



## ADVOCACY & OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Marshall University Forensic Science Center (MUFSC) relied on its strong relationships with law enforcement, medical personnel, and the criminal justice system to organize community meetings which led to the development of the Cabell County Sexual Assault Task Force in June 2003. In addition to advancing SART development, MUFSC promotes the SANE agenda at the state and local level by maintaining a close working relationship with West Virginia Rape Information and Services, Inc. (WV-FRIS), a network of sexual assault service providers in West Virginia. MUFSC and WV-FRIS staff serve on the statewide WV SANE Advisory Board. MUFSC also participates by hosting the WV-FRIS website and the Sexual Assault Services Training Academy (SASTA) online courses.



### SEXUAL ASSAULT KIT REPOSITORY

Through a Memorandum of Understanding with the West Virginia State Police, MUFSC is the state repository for non-reported sexual assault kits. Federal and state legislation provide victims of sexual assault with a full sexual assault examination without requiring the victim to participate in the criminal justice system. At the time of examination many victims are not ready to initiate an investigation, however, the immediate collection and preservation of potential evidence is critical for future prosecutions. As part of this program, MUFSC will hold non-reported sexual assault kits for two years or until the victim elects to initiate an investigation. This program will ensure the proper storage of evidence while giving the victim time to carefully consider his or her options.

### WHAT IS A SANE?

A Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) is a registered nurse who has been specifically trained to provide comprehensive care to sexual violence victims. The SANE is trained to identify physical trauma, document injuries, collect evidence, maintain the chain of custody, and provide necessary referrals. To become a SANE, a registered nurse must successfully complete a 40 hour training, plus an additional 40-60 hours of supervised clinical experience. Also offered are Pediatric SANE trainings, which focus specifically on providing assistance to children who are victims of sexual abuse.

### WHAT IS A SART?

A Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) is a group of community professionals who work jointly to minimize the trauma of sexual assault victims. SART members typically include emergency medical personnel, law enforcement, and a sexual assault advocate. The goal of a SART program is to ensure a coordinated community response to deal with the needs of the rape victim. This is the primary focus whether members of the SART respond together to jointly interview the victim or work independently on a day-to-day basis while communicating regularly to discuss cases or solve mutual problems.



FORENSIC SCIENCE