE nurses have the ability to note suspected victims. Other hospitals are not currently identifying trafficking victimization at all. One private hospital in Delaware opted out of the SANE program and therefore refers all sexual assault victims to another nearby hospital and keeps no known records of suspected victims of human trafficking.

This issue exists for other major entities as well. The majority of non-profits and state agencies are not currently collecting data on victims of human trafficking if they are identifying them.

Moreover, the individual level data collection currently taking place is not unified across systems. In other words, the types of identifying information being collected as well as the collection strategies differ by organization. Based on the lack of matching personal identifiers, and the very small amount of data received overall, attempts to devise a duplicate matching method were not successful or even possible. Therefore, there is some unquantifiable possibility that individuals reported here were reported more than once.

The Uncounted

There are further limitations to the data in Delaware. The number of people identified as being a victim or survivor of human trafficking in 2019 counts only individuals who received services or engaged with the criminal justice system. The reported number does not take into account individuals who died while being exploited, individuals who are undocumented, and those currently being exploited by traffickers who hide and shield victims' identities (M. Thompson, 15 July 2020).

A recent (2019) report sponsored by the National Institute of Justice concluded that human trafficking incidents identified in law enforcement and social service agency records likely represented only a fraction of the actual incidence. The study found that the official trafficking numbers represented as little as 14 percent and at most 45 percent of potential total trafficking victims. According to the study, the main reason for the undercounting by law enforcement is that law enforcement investigators and victim service providers are not equipped to identify the victims they are encountering – and because the victims are not being identified, they are not being counted (Farrell, Dank, Kafafian, Lockwood, Pfeffer, Hughes & Vincent, 2019; National Institute of Justice, 2020). The current study is not able to predict the extent to which the findings above represent an undercount, but it is clear that, like other crimes, human trafficking known to authorities represents a small proportion of the overall pool of potential victims.

Labor Trafficking

Through our research and interviews with informants, a handful of details remained constant throughout. Setting aside more palpable, actionable items, one of the biggest missing pieces present in all of our interviews, is the known but unidentifiable presence of labor trafficking victims or survivors. While sex trafficking is often suspected and sometimes confirmed, not a single person we spoke to could provide tangible information about labor trafficking victims, yet every one of our interviewees was confident that it is currently taking place in the state.

Victims of labor trafficking present a unique challenge. While sex trafficking victims are often identifiable by their injuries when they seek medical help – i.e., genital injuries, pelvic inflammatory disease – victims of labor trafficking usually display less obvious injuries – i.e.,

broken hands, back injuries – even when they are directly related to their abuse. Victims of labor trafficking are also overwhelmingly adults, about 84.6 percent in federal cases according to the Human Trafficking Institute 2019 federal report (Feehs & Currier, 2020), so there is an extra expectation of self-reliance and more blame placed on the victims. Labor trafficking victims are also often not US citizens. This means they are less likely to try to escape or try to contact law enforcement, as their legal status is less than favorable. A recent surge in deportations of undocumented immigrants and especially cruel treatment before actual deportation has understandably increased distrust of law enforcement from non-US citizens. Because many victims of labor trafficking are brought into the United States from other countries, victims are unfamiliar with where they are living and there is likely a language barrier present. This means the odds of receiving help from the authorities are very small and present too big a risk to take. Lack of familial bonds and community support make it even less likely for victims of labor trafficking to seek help on their own.

Illicit Massage Parlors

At the intersection of sex and labor trafficking lie massage parlors. Human trafficking is perceived as a hidden world to most Americans, an evil lurking in far, exotic places. However, human trafficking occurs in all cities, in corners we frequent, and in businesses we patronize. A prime example of how common this is in all our communities is the extensive trafficking that occurs in illicit massage parlors throughout the country. Flushing, New York, within driving distance to Delaware, is considered an east coast epicenter of human trafficking.

Women and girls from Asian countries are brought into the states with the promise of work and vast opportunities. They are told they will have an apartment to live in, a job with good pay, and a path toward the American dream. They arrive to find out they will be working at

massage parlors where they must provide sexual favors to all clients, they must sleep on the floor at these massage parlors, and they are completely secluded from all life outside of their “work.”

Efforts to raid and shut down these massage parlors have been mildly successful at best. Because these businesses are legal and very quickly set up, any time one of these parlors is shut down by the authorities, they are up and running again legally under another name in just a few days. Preparation for these raids is extremely lengthy and complex, and without the existence of a dedicated task force complete with translators and experts on the victims’ culture, these illicit spas will continue to operate indefinitely.

