Obama Administration releases plan to improve response, support for human trafficking survivors

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The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has joined efforts with other federal agencies and private organizations to help improve the support given to survivors of human trafficking as they rebuild their lives.

HHS, along with the Departments of Justice and Homeland Security and other federal agencies, today released the Federal Strategic Action Plan on Services for Victims of Human Trafficking in the United States. This plan describes the steps that federal agencies will take to ensure that all victims of human trafficking are identified and have access to the services they need to recover and rebuild their lives. This includes taking steps to create a victim services network that is comprehensive, trauma-informed, and responsive to the needs of all victims.

“This month we focus on raising awareness of slavery and human trafficking prevention, but we can’t stop there. To continue the fight against this unspeakable crime, we must build on the progress we’ve made to provide services in a manner that respects survivors and strives to integrate their experiences and their voice into the plan,” said HHS Deputy Secretary Bill Corr.

The federal partners developed the plan in response to President Obama’s call to action in his September 2012 speech at the Clinton Global Initiative, in which he asked federal agencies to develop a plan to strengthen services for victims of modern forms of slavery in the United States.

The plan was released today during a meeting with survivors of human trafficking, reinforcing one of the plan’s core values that survivors play a key role in informing effective anti-human trafficking strategies. By incorporating feedback from survivors and collaborating with public and private organizations, the federal partners intend to improve the coordination and scope of support received by victims of human trafficking.

Other events happening this week to observe National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Awareness Month include the launch of the SOAR to Health and Wellness Network, a pilot initiative designed to educate medical and health care providers on how to identify and serve victims of human trafficking.

For more information, including referring cases, accessing resources or training, or receiving help, contact the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC) by calling 1-888-373-7888 or texting HELP or INFO to BeFree (233733). NHTRC, operated by a non-government organization, is a national, toll-free hotline, available to answer calls and texts from anywhere in the country, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, every day of the year.

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