



TURNING THE TIDE

VIOLENCE INTERVENTION PROGRAM

2022 WINTER NEWSLETTER



Changing What's Possible

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTORS

It is hard to believe, but the MUSC Health Turning the Tide Violence Intervention Program (TTVIP) has been serving the patients and families of MUSC for six months! The first hospital violence intervention program in South Carolina, the TTVIP provides immediate trauma-informed support services to victims of community violence treated at the MUSC Adult and Pediatric Trauma Centers, and comprehensive wrap around services to patients between the ages of 12-30 that enroll in the program for long-term support.

The program aims to reduce risk factors for repeat violence, break cycles of retaliation violence, improve access to recovery services, and improve outcomes for victims and their families. The TTVIP also aims to improve understanding of community violence among staff and caregivers at MUSC Health so they can provide trauma-informed care to patients and their families that experience violence and other forms of trauma. Since starting the program, we have provided support services to 71 patients and families, and enrolled 29 patients for long-term follow-up.

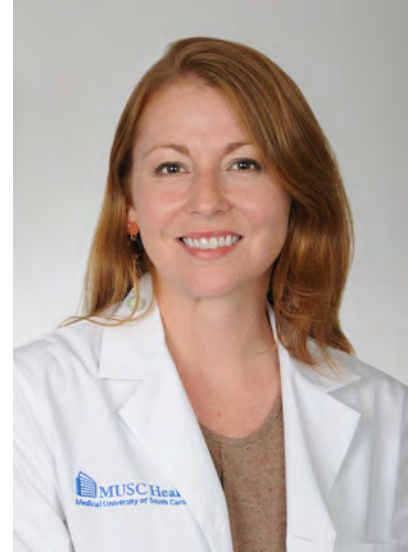
Services and successes have ranged from helping obtain safe housing, employment, mental health services, ID's, getting access to critical therapies after injury and enrolling into school programs. Perhaps what sums up how patients are served is what one patient said to one of our client advocates, ***"You've helped me feel like a human being."***

Dignity goes a long way. We've been hard at work since starting our program and look forward to continuing to change the paradigm of care for victims of violence and individuals that are often disenfranchised in the healthcare system, and reduce the rate of violence in our community.

This newsletter provides an update of some of the other activities we've been engaged with and the reach we've had since the program started, along with two patient testimonials that reflect on how violence has touched their lives, and how the TTVIP has supported them. We'd also like to recognize all of those who support our work including funders and stakeholders.

In peace and service,

Ashley Hink, M.D., MPH
Ronald Dickerson, Ph.D., MSW



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WHO WE ARE

The MUSC Hospital Turning the Tide Violence Intervention Program is a multi-disciplinary program that supports youth and young adults that are at risk of or experience violent injury with the aims of reducing risk factors for violence, preventing injury and re-injury, and improving outcomes.

Core principles to this model include:

- A public health approach to violence to address the social determinants of health and root causes of violence;
- Culturally competent, trauma-informed services to improve trust and communication;
- Community partnerships to provide integrated services within the communities that patients live in and to provide comprehensive support to address multiple needs.

Violent injuries can be life changing.

MUSC Health's Turing the Tide Violence Intervention Program aims to improve the care and recovery of violently injured patients to prevent future violence

and improve quality of life. We currently serve patients 12-30 years old that suffer gunshot injuries from community-based violence, and are treated at MUSC Health Charleston's Adult and Pediatric Trauma Centers.

Full wraparound services are offered to enrolled patients and families. Homicide survivor support services are also available to families and friends that experience the loss of a loved one at MUSC Health.

What are Wraparound Services?

Wraparound services are inclusive of whatever the patient and family need to address unmet needs and risk factors for violent injury, and will promote recovery, reduce repeat violence, and improve their health, social, and economic outcomes.

Services may include mentorship and encouragement, conflict mediation, and connecting patients to social services such as food, housing, education, employment, transportation, healthcare, mental health, substance abuse counseling, victims' services, and community support.

JOIN US!

Members of the MUSC Health TTVIP will be presenting at a number of upcoming conferences and forums, and we invite members of our stakeholder groups and supporters to attend those that are available to the public.

We are especially excited to participate in the 2022 MUSC Thomas A. Pitts Memorial Lectureship in Medical Ethics, as the topic this year is "Gun Violence as a Public Health Problem."

- National Academy of Science, Engineering and Medicine workshop on healthcare approaches to violence prevention and intervention, March, 2022 (Date TBD)
- South Carolina Pediatric Trauma Symposium -- the MUSC Health TTVIP presentation February 25
- MUSC Thomas A. Pitts Memorial Lectureship in Medical Ethics "Gun Violence as a Public Health Problem" April 8



PROGRESS REPORT

The Turning the Tide Violence Intervention Program has come a long way in just a few short months.

■ The TTVIP has provided 21 education and outreach events to the MUSC and greater Charleston community. These have included sessions with students, nurses and residents at MUSC Health on trauma informed care for victims of violence and strategies to reduce community violence, in addition to community forums on gun violence prevention.

