



Support for SANE

A toolkit for talking with your employer about your SANE education

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Seeking support for SANE education

Becoming a sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE) takes determination, the same determination that drives you to want to provide compassionate, trauma-informed, patient-centered care to survivors of sexual assault.

Your enrollment in a didactic education program necessary to become a SANE might also require commitment from your employer, not only in encouragement of your efforts, but also in financial support for the enrollment fee.

This toolkit provides tips for requesting financial support from your facility to enroll in Elite Learning's Sexual Nurse Examiner Adult & Adolescent Core Course, including preparing for a meeting to pitch your request; talking points; what to do (and not do) during a meeting; and handouts for your manager, CNO, or other decision maker.

We applaud your desire to provide the level of care sexual assault survivors need and deserve, and we hope this information will be helpful to your efforts to begin the learning program and ultimately practice as a SANE.



Preparing for a Meeting

5 steps

to get ready

1.

Be sure to do your homework before you request a meeting with your manager or CNO to discuss your desire to become a SANE. An emotional appeal for support — based on your belief that sexual assault survivors deserve specialized healthcare services — will not be sufficient. Your superior(s) will likely admire or even share your conviction, but decision makers need relevant data to justify the decisions they make.

2.

Set aside time to become familiar with the prevalence of sexual assault in the U.S., the physical and psychological ramifications of sexual assault on survivors, and the critical role nurses play in supporting survivors. You will not immediately know every aspect of best practice care of survivors (that's what SANE training is for), but a basic understanding of the pervasiveness of sexual violence and its effects will provide the background you'll need to have a credible conversation.

Tip:

This toolkit includes a page detailing sexual assault statistics for you to use as a handout supporting the need for SANE at your facility. Resources in this kit also direct you to additional information.



3.

Reach out to a rape crisis or other local advocacy organization to learn more about the impact of sexual assault in your community, particularly among vulnerable populations. Turn what you learn into a case study of a survivor's experience with local health care services, or develop a case study based on your own experience with survivors you've encountered. For example, has a survivor who sought care at your facility been turned away because the facility lacked expertise in forensic evidence collection or access to SANE at the time they presented? Or had you performed or observed your colleagues perform a forensic exam based solely on instructions in a sexual assault kit? Gain insight on survivors' needs, the role of a SANE in effectively attending to those needs, and specific outcomes from SANEs who currently work at your organization or who work at other healthcare facilities in your community.

4.

Prepare a packet of materials to bolster your request for support for your SANE education. Include material from this toolkit, the Elite Learning course brochure (downloadable at TrainforSANE.com), and your case study (if you develop one). Leave the material behind at the close of your meeting with the decision maker or attach it in a follow-up email.

5.

Make a point to review your organization's mission and value statements. Incorporate how you believe SANE education aligns with your organization's policies and priorities in your talking points. Practice your talking points in advance of a meeting.

Requesting a Meeting

Depending on the hierarchical structure of your organization and your relationship with your supervisor or other decision maker, you may feel comfortable simply asking in person for time to talk about your interest in becoming a SANE. While a presentation might not be necessary, you might find the need to request a meeting more officially, typically via email.



Email Do's

Friendly

Be friendly but direct. State the problem as you see it (the need for SANE at your facility), but also propose a solution (your interest in becoming a SANE).



Concise

Be concise. Save your talking points for a meeting and limit the email to three or fewer succinct paragraphs.

Clear

Be clear about your "ask," in other words, what you're specifically seeking (financial support for your SANE education).



Tip:

An email template is included in this toolkit. Use the template as a starting point and customize it to suit your particular needs or the needs of your organization

During and After the Meeting



Try to Do

- Be mindful of the decision maker's time. Try to ensure the meeting lasts no longer than 30 minutes.
- Be prepared for a virtual meeting. Download any relevant software and practice using it before the meeting.
- Communicate key talking points, concisely but with conviction.
- Share a professional story or relevant anecdote. Storytelling helps to give statistics a real-life, human face the decision maker can identify with.
- Leave time for the decision maker to ask you questions.
- Demonstrate that you have fully thought through how you will complete the didactic portion of SANE education — likely on your own time — including setting milestones for your progress.
- If you have established how you will gain the clinical experience required to work as a SANE, share that information. If you need help finding a clinical preceptorship, share that, too, and state your willingness to research options for the clinical portion of your SANE education.
- Be specific about your request for assistance in paying for your SANE didactic course.
- Offer to leave a packet of supporting materials, including Elite Learning's SANE course brochure (downloadable at TrainforSANE.com), with the decision maker to review at a later time.
- Thank the decision maker for considering your request and follow up with a brief thank-you email.



