

## THINGS THAT CAN HELP

### *For a Victim of Violence:*

**Talk about your experience with someone who you trust.**

- It is natural to want to talk to someone when you feel angry, sad or depressed. Sometimes you may feel most comfortable speaking with your friends and/or family.
- There may be times however, when you do not feel comfortable talking with someone close to you. That is why there are professionals who are trained to help people address and manage crisis situations, stress and life problems. Professionals who are competent to work with people from various cultural backgrounds are available throughout Boston and surrounding communities.

### **Identify a contact person**

- Identify a helpful person who is willing to provide information to family and friends, so that you do not have to update and repeat information multiple times throughout the day about your condition.

### *For Family Members:*

- Take care of yourselves by eating, drinking plenty of fluids and getting rest.
- Try to remain calm when around your loved one – remember he or she is affected by your feelings and reactions.

“When inspiration has become hidden, when we feel ready to give up, this is the time when healing can be found in the tenderness of the pain itself.”

~Pema Chodron



MASSACHUSETTS  
GENERAL HOSPITAL

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**V**iolence  
**I**ntervention  
**A**dvocacy  
**P**rogram

*A collaboration between the  
Social Service Department  
and the Department of  
Emergency Medicine*

**Phone: 617-643-4303**  
**Cell: 617-816-9017**

# Violence Intervention Advocacy Program (VIAP)

## About Us

*We recognize that acts of community violence are traumatic events that affect both individuals and the overall community. Violent injuries have serious health consequences which may include physical recovery, depression, PTSD, and substance use disorders. MGH presents an opportunity for intervention to help aid in the recovery process and reduce recidivism.*

VIAP is an active member of the National Network of Hospital Based Violence Intervention Programs (NNHVIP), and maintains strong working partnerships with other Boston hospital based violence prevention/intervention programs. To best support and serve clients, VIAP collaborates with community organizations including police, courts, district attorney's offices, housing, immigration, legal services and other assistance programs.

## OUR MISSION

Assist victims of violence to recover from physical and emotional trauma and empower them with skills, services and opportunities so they can safely return to their communities, strengthen others who have been affected by violence and contribute to building healthier communities.

## PROGRAM GOAL

Reduce risk factors for violence and increase protective factors by utilizing engagement, motivation, advocacy and supportive techniques.

## VIAP Services

- Crisis Intervention/Support
- Safety Planning
- Advocacy
- Referrals to resources, including:
  - ◆ Community services
  - ◆ Medical and mental health follow-up care
  - ◆ Financial assistance
  - ◆ Safety Planning
  - ◆ Legal assistance
- Accompaniment to court or other appointments

## THE VIAP ADVOCATE

- Provides trauma informed advocacy services to all patients presenting as victims of violence, as well as families and friends of patients.
- Consults with patients initially in the Emergency Department or an inpatient unit.
- Meets with the patient on a one-time basis or several times over the hospital visit.
- Utilizes motivational interviewing techniques.
- Offers training and consultation to the MGH community.
- Collaborates with community organizations.

Advocates are trained in a variety of violence prevention and intervention strategies including substance abuse screening, brief negotiated intervention, referral to treatment, case management skills and current available community resources and services.

## Contact Us

Call **617-643-4303** to reach a Violence Intervention Advocate at MGH or text **617-816-9017**.

## REACTIONS TO TRAUMA

You might:

- Be shocked, angry or afraid
- Feel guilty because you could not prevent the injury
- Want to hurt the person who hurt you
- Feel embarrassed to tell your friends or family

Other changes and emotions you may notice include:

- Change in eating and sleeping patterns
- Conflict/withdrawal from friends, family, and/or people around you
- Headache or upset stomach
- Nightmares
- Anger
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Feelings of helplessness
- Loss of control or powerlessness
- Difficulty concentrating
- Mood Swings
- Depression
- Anxiety