

BACKGROUND

“The act of recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or sexual services through the use of **force, fraud or coercion**”¹

Human Trafficking

- Human Trafficking is the **2nd** fastest growing form of crime worldwide and accounts for **\$32 billion** annually²
- Only **2%** of victims of sex- trafficking have been identified²
- In 2016, only **2.4%** of reported calls from the National Human Trafficking Hotline were made by medical professionals

Project STARFISH

- Sex Trafficking Awareness For Individual Strength and Hope
- Founded by Arizona State University Department of Social Work Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention Research (STIR)
- A biannual drop-in center that provides resources for anyone who has previously been or is currently being trafficked



Figure 1: Statistics of human trafficking in Arizona^{3,4}



PURPOSE

- To further understand the demographics and medical needs of the sex trafficked population of Phoenix
- Create strategies for health-care providers to better identify victims of human trafficking
- Foster open communication between community members and victims of human trafficking

METHODS

Retrospective observational qualitative study

- Data is collected via a paper SOAP note (image 2, below) at the drop-in center and deidentified when entered into the data program Qualtrics
- Data from December 2016- May 2019
- Outcomes include demographics and medical needs of the trafficked population



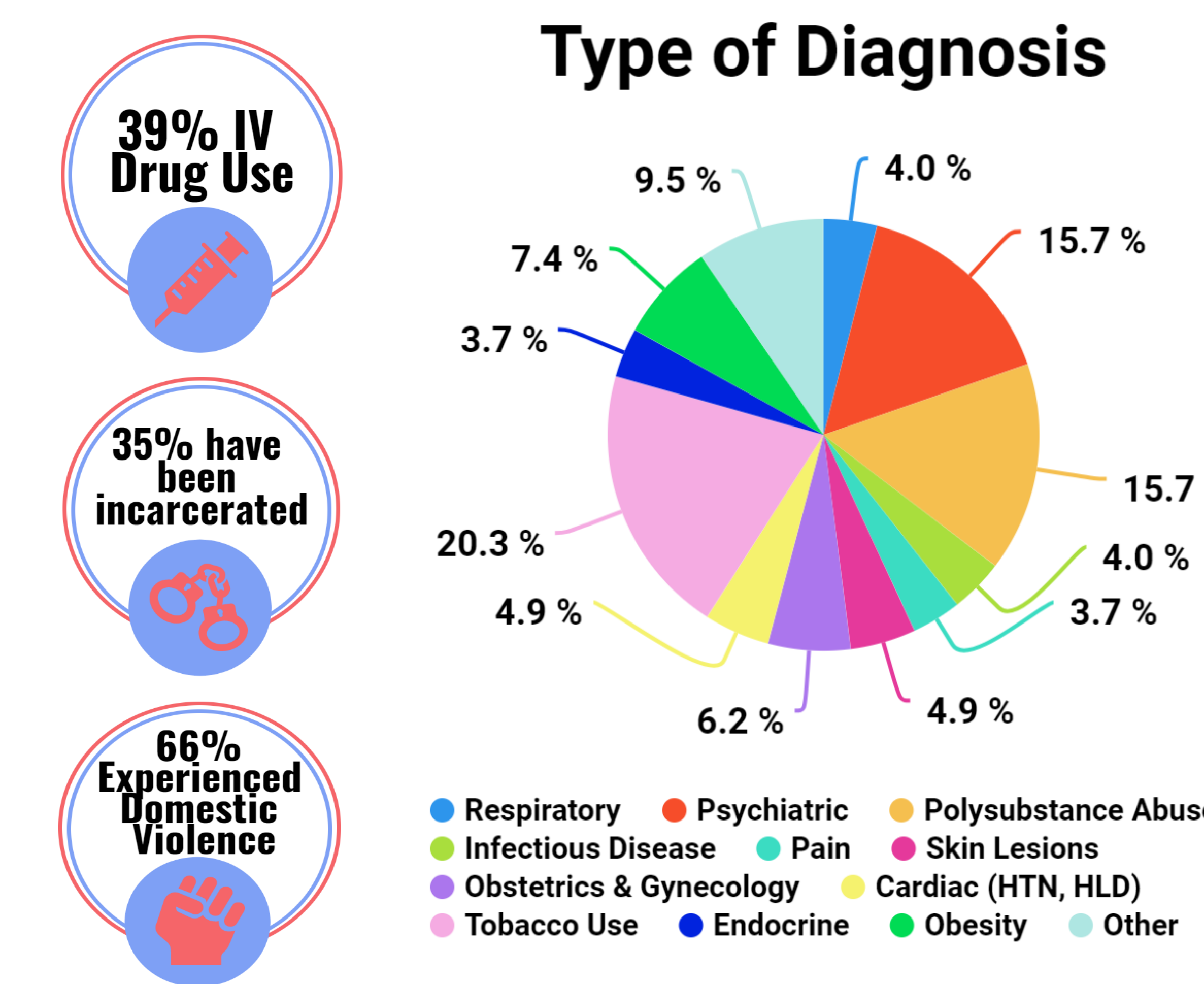
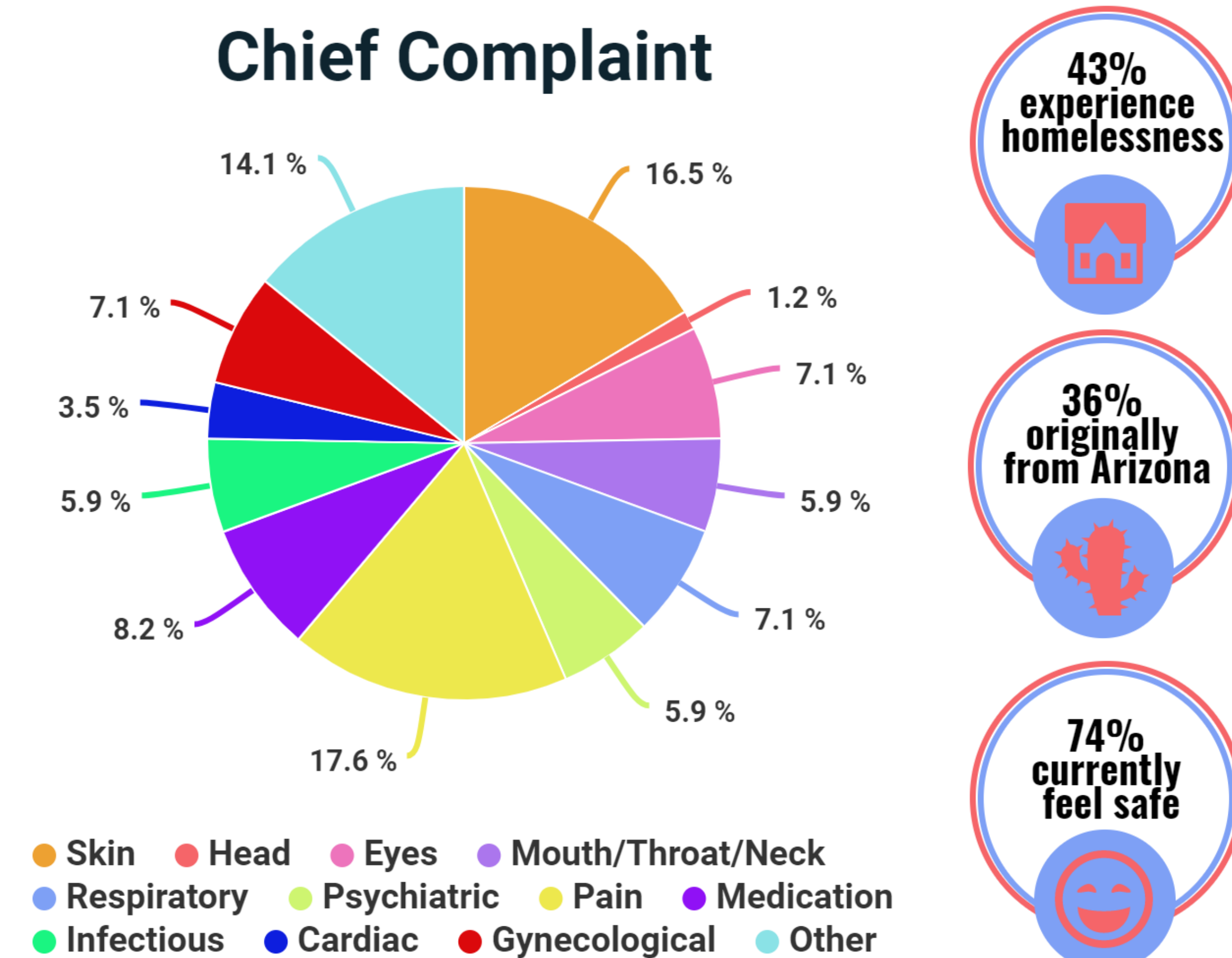
Image 1: Volunteers at Project STARFISH (Above)

