

The Impact of Gun Violence on Health Care in Massachusetts



Gun violence is a public health crisis that has serious implications for medical providers and their patients.

The Impact on U.S. Patients

- Despite the clinical need to prevent firearm injury, the majority of **physicians do not ask their patients about this issue.**
- People seriously injured in an assault are at high risk of experiencing another violent injury, with **re-injury rates of up to 37%** after two years, and **62% across a lifetime.**
- Adult **men account for 86% of all victims** of firearm death and **87% of firearm injuries.**
- **Communities of color face disproportionate exposure to gun violence**, resulting in ongoing trauma and long-term physical and mental health consequences.

How Providers Can Respond

- Explore care methods that **assess firearm access and risk** during patient visits.
- **Attend trainings** on how to breach the subject with your patients.
- Advocate for sustainable **funding towards gun violence prevention research.**
- **Learn about Extreme Risk Protection Orders** and partner with licensed social workers to utilize them when needed.
- **Consider flexible care models for survivors** of gun violence through hospital-based violence intervention programs (HVIPs) and community-based health centers.

How can I get involved?

Join the Vote Yes for a Safe MA campaign to protect our gun safety laws. [**Sign up and donate.**](#)

Stronger Laws, Better Health Care

The new gun safety law **advances opportunities for medical providers** to take an active role in preventing gun violence by:

- **Allowing medical professionals – including nurses and mental health counselors – to request an Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO)** when someone poses a danger to themselves or others.
- **Establishing a task force** to strengthen hospital-based violence prevention through sustainable funding and provider-led efforts to reduce re-injury and trauma.

Firearm injuries are treatable, but more importantly, they are preventable. Let's make sure MA patients have every opportunity to be safe and well.

Sources:



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