■ The TTVIP started a program to provide basic items and self-care packages to victims of violence and their families (change of clothes, hygiene products, cell-phone chargers, emergency gift cards, self-care books). While small, these go a long way to help individuals who have suddenly had their lives uprooted by violence, often not having these necessities or when leaving the hospital in emergent situations. We

thank *We Are Their Voices* for helping support additional efforts for this service, and for providing Thanksgiving dinners to two of our patients' families.

■ The Health Alliance for Violence Intervention (HAVI) provides bi-weekly training and technical support for the MUSC Health TTVIP on a variety of topics from client and community engagement, trauma-informed care for victims of violence, case management, documentation, and many other important, high-yield topics. The team also attended the annual 3-day HAVI virtual conference.

Special thanks to Joe Kim, Senior Manager for Training and Technical Assistance with HAVI, for his fantastic guidance and support!

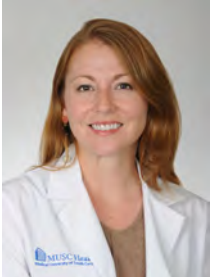
The MUSC Health TTVIP have gathered an incredible group of representatives from both MUSC and the greater Charleston community to collaborate on improving services for patients and developing strategies to reduce violence in our community. These meetings and our stakeholders have generated fantastic ideas for current and future collaboration.

Internal Stakeholders: MUSC Public Safety, MUSC Security, MUSC Trauma Resiliency and Recovery Program (TRRP), MUSC National Crime Victims Center (NCVC), MUSC Trauma Programs, MUSC Pediatrics, MUSC Social Work, MUSC Advocacy Program (MAP), MUSC Chaplain Services

External Stakeholders: Charleston Mental Health, Charleston Center, Charleston Police Department, Charleston Sheriff's Office, Charleston County Solicitor's Office, Charleston County School System, We are Their Voices, 180 Place, Positive Vibes Ronjanae Smith, Inc.

MEET THE TEAM

PROGRAM DIRECTORS



Ashley Hink, M.D. MPH is a general, trauma and acute care surgeon and medical director of the Turning the Tide Violence Intervention Program. She is a nationally known researcher on injury and violence prevention, and recovery after trauma. She serves on the American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma Injury Prevention Committee, working on research and advocacy efforts that aim to reduce violent injuries and suicides. Her work has been published in scientific journals, and she has won awards for her leadership in surgery and humanism in medicine.

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Ronald Dickerson, Ph.D., MSW is the program director of the Turning the Tide Violence Intervention Program. He oversees the day-to-day operations of the program and leads a team of violence intervention advocates. Prior to joining MUSC, Dr. Dickerson served as an Associate Professor at Limestone University. He was also the Clinical Program Coordinator for the Human Service Associate Degree Program at Trident Technical College where he supervised students' Field Internships. He also served as Department Head and Academic Program Coordinator-Human Services with Trident Technical College where his primary duties included course and curriculum development and development of online courses.

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CLIENT ADVOCATES



Keith Smalls works with victims of gun violence from the time they enter the MUSC Health emergency department through the course of their recovery and beyond. A native of North Charleston, Mr. Smalls is the founder and executive director of My Community's Keeper Mentor Group, whose mission is to improve and enhance the quality of life from one community to another through mentorship, life skills training and revitalization projects.

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Donnimechia Singleton works with youth and young adult victims of gun violence. He and his team will provide comprehensive wraparound services to address risks of violence and to promote recovery. Singleton started the nonprofit organization North Charleston SC Youth Resistance, Inc. The mission of the organization is to build strong individuals, helping them become aware of their true identity and breaking beyond stereotypes.

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INJURY PREVENTION COORDINATORS



Adrianna Bellamy, BSPH is the MUSC Health injury prevention coordinator for adult trauma patients and the Trauma Survivors Network (TSN) Coordinator for MUSC. She works closely with the client advocates and adult victims of gun violence and traumatic injury by identifying strategies to improve outcomes through program support and evaluation.

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Christa Green MPH is the Pediatric Trauma Injury Prevention Coordinator for MUSC Children's Health. She is a published researcher, advocate and organizer for community violence and firearm injury prevention. Ms. Green works closely with the MUSC TTVIP team to ensure violently injured pediatric patients receive timely and appropriate support, evaluate patient outcomes, and support program growth and development.

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AN APPRECIATIVE MOTHER'S REFLECTION

Firearm injuries, mostly due to assaults, are now the leading cause of death for children in S.C. and the U.S. This is not lost on Sabrina, a mother of three teenagers in the Charleston area.

“Being a mother in this environment, in this generation – yes. When you hear sirens and you hear that someone has been shot and you don’t know where your kids are, it is a natural thought these days to worry that it could be your kids.”

Then one day, it was. A drive by shooting in her neighborhood left two of her sons injured. While incredibly grateful for their survival, she then and still struggles with the trauma of what happened to her family, and the logistics of trying to keep her sons safe and on paths of recovery.

