Advancing the Footprint of Forensic Nursing Practice

DIANA FAUGNO MSN, RN, AFN-C, CPN, SANE-A, SANE-P, FAAFS, DF-IAFN, DF-AFN
VALERIE SIEVERS MSN, RN, CNS, AFN-C, SANE-A, SANE-P, DF-AFN
STACEY MITCHELL, DNP, MBA, MED, RN, AFN-C, SANE-A, SANE-P, DF-AFN, FAAN
• Describe the role of the Forensic Nurse.
• Discuss how this role can impact health & legal outcomes for patients who have experienced trauma, violence, or maltreatment.

Learning Outcomes
The Past, Present & Future of Forensic Nursing

☆ As the specialty of forensic nursing grows and evolves, research, literature, and practice guidelines will support specialty and role expansion.

☆ Education on forensic nursing topics and concepts is essential as it forms the basis for certification.

☆ This webinar will provide an overview of the fastest growing nursing specialty today with a focus on the importance of trauma-informed, patient-centered practice.
What is a Forensic Nurse?

- A forensic nurse is a Registered or Advanced Practice nurse who has received specialized education and training.
- Forensic nurses provide specialized care for patients who are experiencing acute and long-term health consequences associated with victimization or violence, and/or have unmet forensic healthcare needs.
- Forensic nurses provide consultation and testimony for civil and criminal proceedings regarding nursing practice, evidentiary exams, injury identification & opinions that correlate to findings.
- Forensic nursing care is not separate and distinct from other forms of nursing practice but integrated into the overall care needs of individual patients.
Forensic Nursing Pioneers

- Mid 1970’s Ann Burgess, PhD, RN
  - Rape trauma syndrome
- Mid 1970’s Rape victim advocates
- 1974 Forensic Sexual Assault Exams - Memphis Dr. Pat Speck
- 1977 Minneapolis Dr. Linda Ledray
- Late 1970’s-1980’s Domestic Violence
- 1979 Domestic Violence Dr. Jackie Campbell
- 1986 Family Violence Program RPSLMC Dr. Dan Sheridan
- 1987 Death Investigations Virginia Lynch, MSN
Forensic Nursing Pioneer

- 1970’s – 1980’s, Virginia Lynch was working on Master’s Degree thesis.
- She defined *Forensic Nursing*
- A job description for the Clinical Forensic Nurse Specialist was developed
- Identified & described specialty practice roles within Forensic Nursing
Forensic Nursing-Definition & Evolution

• The application of nursing process to public or legal proceedings (Lynch, 1990).

• Specialized nursing care that focuses on patient populations affected by violence & trauma, across the lifespan & in diverse practice settings. Forensic nursing includes; education, prevention, detection & treatment of the effects of violence in individuals, families, communities & populations (ANA & IAFN, 2017).
Forensic Nursing Milestone

- 1995 ANA Congress of Nursing Practice grants specialty status to forensic nursing

In order to gain full acceptance as a nursing specialty, forensic nursing was required to analyze practice & define the practice of forensic nursing in terms of the *nursing process*. 
What’s UP with Nursing Process??
A critical thinking model used by nurses that comprises the integration of the singular, concurrent actions of six components; assessment, diagnosis, identification of outcomes, planning, implementation & evaluation (ANA, 2015).
• **Forensic nursing process** is an organizational tool & scientific method that is used in providing care to individuals that are ill, injured or deceased as a result of an act of violence, abuse or trauma (Bader & Gabriel, 2010).

• **Looking through the lens of a Forensic Nurse**
Forensic Nursing Process (ADIPIE)

- Assessment
- Identification of outcomes
- Implementation
- Diagnosis
- Planning
- Evaluation
Forensic Nursing
Patients with Forensic Healthcare Needs

- Trauma
- Elder Abuse
- Child Maltreatment
- Domestic Violence-IPV
- Sexual Assault
- Opiate Overdose
- Strangulation
- Human Trafficking
- Drug Exposed Children
- Suicide Attempts
- Suspects/Perpetrators
- Organ Donation
- Mental Health Emergencies

- In Custody Injuries & Death
- Mandated Reporting
- In-Facility Falls & Injury
- LE related trauma & injury
- Toxic Exposure
- Physical Assaults
- Mass Casualties
Forensic Nursing Roles

- Clinical Forensic Nurse/Forensic Nurse Examiner ex) SANE
- Forensic Nurse Death Investigator
- Forensic Correctional Nurse
- Legal Nurse Consultant
- Nurse Attorney
- Advanced Practice Nurse (NP or CNS) with a forensic practice focus
- Forensic Nurse Educator/Researcher
Who Practices Forensic Nursing?

- Forensic Psychiatric Nurses
- Trauma/Acute Care/Urgent Care/Clinics
- Forensic Nurse Examiners/DV/SA
- Nurse Attorneys & Risk Managers
- Pediatric Nurses
- Surgical Nurses
- Legal Nurse Consultants
- Nurses in Correctional Facilities
- Home Care Nurses & Community Health
- Gerontology Nurses
- Women’s Health, L & D, WHNP
- Nurse Educators & Researchers
- Forensic Clinical Nurse Specialists
Forensic Nursing—Where?

- Hospital Based & Acute Care
- Family Justice Center
- Child Abuse Center-Free Standing or Clinic
- Elder Care Center
- Medical Examiner Office
- Jail or Prison-Contracted Services
- Psychiatric Center or Mental Health Centers
- Advocacy Centers
- APN & Follow Up Care Clinics
Forensic Nursing Competencies

• Conduct & document a patient history
• Physical Assessment
• Forensic documentation & photography
• Evidentiary examination
• Injury identification
• Treatment recommendations
• Health care referral and follow up
• Testify in criminal &/or civil proceedings
The Patient : A body of evidence

• Their body “is” the crime scene: Educate the patient the importance of preserving evidence that may be present on their body.

