



Dear Colleague,

In January 2019, a statewide Forensic Nurse Task Force was formed to ensure that trauma informed, forensic care is available throughout the state of South Carolina. The task force includes individuals from the South Carolina Attorney General's Office, South Carolina Victim Assistance Network, South Carolina Coalition against Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, South Carolina Hospital Association, and South Carolina Law Enforcement Division.

In order to identify the strengths and opportunities within our healthcare systems, law enforcement agencies, and advocate centers, we have compiled a questionnaire specific for each community partner. The resulting report will be used to enhance the coordination of care, evidence collection, judiciary outcomes, and victim assistance in our state.

Please forward this to the person(s) in your organization would be best able to answer questions related to the care of victims of violence and abuse. This survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete but will autosave your progress if taken on the same computer. Also, for your convenience, we have attached a PDF of the questions for review prior to answering them online. Identifying information will not be shared and aggregate report will be made available to those whose provided contact information. Please submit the completed survey by October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019.

South Carolina is on the leading edge as only the third state in the country to administer a large-scale environmental scan of the current forensic care delivery system. In support of the great work being done by the South Carolina Victim Assistance Network, the South Carolina Hospital Association is assisting with the distribution of this statewide survey. We would be very grateful for your participation in this effort to gather such crucial data. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Here is the link to the survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/scvan2019>

Regards,

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Thank you for participating in this survey sponsored by the South Carolina Victim Assistance Network. In order to identify the strengths and opportunities within our healthcare systems, law enforcement agencies, and advocate centers, we have compiled a questionnaire specific for each community partner. This survey is focused on improving care of sexual assault victims as well as improving the relationships among professional disciplines when caring for sexual assault victims. The resulting report will be used to enhance the coordination of care, evidence collection, judiciary outcomes, and victim assistance in our state. This survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete but will autosave your progress if taken on the same computer. No identifying information will be shared and an aggregate report will be made available to those who provide contact information. Please answer the questions to the best of your ability.

## GENERAL QUESTIONS

What is the name of your facility?

In regards to mandated reporting, which of the following does your facility report to law enforcement?  
Please select all that apply.

- Vulnerable adult abuse
- Gunshot wounds
- Minor victims
- Other (please specify)

Please indicate which trainings beyond annual competencies your ER staff members are required to attend.  
Please select all that apply.

- Anonymous reporting
- Mandated reporting
- Providing trauma informed care for victims of violent crimes
- No additional required trainings
- Other (please specify)

## MEDICAL FORENSIC EXAMINATIONS FOR ADULT/ADOLESCENT PATIENTS

**This questionnaire is focused only on adult/adolescent patients (12+), NOT on pediatric patients.**

Please provide the total number of adult/adolescent (12+) sexual assault exams conducted in 2018.

Of the total number of adult/adolescent (12+) sexual assault exams performed in 2018, please provide a break down of the following:

Reported to law enforcement

Received an anonymous kit (did not report to law enforcement)

Received medications, but no forensic evidence kit was collected

For those cases that were reported to law enforcement in 2018, did you experience any challenges with law enforcement's response?

Yes

No

What challenges did you encounter when reporting cases to law enforcement?

In 2018, which of the following reasons were *most often* given by sexual assault victims for not wanting to report to law enforcement? Please select all that apply.

Desire to protect the offender

Fear of mistreatment

Fear of offender retaliation

Self-blame/guilt

Wanted to keep information private from family and/or friends

Other (please specify)

In 2018, in the event a sexual assault victim was unable to receive a medical forensic exam with evidence collection at your facility, why was the victim unable to receive the medical forensic exam? Please select all that apply.

- Victim changed their mind
- Victim referred to another facility
- Victim thought wait was too long
- All victims received medical forensic exams
- Other (please specify)

In 2018, how often was an rape crisis advocate called to provide services for victims of sexual assault receiving a medical forensic exam?

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

Do you have a memorandum of understanding/agreement with a rape crisis center in your area?

- Yes
- No
- Other (please specify)



With which rape crisis center do you have a memorandum of understanding/agreement?

When an advocate was called, how often did the he/she respond to the exam facility for the sexual assault victim?

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

At your facility, who conducts sexual assault exams? Please select all that apply.

- Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) with training and certification SANE-A and/or SANE-P
- Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) with training, but no certification
- Emergency room nurse (non-SANE)
- Emergency room physician
- Other (please specify)

Do you have a designated, private room where medical forensic exams are performed?

- Yes
- No
- Other (please specify)

Do you have a designated waiting room where sexual assault victims wait for their medical forensic exam?

- Yes
- No

Where are sexual assault victims waiting for their medical forensic exams?

Who explains to victims that they have the right to a medical forensic exam without reporting to law enforcement or participating in the criminal justice process? Please select all that apply.

- Healthcare provider
- Law enforcement
- Rape crisis victim advocate
- Other (please specify)

Please indicate which applies to your facility regarding time frames for evidence collection following a sexual assault?

- We have a written policy specifying timelines
- We have a standard practice regarding timelines, but do not have a written policy
- Determinations on timelines are made on a case-by-case basis

How many hours after sexual assault do you collect evidence on adult/adolescent (12+) victims?

