**NSVRC xChange Forum Podcast with Dr. Rebecca Loya Part Two**

You are listening to a podcast by the National Sexual Violence Resource Center. The NSVRC serves as the nation’s principle information and resource center regarding all aspects of sexual violence and its prevention. This podcast is part of the NSVRC exchange series, where research and practice converge to end sexual violence.

My name is Donna Greco, and today I am very excited to be talking with Dr. Rebecca Loya, about her research on the economic impacts of sexual violence. Understanding the economic impact of sexual violence is a crucial area of study.

Donna Greco: How do you think advocates can use this information to improve services for sexual assault survivors?

Rebecca Loya: Well I think that these findings point to a need for greater financial assistance and for case management for sexual assault survivors. I think that most existing policies and services for victims focus on acute medical care and counseling with little or no attention to survivors’ economic needs. So I think these findings can help service providers make a case for quick funds to help buffer the negative economic effects of sexual assault and ideally to prevent some of the most severe consequences. So that might be something like one rape crisis center where I did interviews had for a period of time a housing stabilization fund, which was a one-time use pot of money that they would give to survivors in order to help them either to move for safety reasons or to pay bills that they couldn’t pay because their work had been disrupted by the violence. And this fund seemed to make a difference for a lot of the survivors between becoming homeless and being able to sort of bridge themselves into the recovery phase of their lives. So this might be a type of policy model where service providers could ideally get some public funds to provide a service of that kind. And a second thing, I think these findings show is the value of case management service, where an advocate can help a survivor to identify and to access all the various different kinds of public and private funds and financial assistance that do exist that can be quite a lot of work to locate and access those services. But I think with the growing acknowledgement that there are these economic consequences perhaps case management will be increasingly popular service.

Donna Greco: Are there additional policy recommendations that you have based on your research findings?

Rebecca Loya: Yes, so there are broadly two main areas where I can see room for improvement in policy. The first one is a number of existing policies exist to address the economic needs of intimate partner violence victims, but many of them in many states exclude non-IPV rape survivors and I will give you a few examples. So one would be, subsidized housing and emergency housing are very difficult for non-IPV rape survivors to access because their particular safety issues are not well understood. A second would be our Federal Welfare Program Temporary Assistance Needy Families has what they call the Family Violence Option which is a waiver that allows primarily intimate partner violence victims to waive the work requirement, time limits and other provisions. But in most states, non-IPV rape survivors are not eligible for that waiver. So there is another area where we could expand that protection for this population. And a third example would be unemployment insurance, which is available to IPV survivors again in most states, but not available to rape victims in most states. So there are a lot of existing models that are really helpful and effective for survivors of IPV that can be expanded to better protect rape victims. And a second area would be to look at the victim compensation program, which every state has a program of this kind which they administer to eligible victims of violent crimes to sort of defray or offset the costs of victimization. And there are a number of ways that this could be made more accessible to rape victims. So a few examples: one is that most states require that victims report to the police in order to access the funds but we know that a very small portion of rape survivors ever report to the police; so a better model would be to allow other medical professionals or rape crisis counselors to certify their victimization status in order to get them access to victim compensation funds. And another policy change in this area would be that some states have emergency funds where if a survivor is low income or doesn’t have savings and they urgently need some sort of treatment, like HIV prophylaxis medication, an emergency fund can step in and cover that cost for them. But in most states there is no such emergency fund, so some poor uninsured victims simply can’t afford to access HIV prophylaxis. So the policy recommendation there is to expand these emergency funds so that they exist in all the states. I think sort of the bottom line is that rape survivors have already suffered a violent crime through no fault of their own, so for them to suffer economically and risk financial instability on top of that really seems like an injustice and it does seem like an area for policy intervention.

Donna Greco: Thank you.

Donna Greco: For more information on the NSVRC, please go to [www.nsvrc.org](http://www.nsvrc.org) or call toll free at 877-739-3895. The NSVRC was founded by the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape and is funded in large part by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.