• Everyone plays vital role in facilitating evidence preservation while interacting with the patient.
  • Preserving any biological and/or trace evidence is a critical step during the initial stages of your interaction
Forensic Nursing & Trauma-Informed Care (TIC)

- A patient-centered approach to healthcare that calls on health professionals to provide care in a way that prevents re-traumatization of patients and staff.
- TIC is applied universally regardless of trauma disclosure.
- Nurses have ongoing opportunities to influence the experience of patients & colleagues, using a trauma-informed approach.
So Why Nurses?

- Recognize the evolution of nursing care within complex medical legal systems
- Forensic nursing provides much needed, specialized nursing care to vulnerable populations.
- Provide consultation services to nursing, medical, law-related agencies
- Provide expert court testimony regarding interpersonal violence, trauma, death investigation, unexplained injuries
- Advocate for adequacy of health services
- **Just the numbers:** Nurses outnumber Physicians = more availability for forensic healthcare services.
State Nurse Practice Act and Forensic Nursing
Ethical Decision Making in Forensic Nursing

- **Autonomy**
  - Healthcare providers must honor patients’ rights to determine what is best for themselves, even if the decision is different from the provider’s opinions or perspectives.

- **Justice**
  - Providers must deliver fair and equitable treatment and resources to all patients. Injustice in this realm includes denying patients a fair distribution of resources.

- **Beneficence**
  - Providers should work to promote the well-being of their patients, including balancing the benefits of a treatment against the potential risks.

- **Non-maleficence**
  - Providers are obligated to do no harm, including by providing ineffective treatments.
  - Everything forensic nurses do relies on strong ethical convictions, trustworthiness and professionalism.
Benefits of a Forensic Nursing Approach

- An evidence-based response to patients with forensic healthcare needs
- Commitment to interprofessional practice
- A standard approach to a time sensitive response for evidentiary exams and collection of evidence (24/7)
- Improved patient outcomes, identification and treatment of injury and trauma informed responses
- Peer review and quality improvement
- Provide clinical expertise as part of community case review/SART review
- Provide objective testimony in the courtroom arena.
Forensic Nurses Provide The 5 C’s in patient care

- Compassionate
- Coordinated
- Competent
- Collaborative
- Patient Centered
Forensic Nursing Education & Practice

- Licensed RN, APN, APRN
- Research EB forensic education options. Many RNs develop expertise beginning with education & practice in the care of sexual assault patients. CE course available ⇒ STT online SANE Education.
- Graduate curriculum w/ Masters or DNP with Forensic Nursing focus.
- Physical examination expertise, critical thinking, acute care, women’s health, pediatrics, critical care and/or emergency care.
- https://www.sigmamarketplace.org/sexual-assault-forensic-examiner-program----online-course
Academy of Forensic Nursing

• 2018 formed with 13 nurses
• Mission: Academy of Forensic Nursing strives to link research to practice through dissemination of scholarship, education and service to those affected by and responding to trauma.
• GOAFN.ORG
• Join to support advancing the role & practice of the forensic nurse
• Forensic Nurse Certifications
  • GFN-C (Generalist Forensic Nurse)
  • AFN-C (Advanced Forensic Nurse)
Summary:

Continuing education & training in forensic healthcare is vital due to advances in treatment & technology. AFN offers regional conferences, updates on current research, & clinical guidelines and protocols supporting forensic practice.

The specialty of Forensic Nursing has been recognized for 25 years and is rapidly expanding to meet the needs of patients with a variety of forensic healthcare needs.
Introduction to Forensic Nursing provides both current and future forensic nurses with:

- Detailed information on the role of forensic nurses in a variety of settings
- Peer reviewed
- Case studies detail the functional role and skills of a forensic nurse
- More than 200 pages and 50 images
- Pre-test to assess student knowledge

Readers will have the opportunity to apply for CE credits through the Academy of Forensic Nursing!
Forensic Nursing Certification Board

New Certification Opportunities!
Certification Purpose and Value

“Certification is the formal recognition of specialized knowledge, skills, and experience demonstrated by achievement of standards identified by a nursing specialty to promote optimal health outcomes.”

American Board of Nursing Specialties (2007)
Benefits of Certification

- Personal achievement
- Job satisfaction
- Validation of knowledge
- Challenge
- Greater earning potential
- Commitment to professionalism

- Access to a broad range of job opportunities
- High levels of professionalism
- Increased access to job-related power
- High perceptions of empowerment

Generalist Forensic Nurse Credential:

Generalist Forensic Nurse Certified (GFN-C™)

Advanced Forensic Nurse Credential:

Advanced Forensic Nurse Certified (AFN-C™)
FORENSIC NURSING PILLARS

LEGAL

Government
Legislation
Criminology
Victimology
Testimony

FORENSIC SCIENCE

Evidence
Identification
Collection
Preservation
Management
Transfer

FORENSIC NURSING

Health
Environment
Patient
Nurse
Ethics
Public Health
Populations
Core Competencies
Next Examination Window:

July 1-31, 2022, at 11:59 pm Central Time

Application Deadline:

April 1-May 15, 2022, at 11:59 pm Central Time
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- We will send you an email in **approximately 1 week** that will include a link to the webinar recording and the process for completing the evaluation to obtain your NCPD certificate.

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