While working full time, Sabrina has been trying to find a place to move her family to feel safer and to not be reminded of the violence that took place there, which is much easier said than done. Her two sons are staying with a family member in a different community while she searches for a new residence, but she’s constantly thinking about them and checking on them.

“I can hardly sleep now – I stay up at night because I worry about my kids.” She then gets up at 5 a.m. to go to work. “I’ve never experienced this. I don’t know what to expect or how to feel.”

She has found a sense of relief with the help of Mr. Keith Smalls, an advocate with the TTVIP. “He’s been such a help. He helped get my son into a new school, get into programs, get mentorship and has done little

TURNING THE TIDE

things to help them. He helped us get services I didn’t even know existed.”

He also picked her family to receive a Thanksgiving Feast donated by “We are Their Voices,” an organization founded by Tisa Whack, an MUSC employee, that supports families after gun violence.

Mr. Smalls is also ensuring they receive mental health support from the MUSC Health Trauma Resiliency and Recovery Program (TRRP), which provides virtual and in person services to patients treated at MUSC Health that experience post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after a traumatic injury. Victims of firearm assaults have the highest rates of PTSD out of all injuries – upwards of 50%. Advocates like Mr. Smalls play an important role in encouraging patients like Sabrina’s sons to receive mental health support.

Sabrina wants more things to be done in her community to prevent this from happening to other children. From more active law enforcement patrolling in neighborhoods with high rates of crime, curfews, cameras and community cooperation, she thinks a number of strategies need to be employed.

More than anything, she expressed that people – from community members and law enforcement – need to care about the type of violence that is hurting children like her own.

“People tend to not care unless it happens to them or their family,”

She reflects that if no one cares, then it will just keep happening until it does impact them.



A CHANGE OF LIFE, PURPOSE AND GOALS AFTER SURVIVING AN ACT OF VIOLENCE

Kevin* never thought anyone really “cared” about him until he met Mr. Donnie. At the age of 19, he had experienced more trauma than any child should, resulting in him being “in and out of the DSS system” while growing up in what he describes as a neighborhood where “no one cares about others” with frequent violence and illegal activities.

Then, while walking home, he experienced that violence directly, being assaulted on the side of a street and left with multiple injuries. He was treated at the MUSC Health Level 1 trauma center that cared for his injuries, and Mr. Donnie Singleton, a patient advocate with the Turning the Tide Violence Intervention Program, was there to offer more.

Kevin said the violent attack “opened up his eyes a lot.” The attack changed his life in multiple ways, he said, indicating that he now doesn’t trust people he once considered friends and that he prefers to be by himself, but that he does trust one person – Mr. Donnie.

“He’s like a brother and a mentor to me. I never knew what it is like to really have family. I can call on him to

help me...he helps me make a plan and set goals,” Kevin said, referring to Mr. Singleton.

“If it weren’t for him, I’d probably be dead or in jail.”

Kevin does have plans, and he has already made some of his goals a reality. Before his injury, he was struggling to travel to his low-paying job over 30 minutes away. With the help of Mr. Singleton, he’s obtained his driver’s permit, opened his own bank account and got a new full-time job closer to home that pays a fair wage that he can walk to. He has new perspective on his relationships, and no longer invests time in people he thought were his friends.

He reflects on his community, and says that the violence, drug use and lack of concern for others “is getting old.” He’d like to see it change, but ultimately wants to move away to start a new life, own his own home and start a business. He recognizes there is work ahead to achieve this, but he knows that Mr. Donnie is there to mentor him along the way. “I know I can always call him.”

**Patient’s name changed to protect his identity.*

We thank our patients and families for taking the time to reflect on their experiences and using their voices to help change our community.

Gratitude



Your generous support is changing what's possible in trauma care.

We'd like to give recognition and thanks to recent donors to the MUSC Health TTVIP.

Their support will help ongoing efforts for violence intervention and victim support in 2022:

- Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation (\$50,000)
- City of North Charleston Community Assistance Grant (\$50,000)
- Mr. Tomas Parrington with a matching donation from the MUSC Foundation (\$10,000)

Thank you

Because of your gifts, the tides are turning!

Learn more about how you can support the Turning the Tide Violence Intervention Program by contacting Vera Ford, MUSC Development Director in the Department of Surgery at 843-792-1840 or fordva@musc.edu.

In addition to our generous donors and community partners, we were awarded a competitive Comprehensive Youth Violence Prevention and Reduction Program grant from the Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to implement a collaborative hospital and community-based youth violence intervention and interruption program that will serve Charleston and North Charleston.

The grant will help the program expand intervention services to at-risk youth cared for at MUSC Health and develop a community-based violence intervention and interruption program with Youth Advocate Programs, Inc., a social justice non-profit with over 40 years of experience in providing community-based services for high-risk youth including violence interruption programs. This is a significant win for the Charleston and North Charleston communities, as it is a substantial investment for violence prevention in our communities.

Learn more at Turning the Tide Violence Intervention Program
muschealth.org/TTVIP

Join Us! Support the MUSC Health TTVIP Program!

