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AFFIRM Research Speaks Out on Atlanta Spa Shootings, Emphasizes Need for Prevention

WILLIAMSTOWN, MA, March 22, 2021 - On March 16, 2021, three spas in the Atlanta metro area were attacked by what law enforcement officials have determined was a lone gunman, killing eight people in consecutive attacks. This mass shooting exposes the continued threat of racism, misogyny, and xenophobia in our country, especially against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. It is only one of the latest episodes of firearm-related violence, and occurs at a time when the rates of homicide, suicide, and intimate partner violence all continue to increase.

“As healthcare providers, we know that each firearm death and injury should be viewed as preventable and that we can relieve the burden of firearm-related harms in our society through comprehensive public health methods,” said Dr. Christopher Barsotti, MD, and AFFIRM Research CEO. “We understand that simply calling for increased legislation—which continues to be the customary societal and media response to this kind of trauma—is not going to prevent similar events from happening, as policy is only one component of the public-health approach.”

Research into acts of violence demonstrates [defined paths of action](#), which are manifest within the context of known risk factors balanced against protective factors. Instead of focusing on the potential motives of the most recent perpetrator of firearm-related violence, we look forward to objective discussions on the determinants of health that influence violence, evidence-based practices to mitigate risk and promote resilience to create a public-health model of firearm injury prevention that everyone can, literally, live with.

About AFFIRM:

AFFIRM is the nation's leading non-profit fully dedicated to ending the American firearm injury epidemic using the public health approach. We are a nonpartisan network of healthcare professionals, public health experts, and researchers who aim to prevent firearm injury through research, innovation, and evidence-based practice. We are gun owners and non-gun owners committed to reducing the rate of firearm injuries and deaths. Since our founding in 2017, AFFIRM enables and funds transformative, high-impact innovations to reduce firearm injury in the United States. For more information, please visit www.affirmresearch.org.

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