



HEALTH CARE ACTION KIT

HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS START BY BELIVING

Anyone can make a commitment to Start by Beliving in their personal life. But some have questioned whether this is appropriate for health care professionals, particularly those who conduct medical forensic examinations.

We believe it is perfectly appropriate, and in fact, it is the way health care providers approach every patient encounter.

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My name is Rachael. I am pledging for my survivor spouse and all of my courageous patients who entrust me with their stories and their care. I believe you. I will keep fighting for you.

My name is Katy. I am a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner and I want all survivors to feel empowered to come forward. I want my patients to know that when they come in for an exam they will be believed and supported no matter what.

My name is Heather. I am making this pledge because I want to be an instrument of change with response to sexual assault and I want to support survivors on their road to healing. I know that believing sexual assault survivors is the most important thing we can do to encourage them to report and access healthcare.



**Start by
Beliving**



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When a patient tells a doctor or nurse that their stomach hurts, evaluation and treatment begins from the assumption that this is true – while remaining open to alternative possibilities. Similarly, when a patient says they were sexually assaulted or abused, treatment and services begin from that starting point.

In fact, it is not the role of a health care provider to make a determination regarding whether or not a patient has been sexually assaulted. That is a legal question. The health care provider's role is simply to provide testing, treatment, and services, which can include forensic evidence collection when requested. If the health care provider is later called to testify in court, their conclusion will simply be to determine whether the findings are, or are not, “consistent” or “congruent” with the history given by the patient.

HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS TAKE THE LEAD

We have all the tools health care professionals need to launch a Start by Believing campaign. Visit the website for resources like a [pledge placard](#), [brochure](#), [proclamation template](#), [social media graphics](#), [posters](#), and more.

Good Shephard Health Care System
Hermiston, Oregon



Start by giving a presentation to your administration or staff. Use the Start by Believing [research-based presentation](#) to build your own PowerPoint slides, and begin your presentation by showing the [Start by Believing video](#), which introduces the philosophy and offers inspiring examples of local initiatives.



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Challenge other health care workers to join you by taking the Start by Believing message to your next community roundtable or presentation. Inform them to Start by Believing when their patients disclose an assault or abuse.

Ballad Health SANEs
Johnson City, Tennessee



Display posters, fliers, banners, and signs where survivors and their loved ones will see them, including in front of your building, in the lobby or waiting area, in the forensic exam room, and on your website.

Swedish Covenant Hospital
Chicago, Illinois

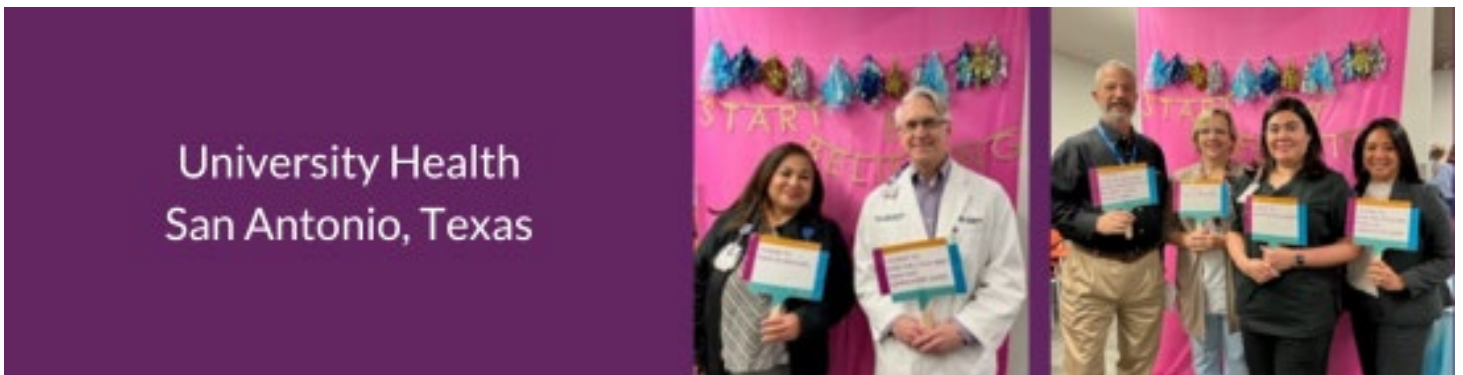


Make a video to let victims know. "If you come to us with a disclosure of sexual assault, we will Start by Believing."

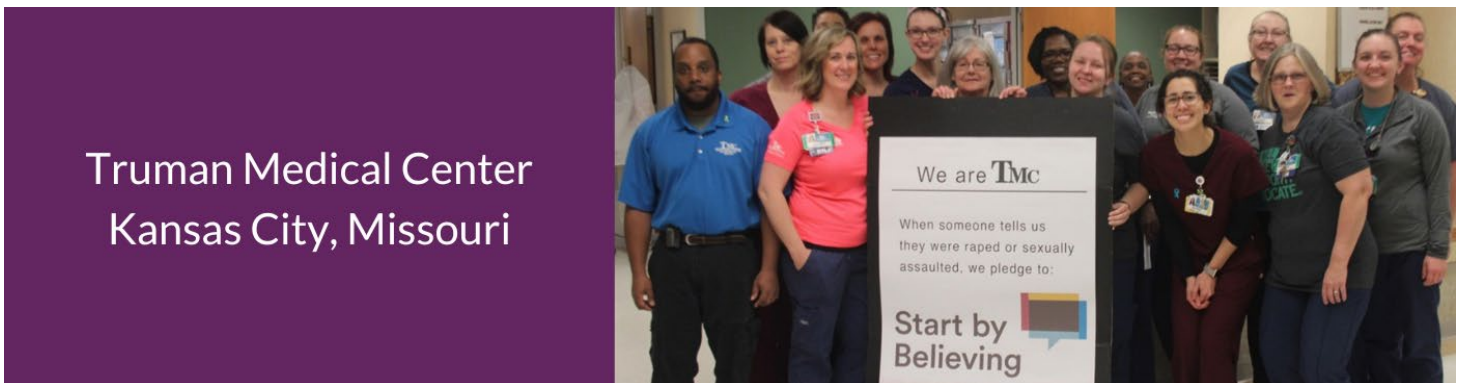


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Set up a **pledge station** where health care workers can learn about the Start by Believing campaign. Follow the example of University Health in San Antonio Texas. Their campaign offered multiple stations for staff to learn about Start by Believing. The first stop offered information on local resources for survivors, and badge cards with tips on what to say when someone discloses that they've been abused or assaulted. Another station provided an opportunity to sign a Start by Believing banner, then pop into a photo booth and take pictures featuring a favorite quote. The last station offered a treat for everyone to enjoy while watching the 5-minute Start by Believing video.



Share on **social media**. Broadcast your facility's commitment to Start by Believing survivors. Our [social media toolkit](#) and [graphics](#) are designed to help, and don't forget to use #StartbyBelieving to join the global movement.



Then take your campaign to the next level! Use our [campaign toolkit](#) for inspiration and creative ideas.

Need more support? Submit a request for [technical assistance](#). Thank you for being a Start by Believing partner!

