



MEDIA CONTACTS:

Hannah Gregory, 914-960-4642, media@forensicnurses.org
Carey Goryl 410-626-7805, careygoryl@forensicnurses.org

International Association of Forensic Nurses Marks National Nurses Week by Recognizing Important Work in the Field

Elkridge, MD (May 5, 2014) The International Association of Forensic Nurses joins in the celebration of National Nurses Week, from May 6 to 12, which recognizes the contributions and commitments nurses make and highlights the significant work they perform.

A forensic nurse provides specialized care for patients who are victims and/or suspects who have experienced injury (both intentional and unintentional). These healthcare professionals are nurses first, but have knowledge of the legal system and expertise in forensic science. After meeting a patient's medical and psychosocial needs, a forensic nurse often collects evidence, provides medical testimony in court, and consults with legal authorities. The [International Association of Forensic Nurses](#) has more than 3,000 members from 22 countries.

Forensic nursing is the fastest growing nursing subspecialty. Forensic nurses use their advanced education and training to provide nursing care, collect evidence and provide consultation in a variety of areas including: sexual assault, intimate partner violence, child abuse and neglect, death investigation, elder mistreatment, corrections, emergency services, mass disasters, psychiatric mental health and public health.

Studies show a strong link between violence and short- and long-term healthcare issues, with patients who experience violence or abuse accessing the healthcare system at least twice as frequently as those without a history.

“Forensic nursing is an exceptional field that deserves much more attention, not only because of the impact it can have in a legal setting, but more importantly, because of the good that is done for patients at the bedside, and their families and communities,” said Carey Goryl, MSW, CAE, chief executive officer of the International Association of Forensic Nurses.

Most recently, the Association has implemented the only national online training program for Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE), a specialty within forensic nursing. SANE nurses provide specialized health and forensic care to adult and adolescent patients who have experienced sexual violence. After completing this 40-hour online course, SANE nurses will

have enhanced skills in patient history taking, assessing and treating trauma response and injury, collecting, documenting and managing evidence and providing testimony as needed.

A SANE nurse's role is important not only to the health, safety and welfare of the sexual assault victim but also within their collaboration with advocacy, law enforcement and legal systems. When a victim of sexual violence presents in the emergency room or other healthcare facility, they are encouraged to have a thorough medical screening that is both utilized as an exam to evaluate the patient's health and psychosocial wellness and also as the basis for the forensic evaluation of evidence collection that can later be utilized in legal proceedings. These exams are provided by SANE nurses or other healthcare practitioners that have had additional training, clinical practice and expertise in medicolegal-forensic evaluations.

This new national online training meets the educational guidelines for SANE training set forth by the Association in 2013, and will allow access to this specialized training nationally for registered nurses and nurse practitioners who wish to focus on this specialty.

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FORENSIC NURSES

With more than 3,000 members from 22 countries, the International Association of Forensic Nurses' mission is to provide leadership in forensic nursing practice by developing, promoting, and disseminating information internationally about forensic nursing science. The Association also offers certification for Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners in both Adult/Adolescent (SANE-A) and Pediatric (SANE-P) patient care. In 2012, the Association and the American Nurse Credentialing Center (ANCC) launched a new certification through portfolio for Advanced Forensic Nurses. For more information, visit <http://www.ForensicNurses.org>.

###