

## Did You Know?

WV Code §61-8B-16 states that a victim of sexual assault is NOT required to participate in the criminal justice system OR cooperate with law enforcement in order to have a forensic medical examination. (Effective July 1, 2007)

## West Virginia has...

### ■ A Multidisciplinary Protocol for Responding to Victims

The protocol details the medical, law enforcement, prosecution and advocacy response to sexual assault. This multidisciplinary approach is essential to provide adequate support for the victim and to facilitate the arrest, prosecution and conviction of the offender.

### ■ The Forensic Medical Examination Fund

The fund provides reimbursement to licensed medical facilities performing forensic medical examinations in sexual assault cases. The fund is restricted to the payment of all reasonable and customary costs of a forensic medical examination, which must be conducted within a reasonable time of the sexual assault.

Following the forensic medical examination, the medical facility must certify that the forensic medical examination was performed and submit an original invoice and completed certification form to the WV Prosecuting Attorneys Institute requesting reimbursement for the forensic medical examination.

### ■ SART/SANE Programs

A SART/SANE program can be tailored to the needs of any locality or region to provide a victim-centered response to sexual assault. The West Virginia Foundation for Rape Information and Services (WVFRIS) provides information and technical assistance to individuals and organizations interested in developing a SART or SANE Program.

For additional information contact **WVFRIS** at **304-366-9500** or visit **www.fris.org**.



If you are a victim of sexual assault, call the rape crisis center in your area.

Someone is there to listen and to help.

**CONTACT Huntington Rape Crisis Counseling**  
Huntington  
304-399-1111

**Family Refuge Center**  
Lewisburg  
304-645-6334

**REACH Family Counseling Connection**  
Charleston  
304-340-3676

**Hope, Inc.**  
Fairmont  
304-367-1100

**Rape and Domestic Violence Information Center**  
Morgantown  
304-292-5100

**Sexual Assault Help Center**  
Wheeling  
304-234-8519

**Shenandoah Women's Center**  
Martinsburg  
304-263-8292

**Women's Aid In Crisis**  
Elkins  
1-800-339-1185

**Women's Resource Center**  
Beckley  
304-255-2559

**NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT HOTLINE**  
1-800-656-HOPE

**West Virginia Foundation For Rape Information and Services**  
www.fris.org

# THE

# SART

Sexual Assault Response Team

and

# SANE

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner

# INITIATIVE IN WEST VIRGINIA



**West Virginia Foundation  
For Rape Information and Services**  
www.fris.org

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## What Is a SART?

A Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) is a group of community professionals who work to coordinate an immediate, high quality, multidisciplinary, victim-centered response to sexual violence. The SART creates a mechanism to monitor the effectiveness of the response and to promptly address problems in service delivery.

## Who Is On a SART?

A SART typically includes a victim advocate from the local rape crisis center, medical personnel or SANE, law enforcement officials, and the prosecutor. Other partners may include representatives from the public health department, emergency medical services, child/adult protective services, college campus personnel, organizations serving victims from underserved populations, and social service agencies.

## What Are the Benefits of a SART?

- A SART uses a victim-centered approach which provides compassionate, efficient and highly skilled care and support throughout the criminal justice system.
- A SART can increase the likelihood that a victim will seek follow-up assistance and long-term support to promote healing, whether or not the sexual assault is reported to law enforcement.
- A SART can assess and improve the effectiveness of current coordinated responses.
- Research indicates that SARTs can increase both the reporting of sexual violence and the conviction rate of offenders.

## The Facts

**Rape is a crime of power and control. No matter where it happens or by whom, it is never the victim's fault.**

### National Statistics

- Every two minutes someone in the U.S. is sexually assaulted.
- Females, ages 16–19, are four times more likely than the general population to be victims of rape, attempted rape, or sexual assault.
- Over 70% of all rapes are unreported.

### West Virginia Statistics

- 86% of the victims are female and 65% of the victims are under the age of 18.
- 95% of the offenders are male and nearly 2/3 are not related to the victim.
- One in nine adult women will be a victim of forcible rape in her lifetime.

## The Purpose of the SART/SANE Initiative

- To limit the trauma to victims and provide the necessary support systems that are critical to healing.
- To provide victims of sexual assault with prompt, compassionate and highly skilled medical care.
- To improve the quality and preservation of the evidence collected.

## What Is a SANE?

A Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) is a registered nurse who has had advanced education and clinical preparation in the medical forensic examination of sexual assault victims. The SANE is trained:

- to provide comprehensive care to victims of sexual violence;
- to identify physical trauma;
- to document injuries;
- to collect evidence and maintain the chain of custody; (The WV State Police Forensic Laboratory has set 96 hours as the outside limit for conducting the forensic medical examination)
- to provide referrals for medical and psychological care and support;
- to be an expert witness.

## What Are the Advantages of a SANE Program?

- A SANE program provides 24 hour services for victims of sexual assault. This shortens the waiting time and increases personalized attention and care for the victim.
- A SANE conducts a thorough, yet sensitive, rape exam in a safe and private environment. A 40 hour classroom training plus required clinical hours in the complete assessment, evaluation and treatment of the adult sexual assault victim prepares the SANE to provide this special care.
- A SANE provides referral services for follow-up care after the exam. This can address the victim's long term healthcare concerns from the sexual assault.
- A SANE's thorough evidence collection and comprehensive documentation strengthens the prosecution's case in seeking to convict the offender.