

Advocacy

Keeping both the patients' and families' needs priority while recognizing vulnerability and using influence to assure those needs are central to our compassionate interdisciplinary care and treatment planning.

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) Offer Compassionate Care

Sexual assault is a devastating and prevalent crime with long-term negative implications for victims and their families. It may result in a range of physical, psychological, acute and chronic health problems. SANE programs are recognized nationally as best practice concerning treatment of victims of sexual assault providing compassionate, immediate and coordinated care.

The MUSC SANE program serves patients 18 and older, who report or are concerned about a potential sexual assault occurrence. Adults may report the assault to the police or make an anonymous report and are entitled to receive a medical forensic exam, evidence collection and treatment, including medication to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, without incurring a charge. All exams and medications are funded through the State Office of Victim Assistance (SOVA). A state of the art digital forensic photography system is utilized and will enhance efforts to identify and document injury. For patients who report a sexual assault to law enforcement, this may result in an improved criminal justice outcome. Patients receive immediate assistance through People Against Rape (PAR), which provides treatment and information about local resources, support, crisis intervention and assistance with referrals. SANE and PAR advocates work together providing victim-centered care to the patient.

The program is comprised of eight representatives certified to support pediatrics, adolescents and adults, as well as board certified in Advanced Forensic Nursing. Nurses are on call and respond to patients arriving at the emergency room 24 hours a day. A SANE representative works specifically with community agencies to provide education to health care providers, hospitals, clinics, law enforcement and colleges. SANE participates in state initiatives to improve health care for victims of sexual assault and provides 24 hour consultation to nurses and physicians at MUSC in need of their services.