

# YWCA IS ON A MISSION: Advocacy & Prevention



## Meet advocate Rebecca Hosier and learn about the important work she takes on as the community's Medical Advocate

When conjuring images of the YWCA Northcentral PA and available services, some might be surprised to learn that outreach for our medical community is a big part of what we do!

Rebecca Hosier, YWCA Medical Advocate, provides free and comprehensive training and resources for individual medical professionals and agencies in Lycoming County on Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Human Trafficking. Many from the medical community have and continue to participate in Rebecca's medical advocacy training. Partaking in the education courses include resident doctors from

UPMC, healthcare students at the Lycoming Career and Tech Center, and students from the Pennsylvania College of Technology. Rebecca's presentations are tailored to fit the organization or office. Each training provides pertinent knowledge on caring for patients who are experiencing Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, or Human Trafficking. Attendees should expect to learn about red flags in both patients and loved ones or care givers. Rebecca will teach participants how to assess for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault as well as how best to speak with a patient about these topics when someone else is present.

"I try to share as much information as possible with doctors, nurses, and administration staff so that they treat the patient with empathy and compassion while also making the necessary steps to empower that patient," Rebecca said.

Part of that empowerment comes from sharing vital community resources with providers. Rebecca has a presentation prepared highlighting Lycoming County resources including counseling and support groups, YWCA services, local food pantries, and PA 2-1-1.

"When we help alleviate the other problems patients are dealing with, we also help them with their physical health and protect them against Domestic Violence."

More than 80% of victims in abusive relationships will seek help from healthcare professionals of some kind.

"As the medical advocate, I feel like it is necessary for any and all types of medical professionals, from ER nurses to optometrists, to know how to talk to their patients about abuse," Rebecca said. "How a victim is responded to by medical professionals can be a major determining factor as to whether they continue receiving services or leave the relationship."

Another aspect of Rebecca's outreach takes aim at eye doctors and dentists. In the coming year, she hopes to increase scheduled outreach opportunities with these providers to extend the community's circle of advocates.

"While we often think of the ER as the main place Domestic Violence patients are seen, that's far from the only place," she said.

Eye doctors and dentists work directly with a patient's head, face and neck. These professionals have unique access to patients to be able to check for things like bruising, chipped teeth, dental neglect, and broken blood vessels. Those are all signs of physical abuse.

"Women who talked to their health care provider about the abuse they are experiencing are four times more likely to seek intervention services and almost three times more likely to leave the abusive relationship," Rebecca said.

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To schedule an educational experience,  
contact Rebecca Hosier, YWCA Medical Advocate  
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