

Developing a Sexual Abuse Nursing Team for a Michigan Healthcare System

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PURPOSE

- To initiate a Sexual Abuse Response Team (SART) for forensic evidence collection within a hospital system
- Specifically, this SART development will focus on training sexual abuse nurses within a healthcare system in the metro Detroit, Michigan area
- Organizations, like HAVEN (an organization for sexual abuse & domestic violence in Oakland County MI), provide on-call, around-the-clock availability for Safe Therapeutic Assault Response Team (START) Nurses to designated facilities for forensic exams (Beaumont, 2019).
- This educational training proposal will focus on the development of a program to train the healthcare system's own nurses to become Sexual Assault/Abuse Nurse Examiners (SANEs) for their own cases

OUTCOMES

- Due to the nature of this educational proposition, there is no definitive way to measure outcomes at this time.
- Post initial education & clinical setting check-offs, SANE nurses voluntarily sign up for 12-hour call shifts.
- A proposed goal is for this training among the employees in the health system, & reevaluated at the 3-month, 6-month, & 1-year benchmarks after initiation
 - a) the system will reevaluate the effectiveness of this format and adjust the standards as needed
 - b) implement best care standards & evidence-based practice according to Michigan law & IAFN protocols
 - c) be able to properly follow set standards & propose written policies to formulate a sexual assault protocol algorithm
 - d) establish consistency in care to better appraise if program expansion to other facilities.
- Feedback will be openly welcomed from forensic trained nursing staff, patients who were treated, community advocates, and educators.

BACKGROUND

- Michigan has the 4th-highest rape rate in the US: 7,235 reported cases. Rape is especially prevalent in Detroit, MI (World Population Review, 2021)
 - Michigan State Police statistics indicated 11,188 offenses related to sexual assault were reported to law enforcement in 2016 (Michigan.gov, 2018)
 - Crime rates continue to decrease in other offenses, except for rape (World Population Review, 2021)
 - 2017-2018 saw a 28% increase in rape cases (World Population Review, 2021); 697 cases increased to 894 in 1 year
- Sexual abuse impacts a persons' mental, physical, emotional, & social state (Focht, 2019)
 - Traumatic memories, behavior/personality changes, mental health issues, fatigue, & substance abuse can result in survivors
- To decrease reoccurrence of sexual violence SANEs must provide support: recognize the issue, advocate for vulnerable populations, and provide the initial treatment, and resources to promote recovery
- Forensic nurses are responsible for identifying outcomes & providing a plan of care (American Nurses Association [ANA], 2017). SANE programs & proper training are essential.

CONCLUSION

- Large health systems have become an integral part of patient care for all health services
- Establishing an education plan to train sexual abuse/assault nurses to recognize injuries, provide empathy & support, and access to other services to assist patients affected by sexual violence is imperative to the metro Detroit community
- It is my hope that this educational training format will help the MI healthcare network to:
 - a) implement, trial, & improve the start of a forensic nursing program
 - b) assist victims with immediate needs after sexual trauma
 - c) instill nursing care that will further expand upon the integrity and excellence of the health care system

METHODS

- Nurses will train at a central, corporate office, then designated to 3 facilities (suburbs near Royal Oak, Dearborn, & Grosse Point) to begin.
- Patients may transport themselves, EMS may transport to nearest facility, or other hospitals in-network can transfer within 30mins to the nearest facility with SANE staff available.
- Evaluation of the intended training & education objective for SART team response implementation:
 - a) Likert-scale evaluation of training & readiness
 - b) Educational skills stations to practice
 - c) Written examination (2 attempts for 75% or higher)
 - d) Free text area for suggestions to improve development of the SART response after the 40-hour extensive training
- Due to the nature of this education improvement, an Institutional Review Board approval was neither sought, approved, nor necessary.

REVEVANCE TO NURSING

- Sexual abuse nurses bridge the gap to advocate for victims and assists law enforcement in the collection of forensic evidence, affiliated injuries, and a narrative history to build a better case.
- For health systems in places like Michigan, where rape percentages are high & resources are minimal, it's important to have reliable & trustworthy SANE nurses to learn these standards and implement them in into practice.
- SANEs are the most important resource when the patient needs assistance & should act according to their nursing practice & the laws where they practice. Therefore, this takes extensive training and recurrent education for forensic-related specialties.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



The Integrated Practice Model for Forensic Nursing Science

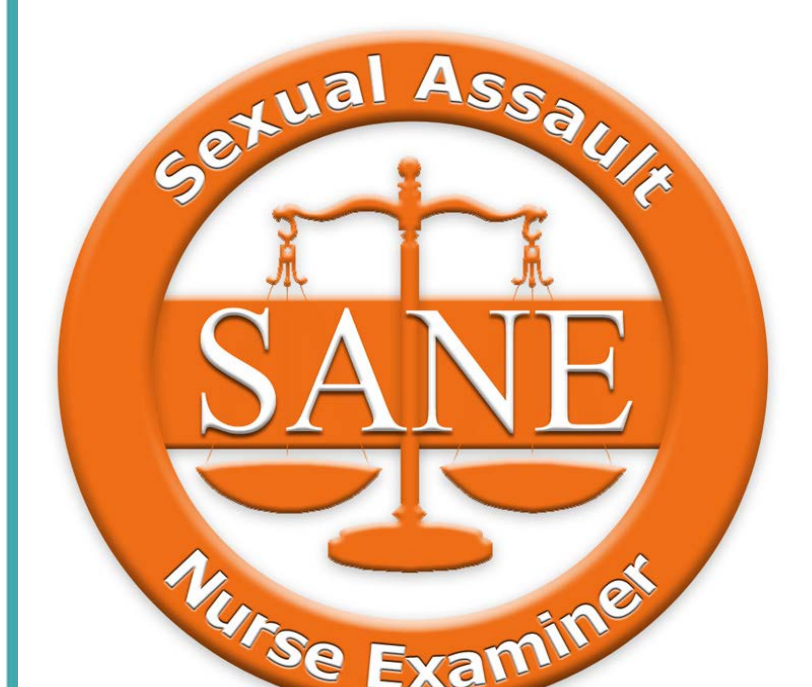
synthesizes the multidisciplinary and multisectorial framework for the accountability in forensic nursing, forensic science, and criminal justice overall (Lynch, 2011, p. 74).

SART Coordinated Response to Sexual Assault



The SART Coordinated Response to Sexual Assault Model

emphasizes the multidisciplinary approach to response of sexual abuse. The model generalizes the basic duties of hospitals, victim advocates, law enforcement & prosecutors (End Violent Encounters, 2021).



References

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