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)

When a sex crime kit has been collected but not released to law enforcement, the examining physician or SANE will be responsible for collecting the forensic evidence, maintaining the chain of custody, and sending the kit by FedEx to Marshall University Forensic Science Center (MUFSC). The evidence will be stored at MUFSC. During that time a victim has the option to initiate an investigation.

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.

  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 (FRIS) provides information and technical assistance to individuals and organizations interested in developing a SART or SANE Program.

CONTACT Huntington, Inc.
Huntington
304-399-1111

Family Refuge Center
Lewisburg
304-645-8334

Hope, Inc.
Fairmont
304-367-1100

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

REACH
Family Counseling Connection
Charleston
304-340-3676

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 / TTY 1-888-825-7836

NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT HOTLINE
1-800-656-HOPE

West Virginia Foundation for Rape Information and Services
www.frisc.org

Revised 10/2010

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.frisc.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 system to monitor the effectiveness of the response and to promptly address problems in service delivery.

Who Are Members of 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 campuses, organizations serving victims from underserved populations, and social service agencies.

What Are the Benefits of a SART?
- A SART uses a victim-centered approach that provides compassionate, efficient and highly skilled care and support for a victim 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.
- 60%–84% of all rapes are unreported.


West Virginia Statistics
- 83% of victims are female and 65% of the victims are under the age of 18.
- 93% of offenders are male and nearly 3/4 are not related to the victim.
- One in six adult women will be a victim of attempted or completed forcible rape in her lifetime.

WV State Police Incident Based Reporting System, 2009; WV Health Statistics Center, BRFSS, 2008

SART/SANE Initiative
The purposes of the SART/SANE initiative are to:
- Limit the trauma to sexual assault victims and provide the necessary support systems that are critical to healing;
- Provide victims with prompt, compassionate and highly skilled care; and
- Improve the quality and preservation of the evidence collected.

What Is a SANE?
A Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) is a registered nurse with advanced education and clinical preparation in the forensic medical examination of sexual assault victims. The SANE is trained to:
- Provide comprehensive care to victims of sexual violence;
- Identify physical trauma;
- Document injuries;
- Collect evidence and maintain the chain of custody;
- Provide referrals for medical and psychological care and support; and
- 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 at the hospital and increases personalized attention and care for the victim.
- A SANE conducts a thorough, yet sensitive, forensic medical exam in a safe and private environment. Forty hours of classroom training plus required clinical hours in the complete assessment, evaluation and treatment of the adult sexual assault victim prepare the SANE to provide this specialized 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 can strengthen the case for the prosecution in convicting the offender.