DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG WOMEN ATTENDING THE FORENSIC MEDICINE INSTITUTE MARCALA, DEPARTMENT OF LA PAZ, HONDURAS, JUNE 2007 TO NOVEMBER 2009

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Background In Honduras in 2008 were made 6,572 domestic violence complaints. At the Marcala Forensic Medicine Institute (IML), the leading injury cause complaint by women is domestic violence; the IML covers 10 municipalities, 57,833 women (51%). No previous studies, being necessary to determine the domestic violence prevalence, epidemiological characterisation, injury types and identify the aggressor–victim relationship.

Materials and Methods A series of cases, defined case: any woman attended by Marcala IML, physical, mental or sexual domestic violence victim, on June 11th 2007 to November 30th, 2009. All medical records in IML were reviewed, developed a sheet to collect variables data: age, origin, marital status, educational level, profession or occupation, race, type of violence, injury, instrument of injury, disability granted, sequels, relationship with the perpetrator; calculated central tendency and frequency measures.

Results Reviewed 613 records, 346 met definition case, median 21 years (range 5 to 71), most affected group 20 to 60 years (51.6%), incomplete primary education (33.5%), single (61%), rural area (71.3%) and housework (64%). Observed two violence types: physical (63%) and sexual (37%). Predominated Contusions (57%) and rape (37%). The spouse was the primary aggressor (20%). Municipalities with higher prevalence rates were Marcala and San Jose with 11.6 and 8.7 per thousand, respectively. Only effect observed: pregnancy (12), 18% victims of rape.

Conclusions Domestic violence present higher proportion on less educated, single women. As a limiting, are recorded only women who be attended by IML. We recommend implementing injury surveillance at other institutions, and disseminate results to other organisation to implement control measures and prevention.