Image 2: Medical SOAP note used at the Project STARFISH drop-in center to obtain data (Right)

RESULTS

Characteristics	All Participants (n=80)
Age, years (mean, SD)	35.2 (11.4)
Sex (female, %)	73 (91.3%)
BMI (n, %)	
Normal weight: <25	21 (26%)
Overweight: ≥25	24 (30%)
Tobacco Smoker (n, %)	65 (81%)
Primary Care Physician (n, %)	27 (34%)
Years in the Life (mean, SD)	11.5 (10.8)
Insured (n, %)	62 (78%)
Number of pregnancies (mean, SD)	3.9 (2.6)

Table 1: Demographics of the sex-trafficked population of Phoenix



CONCLUSIONS

- 78% of people in this population have some form of insurance
- 25.5% of the U.S. have public insurance, while 69% of sex- trafficked victims in Phoenix have public insurance (AHCCCS)
- Over 1/3 of victims are in contact with a regular primary care physician
- The use of tobacco smoking is more than 6x the national average
- 2 out of 3 people have experienced domestic violence
- Women have an average of 2 children

DISCUSSION

- Victims of sex-trafficking often present with many non-specific somatic complaints and unexplained physical findings, which may cause healthcare providers to label these as Lupus or rare systemic diseases, when in reality they are often psychosocial in etiology.
- Many victims have multiple contacts with the healthcare system each year, however the lack of awareness of providers in the background of these victims, may result in inefficient and incorrect care. Provider education and continuity of care would benefit this population immensely.
- Healthcare education on awareness, epidemiology trends and interventions are needed to provide proper and compassionate care to this vulnerable population.

REFERENCES

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