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| Supplemental Table 2: COVID-19 Implications on Women Survivors of IPV and TBI |
| ***Increased experiences of violence and risk for violence*** |
| Those who were at minimum risk, have risen to moderate risk. Those who were moderate risk have risen to high risk. And so, we have found this pandemic to be a really dangerous amplifier … of violence in women's lives. And I talk about how COVID is an abuser's dream, it is, because she has nowhere to go. Family can't come around, people can't call, she can't leave the house, the kids, just like the mother for whom work was a reprieve, school was a reprieve. But now you're doing online learning and he is behind you, so the tensions for everybody have been amplified. **P6**Basically that, you know, some of the takeaways like 50% of shelters are reporting that they're seeing increased levels of violence is being reported among those that are coming in. That there was this initial phase of quiet, eerily quiet in March, April, and then all of a sudden [during] the summer it's been crazy and this is certainly what we've seen is that in terms of our housing applications for second stage housing we've seen them go steadily up and up and up and up. **P8**That is pre-existing, it’s exacerbated because of COVID. It’s not a coincidence that domestic violence rates have increased. No, the hatred, the misogyny, the violence was there already, and now people are stuck in their house. It is just a magnifying glass. **P7**I had COVID and know how terrifying is. And I can't imagine the suffering of someone who is not able to leave their house, trapped with a violent partner, and dependent on them for anything, and then not being able to breathe. That was the one thing that just totally freaked me out, like, I could not breathe, period. I couldn’t even lift my head off the pillow without gasping. I am horrified even to think that anyone could be trapped with someone and going through that. **P5**I mean the pandemic has been huge for women fleeing violence. [E]veryone has been told to stay home, stay home and it’s not safe for women to stay home, that’s the worst place for them to be. **P12**The level of intensity has been escalated by COVID because of not only just the climate around it but also that this is a very powerful way to make that woman feel more disconnected than she already did feel. And, you know, the idea that if she goes and seeks help that she's putting everyone's life in danger and she's being irresponsible by going and meeting a support worker, getting that help, that she's somehow putting her children at danger. These are things that women can very easily get messages around. So it's a very powerful tool of coercive control basically. **P8**People are going through IPV right at the time, I mean they're in a mine zone all the time, because the perpetrator is there and he has no way to get rid of his pent-up emotions, so he takes it out on her. And she's got nowhere to go to get away, like she can't even go see a counsellor, she can't go anywhere. She can't go to her mother's, you know that kind of thing, so you're stuck. And it just gets more violent and more violent. **P4** |
| ***Impact on survivors’ mental health*** |
| I’ve struggled as well just because of my own issues with isolation and self-isolating and whatever. So, … just not going to work, not going to the office, staying home. I’ve just noticed the impacts on me and how it’s just not good. I think within the first month; I think it only took like a month [and] I tried to set up an appointment with my doctor and we … increased my meds. **P1**I think that the key thing, and I know that this affects everybody regardless of whether or not they've dealt with this in the past, but being isolated, like being alone and working with other survivors and things like that I know that that is the key thing for them. So many women have been isolated from their families, from their friends … when they were dealing with their abuser. So, this really can throw them back into that set of trauma. **P2** My family lives an hour and a half away from me; I only have a mother and a sister. So, prior to the relationship breakup, you know even though he was an asshole, I still had that contact. Somebody physically present. And I still had access to my family; after COVID, I am in complete isolation from people. I mean, even when I go grocery shopping I’m still in isolation from people. **P13**I think the big thing is I’ve always been, since the TBI and the IPV, a timid person and now I’m scared, just scared to go anywhere. I never liked big crowds, now I don’t like any crowds unless I have a [N95] on. I don’t like being in public so that leads to the isolation which is bad both for the TBI and the IPV, Even here driving, if you drive through a drive through you have to have a mask on. **P11**People are so exhausted on Zoom that we're only seeing two or three women coming to that each week. And we have like 46 in our program. With the brain injury and mental health, particularly the mental health and then going into addiction stuff, a lot of those services are happening electronically and that doesn't work for a lot of our women. **P8**Because frequent messaging from management is, “we need to think about the health of the women,” and then the mental health practitioners are like “you're not really thinking about the health of the women, because the mental health is part of their health and these policies are incredibly detrimental.” **P9** |
| ***Impact on survivors’ employment*** |
| For a lot of survivors and their children, pre-COVID they could go to work, she could [go]to work and there was reprieve, there was escape for eight hours. She left the house and she could do something, but now you're home, he's there, you're here, there's nowhere to go, so it's a 24 hour constant belittling, constant harassing and there is no reprieve. **P6**Well, one way COVID has helped, in that employers seem to be much more willing to have a four-day work-week, to do some work at a distance. And I can see that being so helpful for someone with children, or someone who needs to go slow throughout the day, or just have a break. In my home right now, there’s less stimuli, I'm not interrupted by people, I don’t have to worry about an hour commuting. That is so helpful to me, and so I imagine that structure would be very helpful for somebody with kids, with a brain injury, leaving an abusive situation. **P7** Then when COVID happened, there were so many layoffs and so many changes to everybody’s employment situations and so many more demands on … a lot of our clients are looking in some sort of a customer service or a retail stream setting and there were just so many cutbacks there that the conversation – whether there wasn’t time, or willingness or ability to have those conversations. So, this year has been really, really tough for people losing jobs and/or finding a job. **P10** |