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**Title:** Sexual Assault & Gender Based Violence in Lesotho: Survey results of healthcare providers experience dealing with victims of gender-based violence.

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**Objectives of Study:** Gender-based violence is prevalent throughout the world with a wide range of health implications, including unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, sexually transmitted diseases (including HIV) and psychological sequelae. Studies done in South Africa noted a number of concerns related to care of such victims. We attempted to assess issues related to care of victims of gender-based violence in Lesotho based on feedback from healthcare providers.

**Methods:** In May 2012, the Lesotho Boston Health Alliance (LeBoHa), in collaboration with Lesotho Medial Association, organized a series of workshops on issues related to care of victims of gender-based violence. Attendees for the seminars included mostly healthcare workers, although members of Child Gender Protection Unit, Ministry of Gender, and local media also attended. During the seminars, a survey was distributed to the participants.

**Results:** The feedback suggests that providers are seeing victims of sexual assault and gender-based violence on a regular basis in their clinical settings (31% seeing victims of sexual assault & domestic violence at least weekly, and more than 50% seeing each at least monthly). Data also suggests that most healthcare providers have not had training on how to care for such victims (78% reported having had no training on care of sexual assault & 85% reported no training on issues related domestic violence). The survey also suggests that most providers were not aware of the existence of the Ministry of Health’s Guidelines on treatment of sexual assault victims.

**Conclusions:** While providers in Lesotho are caring for victims of gender-based violence on regular basis, most are not familiar with guidelines and standards of care. Moving forward, training and collaboration is needed to improve care of victims of gender-based violence.

**Reference:**