- <72 hours
- <96 hours
- <120 hours
- Other (please specify)

Please indicate which separate informed consents are required by your facility. Select all that apply.

- Evidence collection
- Pregnancy prevention
- Photography
- STD prophylaxis
- No separate informed consents are required
- Other (please specify)

When collecting evidence, are all items in the kit collected or only items that are pertinent to the assault history?

- All items in the kit are collected
- Only items that are pertinent to the assault history are collected
- Other (please specify)

During a medical forensic exam, do you *test* for sexually transmitted infections?

- Yes
- No

During a medical forensic exam, do you *treat* for sexually transmitted infections?

- Yes
- No

Do the medications you give follow CDC guidelines for treatment?

- Yes
- No

Are sexual assault victims screened for strangulation after sexual assault?

- Yes
- No

Does your facility have a designated camera for use during the medical forensic exam of a sexual assault victim?

- Yes
- No

What pictures are taken during the medical forensic exam of a sexual assault victim? Please select all that apply.

- Genital injuries
- Hand prints
- Head to toe
- Ligature wounds
- Non-genital injuries
- Strangulation injuries
- Other (please specify)

How are you storing images? Please select all that apply.

- CD
- Flash drive
- Individual server
- Inside forensic evidence collection kit
- Other (please specify)

Please indicate if any of the following alternative exam techniques are used at your facility . Please select all that apply.

- Alternative light source (NOT a woods lamp)
- Foley catheter
- Staining dye
- Do not use alternative exam techniques
- Other (please specify)

Prior to discharging sexual assault victims, does your facility provide victims with information for medical follow up post sexual assault, e.g. HIV, hepatitis, or pregnancy?

- Yes
- No

Prior to discharging a victim of sexual assault, does your facility develop a safety plan with the victim?

- Yes  
 No

Has your facility looked into the possibility of using telemedicine for sexual assault victims?

- Yes  
 No

Please explain how you think telemedicine could benefit sexual assault victims seen at your facility.

#### STORAGE/TRANSPORTATION OF SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE KITS

Do you store your completed sexual assault evidence kits in the event that law enforcement does not pick them up for long term storage?

- Yes  
 No

What type of sexual assault evidence kits do you store at your facility? Please select all that apply.

- Anonymous  
 Non-anonymous

Do you have a written policy for your guidelines for storing sexual assault evidence kits at your facility?

- Yes  
 No

Would your facility like assistance with writing a policy for the storage of sexual assault evidence kits?

- Yes
- No

Please explain where sexual assault evidence kits are stored at your facility?

Does your facility have a tracking system for the sexual assault evidence kits?

- Yes
- No

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Please describe your tracking system for sexual assault evidence kits.

How long will your facility store a sexual assault evidence kit before destroying it?

- Less than 6 months
- 6 - 12 months
- 12 - 18 months
- 18 -24 months
- More than 24 months
- Other (please specify)

How do you destroy the sexual assault evidence kit?

As the date for kit destruction approaches, do you notify the victim?

- Yes
- No

Please indicate why victims are not notified.

Who transports the sexual assault evidence kits to law enforcement for storage?

How is the chain of custody maintained?

## MEDICAL RECORDS/BILLING FOR SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS

Has your accounting staff been trained on Department of Crime Victims Compensation procedures?

- Yes
- No
- Other (please specify)

Would your facility be interested in receiving training for the proper billing procedures for crime victims?

- Yes
- No

Who is billed when a victim receives a medical forensic exam? Select all that apply.

Department of Crime Victims Compensation is billed

Patient is billed

Private insurance is billed

Other (please specify)

For Department of Crime Victims Compensation bills, how often did you receive reimbursement?

Always

Usually

Sometimes

Rarely

Never

Are forensic records stored separate from the patient's other medical records?

Yes

No

Who has access to the forensic records?

## PATIENT POPULATIONS/STATISTICS

In 2018, please provide the number of victims for each age range listed.

13 - 17 years old

18 - 24 years old

25 - 35 years old

36 - 50 years old

More than 50 year old

For victims of sexual assault, please indicate the number of each identity.

Male

Female

Non-binary

Other (Please specify)

Of the cases seen in 2018, please give the number of victims based on ethnicity or race.

Black/African American

White/Caucasian

Hispanic/Latino

American Indian/Alaska  
Native

Native Hawaiian

Asian

Multiple races

Unknown

Other

Did any sexual assault victims require the use of a translator?

Yes

No

Based on your data, please describe the types of special populations/individuals with disabilities that you feel might require additional support or resources.

From triage to discharge, what is the estimated total time the sexual assault victim is in the emergency department for a medical forensic exam?

- 0 - 2 hours
- 2 - 4 hours
- 4 - 8 hours
- More than 8 hours

How many medical forensic exams involved suspected drug facilitated assaults?

- Less than 5
- 5 - 10
- 10 - 15
- More than 15

Please use the following comment box to provide any additional information or suggestions that you feel would be beneficial to improving the quality and process of caring for sexual assault victims.

**Contact information**

Name

Title

Email address