



Contact: Carey Goryl 410-626-7805 x 102
careygoryl@forensicnurses.org

Forensic Nurses Week Raises Worldwide Awareness

The International Association of Forensic Nurses has designated the second week in November to recognize and honor the forensic nurse. Forensic Nurses Week celebrates the expertise and dedication of forensic nurses around the globe, highlighting their unique and important work.

Elkridge, Md. (Nov. 09, 2015)

“I was working in the emergency department 15 years ago when a 17-year-old girl came in. She had been sexually assaulted—and no one knew what to do with her. I was shocked. Having reviewed the sexual assault exam as part of my nurse practitioner education, I was able to assist my colleagues that day. But that was the moment I realized I needed more formal education and training to respond to patients who were victims of sexual violence. Forensic nursing allows me to use all my experience and education as a nurse to perform this specialized care—objectively, scientifically, and compassionately—ultimately allowing justice to be served.” Kimberly Womack, DHSc, ARNP-BC, SANE-A, CEN, IAFN Board President

No community is immune. Violence and trauma occur every day, everywhere, worldwide. And for a patient who is a victim and/or a suspect of intentional or unintentional violence, a forensic nurse provides dedicated and specialized care. Although he or she is a nurse first, this healthcare professional possesses knowledge of the legal system and expertise in forensic sciences. After meeting a patient’s healthcare and psychosocial needs, the forensic nurse often collects evidence, provides medical testimony in court, and consults with legal authorities. By hiring and training forensic nurses, a community ensures that those who are affected by violence and abuse receive the specialized care they deserve—and forges or strengthens a vital link to ensure the administration of justice.

From November 09 - 13, 2015, Forensic Nurses Week recognizes nurses worldwide who provide exceptional care every day to men, women, and children who have experienced violence or trauma. Celebrated internationally through local events and education efforts, Forensic Nurses Week raises awareness about forensic nursing practice. To mark the week, forensic nurses worldwide wear lilac, the designated color of forensic nursing.



Forensic nurses engage on every level—from the local to the global. On September 22 - 23, 2015, in Geneva, a forensic nurse, Sheila Early, RN BScN, Immediate Past President of IAFN, joined 138 delegates and 27 speakers from 38 countries at the World Health Organization's 7th Milestones Meeting of the Global Campaign for Violence Prevention. Until we live in a world without violence, forensic nurses will seek to strengthen the role of the health system in addressing violence and continue to provide expert and compassionate care to patients who require these specialized services.

LATEST NEWS FROM THE ASSOCIATION

The International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN) is pleased to announce the arrival of its first-edition *Core Curriculum for Forensic Nursing*. Replete with practical instruction and image-rich content, this clear, concise text offers a full view of the role of the forensic nurse who practices at the intersection of the healthcare and the legal systems. For active forensic nurses who are updating their skills or those who are exploring or launching a career in this dynamic and growing specialty, there is no better guide.

THE ASSOCIATION AT A GLANCE

With more than 3,300 members from 24 countries, the International Association of Forensic Nurses has a mission to provide leadership in forensic nursing practice by developing, promoting, and disseminating information internationally about forensic nursing science. The Association offers board certification for sexual assault nurse examiners who care for Adult/Adolescent (SANE-A®) and Pediatric (SANE-P®) patients. For more information, visit www.ForensicNurses.org.

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