

Intimate Partner Violence during COVID-19 Isolation in the United States for Gay Men

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Abstract

Male same-sex intimate partner violence is a preventable and serious social problem worldwide, including in the United States. Conflicting data sets posit that members of the LGBT community are at higher risk to be perpetrators and victims of intimate partner violence. The current and rapid ascendency of the COVID-19 virus has thrust the United States into uncharted territory concerning shelter-in-place orders, which may be construed as quarantines. In addition, the current panic level of many individuals in the United States has contributed to food and supply hoarding and has increased the stress level of many Americans. These shelter-in-place orders can provide catastrophic results for those that are in a relationship that is rife with domestic violence. The potential for risk of abuse is compounded by not just staying at home with the abuser, but also thwarting crucial social supports who cannot be in close proximity or who are only accessible through phone calls or texts. Moreover, mental health practitioners are now utilizing tele-medicine that does not guarantee confidentiality or protection for the victims, further enabling hopelessness for the abused. It is urgent that we address this situation in the social literature.

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