Try to Avoid

- Sidestep any temptation to do all the talking. Take more of a conversational approach to the meeting. If there is more than one participant in the meeting, be sure everyone has an opportunity to respond and ask questions.
- Don't hedge or guess the answer to a question; it will detract from your credibility. Say you do not know if you genuinely do not know an answer. Use your lack of specific knowledge as a reason for a follow-up connection or meeting. Indicate when and how you will respond with an answer.
- Don't leave the meeting without establishing specific next steps. These may include an internal process you must follow if the decision maker approves your request, an estimated time period in which a decision will be made, or how and when you must provide additional information.

Talking Points

- ✓ **Establish the prevalence of sexual assault**
Share what you've learned about the frequency of sexual assault, not only across the country but also in your local community. Offer the handout of the statistics included in this toolkit, and highlight any data you've compiled about the frequency of sexual assault on patient populations served by your facility, including vulnerable or underserved patients. For example, is your facility located near a military base? Does your facility serve an LGBTQ, tribal, or ethnic minority population? Point out information that is particularly relevant to your organization.
- ✓ **Summarize the impact of sexual assault**
Note the common physical and psychological effects of sexual assault on survivors. Be brief — the decision maker is likely at least generally aware of the sequelae of sexual assault — but emphasize the ability of nurses trained as SANE to address survivors' unique physical and emotional needs. Include the theoretical framework handout in this toolkit in your packet of informational materials, and discuss your case study if you have prepared one.
- ✓ **Stress your facility's duty to provide patient-centered, trauma-informed care to sexual assault survivors.**
Discuss caring for sexual assault survivors in the context of your facility's mission. Point out that providing proper care to survivors is not only an obligation for healthcare providers, but also reinforce that the care provided by SANE contributes to improved patient outcomes, bolsters the morale of nurses and other staff who feel unable to appropriately and knowledgeably care for survivors, and enhances the facility's reputation in the community.
- ✓ **Explain the course.**
Download and share the brochure for Elite Learning's Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Adult and Adolescent Core Course (available at TrainforSane.com). Stress the need to complete the course as a prerequisite, along with clinical experience, to practice as a SANE. Ask for your organization's support in completing the education, including covering the cost of enrollment in the course. Elite Learning's course has been reviewed and approved by the International Association of Forensic Nurses, which establishes the gold standard for SANE didactic education. Be clear that the cost to enroll in the course is \$299, a fee that is less than the other handful of online courses available to educate nurses as SANE.
- ✓ **Assert your commitment to SANE education.**
Reinforce your dedication to gaining the knowledge necessary to respond to the needs of sexual assault survivors in an effective and compassionate way, and acknowledge your responsibility to complete the required SANE didactic education. Explain your plan for working through the course, including the timeline in which you envision completing the education and how and with what frequency you will report your progress to your employer. Be respectful of your organization's needs, and ensure that you will follow any organization-specific protocols for continuing education.



Sample Email Requesting a Meeting

Dear [name],

I am requesting a meeting with you to discuss my interest in furthering my nursing education as a sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE).

As a [insert your nursing position, e.g., emergency nurse, primary care nurse, etc.] at [insert name of your facility], I want to provide optimal nursing care to every patient with whom I interact, including patients who have experienced rape or other forms of sexual assault. Survivors of sexual support need and deserve specialized services that nurses educated as SANE provide. I believe I have a responsibility to provide those services but can only do so by completing an education program and other requirements to practice as a SANE.

I am eager to meet with you to discuss ways in which [facility name] might assist me in enrolling in a comprehensive, accredited, and approved SANE education program. I can be reached at [number] or [email address] to schedule a meeting. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



TIP:

Be patient. You might not receive a response to your request for a meeting right away. Follow up with another email in one to two weeks.

