

Perceptions of Women Survivors of Life-Threatening Intimate Partner Violence

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This pilot study was developed in response to the increasing rate of violence, including intimate partner violence, in S.C., a state that currently ranks #6 in the nation for women killed by current or former intimate partners. This is an exploratory descriptive cross-sectional study utilizing a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis techniques. Participants will be English-speaking women at least 18 years old who previously experienced high-lethality violence (life-threatening injuries) perpetrated by an intimate partner and who are now living safely in the community apart from the perpetrator. Approximately 20-25 women will be recruited through domestic violence organizations and law enforcement agencies statewide, allowing representation by women living in urban and rural communities.

Data collection will occur through one-time, semi-structured audiotaped interviews. Consistent with the primary aims of the study, the focus of the interviews will be to learn more about how the women coped with their experiences and the type and quality of assistance they found available in their communities, and to elicit input to help in planning effective and accessible interventions aimed at preventing and responding to intimate partner violence. Additionally, women volunteers will be asked to complete a demographic form and 4 brief instruments that assess for the presence of depression, post-traumatic stress symptoms, and substance abuse, risks associated with a history of traumatization.

Secondary aims of the pilot study include building and strengthening CON alliances with domestic violence support agencies throughout the state of South Carolina and furthering the development of externally fundable initiatives aimed at preventing and intervening in intimate partner violence.