Keck School of Medicine of USC

November 10, 2021

Dear KSOM Community:

Before you scroll down, we want to let you know that this email discusses sexual violence as a general topic. No details are shared, but common emotions in response to sexual assault are discussed.

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You may have read the email from the provost regarding reports of sexual assault on the main campus. We at KSOM were profoundly disturbed by this news and wanted to reach out to you, our community, about this important issue - and make sure that all of you are okay.

Sexual violence is a systemic and cultural problem stemming from centuries of patriarchal power. KSOM stands against any and all forms of oppression and violence. We support any learner, staff, or faculty member who has ever experienced sexual mistreatment, while also respecting your personal process and your right to privacy.

Many of us - faculty, staff, and learners alike - have experienced unwanted sexual contact over the course of our lives. Some of us are not ready to call it a sexual assault. We might question our own decisions prior to the event, blame ourselves for what happened, or feel scared or ashamed to tell our story. Others of us have born witness to the devastating effects of sexual assault on people we love.

Any level of exposure to this kind of violence, whether through our own lives or through others', can have a deep impact on our sense of calm and safety in the world. Hearing about alleged assaults on the main campus, even if we do not know the individuals involved, can bring up overwhelming feelings of fear, instability, rage, and grief.

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We need to talk about it, and we need to get support in order to heal. KSOM is here for you in a variety of ways. Students can access immediate mental health support by calling the <u>RSVP office</u> at 213-740-9355 (24/7). Faculty and staff can access immediate support by calling the <u>Center for Work & Family Life</u> at (213) 821-0800 (24/7) or <u>Care for the Caregiver</u> at (323) 865-9897 (for Keck Medicine healthcare workers, 8am-5pm). All of these services are free and confidential. For information about <u>reporting</u> options and <u>supportive measures</u> (such as academic accommodations, connection to counseling, etc.), please contact USC's Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity and Title IX (EEO-TIX) at <u>eeotix@usc.edu</u> or (213) 740-5086.

Whether you have told your story or not, you are not alone - and it is not your fault.

We stand with you.

Chantal Young, PhD Director, Office of Well-Being Parveen Parmar, MD, MPH Director, Center for Gender Equity in Medicine & Science (GEMS) Ricky Bluthenthal, PhD Associate Dean, Office for Social Justice