Future efforts should endeavor to elicit more information about the extent of labor trafficking in the state, but the scope and duration of the current project prohibited a more in-depth analysis. Still, it is clear from the data reported above that human trafficking is a problem in the state of Delaware. Below are recommendations for how to improve data collection efforts.

Recommendations

1. Standard definition

A standard definition of human trafficking must be established and acknowledged by agencies and organizations. Individuals must be aware and knowledgeable of Title 11 §787 that defines human trafficking in Delaware. Fully understanding the definition is imperative to people recognizing situations that involve sex and/or trafficking.

2. Standardized reporting method and system

A standard method of reporting trafficking cases must be established using a sequence of identifiers. Compared to Ohio, Delaware’s active data collection across organizations and agencies, when it exists, is a relatively new process. Organizations and agencies that provide services or interact with victims and survivors of human trafficking do not currently keep

consistent records of known or suspected victims and survivors. Most agencies and organizations began noting individuals who were suspected victims of trafficking under their own direction, rather than from official, governmental guidance. This information is typically collected in an ad hoc fashion in case notes or recalled by stakeholders who provide services or resources to victims. However, there is no common vocabulary or terminology to adequately describe or explicate the threshold at which known or suspected victims of trafficking should be acknowledged.

At this time, calling Polaris is the closest the state comes to a standardized system of reporting, but is often not useful as data is incomplete and/or inaccurate. When reports are in Delaware's jurisdiction, Polaris notifies a small group of individuals in the state who then investigate the credibility of each report based on the information relayed by the caller. Data reports with a dearth of actionable information result in law enforcement agencies being unable to fully investigate allegations of human trafficking. Additionally, criminal justice agencies, non-profit service providers, and law enforcement may interface with known or suspected victims and never report the instance to Polaris or law enforcement. These individual agencies and organizations do not have embedded data collection procedures for human trafficking victims or survivors.

A standard method of capturing data by selecting certain variables such as initials of first and last names, date of birth, race, and gender at a minimum to create a de-identified code should be established. This would enable the collection of data to be checked to guard against duplication. Using an alphanumeric sequence would aid in keeping the victims' and survivors' personally identifying information confidential. The data collected should be reported to a centralized entity on an annual basis to establish a yearly estimate of the number of victims.

This will enable the ability to track increases and decreases over time.

3. Identifying victims through comprehensive training across agencies and organizations

Training on human trafficking should be provided to front line workers, such as law enforcement, health care workers, and other key members of the community. During data collection proceedings, it became apparent that some key stakeholders were educated on human trafficking. These individuals received training during the course of their job duties. Individuals who self-reported taking training typically did so because of their position in the agency or organization and their responsibility to vulnerable populations. However, trainings to recognize human trafficking should be more widespread to enable more robust reporting. Other social service organizations, schools, court officials, and all law enforcement, among others, would benefit from expanded training to recognize signs of trafficking.

4. Expand capability to investigate cases of suspected human trafficking

Capability to investigate cases of suspected human trafficking should be expanded to assist in identifying additional victims and traffickers. In order to investigate suspected human trafficking with fidelity, a plethora of state organizations and agencies must establish a network to utilize dedicated resources. Each state actor has an area of expertise, that when brought together provides a more robust response to supporting victims of human trafficking and prosecuting traffickers.

Conclusion

Human trafficking exists in Delaware. While it has likely been occurring for some time, it has only recently come to be recognized by authorities as an issue. Delaware is not alone in its recent heightened focus on trafficking victims; the problem has only recently come to center stage across the U.S. The Delaware Human Trafficking Interagency Coordinating Council

(HTICC), in an attempt to discern the availability of data on trafficking and to arrive at an initial estimate of the prevalence of human trafficking in Delaware, partnered with the Center for Drug and Health Studies at the University of Delaware to produce this report. While necessarily lacking in precise estimates of the extent of trafficking victimization in the state, the report presented above provides an initial baseline estimate of annual known victims as well as estimates of persons potentially at risk for being trafficked. The report also highlights numerous issues with current data and their collection, and made several recommendations on how data might be improved. Hopefully, the findings and recommendations will enable the HTICC to improve reporting on the state and extent of human trafficking in Delaware.

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