



ForensicNurses.org

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Message to our Members regarding COVID-19:

As you all know, the [World Health Organization](#) has declared COVID-19 a pandemic. This pandemic is expected to generate disruption and disease. Our healthcare facilities may be taxed, and social distancing will change our routines. Many of you currently working in a healthcare facility have already begun to feel the impact. Like you, the IAFN has been monitoring the situation and its effect on the patient population we serve.

We want to provide you, our members, and all forensic nurses with guidance for responding to patients who are impacted by violence during this public health emergency:

- Communicate to patients seeking treatment after abuse that the healthcare system is **open and safe** for them to access;
- Connect with your multidisciplinary partners and reassure them that you are still seeing and caring for patients;
- If your advocacy community provides hospital/exam accompaniment, reach out to discuss any questions, concerns, or limitations they may have in providing services;
- If an outbreak occurs in your community, take guidance directly from local health officials;
- If you work in an outbreak area, seek alternate locations (other than the emergency department) to provide care to your forensic patient populations.

Many resources exist to share with your community partners, but the most important message to share is remain creative and flexible so that access to patient care is not compromised or delayed. We are committed to monitoring the situation and keeping an open line of communication with you.

Stay up to date using the resources below:

- US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/summary.html>
- Government of Canada: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>
- World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/events-as-they-happen>

In addition, each US State has a Department of Health website that provides state-specific guidance.