Sexual Assault Statistics



Someone in the **U.S.** is sexually assaulted every 68 seconds.¹

1 in 5



women report experiencing rape or attempted rape in their lifetimes.²



Nearly ¼

24.8%

of men report experiencing sexual violence involving physical contact in their lifetimes.²



In **2018**, more than **700,000** American women and men experienced threatened, attempted, or completed rape.³

There is a low incidence
2% to 10%
of false reporting of sexual assault crimes.²



While an estimated **80% of rapes** or sexual assaults are not identified to police, 4 societal trends point to an uptick in the reporting of sexual violence. A Yale University study, for example, tied a **7% increase** in reports of sexual assault in the U.S. to the #MeToo movement.⁵

1 RAINN.org (n.d.).

2 Smith, S. G., Zhang, X., Basile, K. C., Merrick, M. T., Wang, J., Kresnow, M., & Chen, J. (2018). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2015 data brief – updated release*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

3 Morgan, R. E., & Oudekerk, B. (2019). *Criminal victimization, 2018* (NCJ 253043). U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

4 Morgan, R. E., & Kena, G. (2018). *Criminal victimization, 2016, revised* (NCJ 252121). U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

5 Levy, R., & Mattsson, M. (2020). *The effects of social movements: Evidence from #MeToo*. Yale University, Department of Economics.

Framework for SANE Practice



Patient-centered care

Respecting patient preferences regardless of outcomes requires more than providing the sexual assault patient with information and options about what will happen during the examination; it requires taking a step back before starting the exam and finding out what the patient needs to have happen first.



Trauma-informed care

Trauma history can include the present traumatic event, previous traumatic experiences, and, for some populations, it will also include historical trauma.



Evidence-based practice

SANE apply the best available research evidence, along with clinical expertise and patient preferences, when making decisions about survivors' health care.



Interdisciplinary care

A collaborative approach is necessary for SANEs to perform their primary duty of providing quality health care to sexual assault survivors. SANEs work closely and collaboratively with advocates, law enforcement, prosecutors, forensic scientists, mental healthcare providers, and other professionals in the community.

SANE Examples in Practice



- Helping the patient arrange for someone to pick up their child from school before starting the examination.
- Finding a place where the patient can smoke a cigarette before starting the examination.
- Allowing the teen to use their cell phone during the exam.
- Allowing a urine pregnancy test to a patient who declines a blood draw.
- Conducting a smudging ceremony prior to an exam.
- Recognizing while taking a history of the assault that the patient may have disassociated during the traumatic event. Discussing with the patient strategies to prevent disassociation during the examination and reassuring them that the exam will stop if that happens.
- Understanding that some individuals distrust the healthcare system and healthcare providers as a result of previous trauma or even historical trauma.
- Understanding and being able to explain why genital injury can be present or absent after sexual assault.
- Understanding that while valuable evidence may be lost, the patient always has the right to decide what evidence is or is not collected.
- Valuing the contributions of team members and other professionals, which improves the care and outcomes of the patient. Providing all team members the opportunity to introduce themselves to the patient and offer services if the patient consents.

Resources

**International Association of Forensic Nurses
SANE Education Guidelines**
forensicnurses.org/page/EducationGuidelinesAccess

**U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims
of Crime Resource Listing**
ovcttac.gov/saneguide/legal-and-ethical-foundations-for-sane-practice/

Resource listing
ovcttac.gov/saneguide/resource-list/

National Sexual Violence Resource Center
nsvrc.org

Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN)
rainn.org

NoMore (domestic and sexual violence prevention)
nomore.org

1in6 (sexual assault experienced by men and boys)
1in6.org

**End Rape on Campus
Centering the Margins initiative**
endrapeoncampus.org/centering-margins/

**University of Kansas, Center for Community Health and Development
Assessing Community Needs and Resources**
ctb.ku.edu/en/assessing-community-needs-and-resources



Find more information at
TrainforSANE.com

For individual course and group pricing information
for employers, contact customer service:

888-857-6920

www.elitecme.com/contact-us



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