

## ABSTRACT

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Title: ASSESSING THE KNOWLEDGE OF NURSING STUDENTS ABOUT SEXUAL ASSAULT NURSE EXAMINERS AND SEXUAL ASSAULT WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A SURVEY TOOL

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Year: 2019

The initial knowledge that both undergraduate and accelerated career entry nursing students possess about the role of a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE), and the importance of collecting evidence for a rape kit was examined. The survey tool, "Nursing Forensic Science Knowledge Exam" developed by Drake, Langford, and Young (2016) was utilized to test the knowledge of nursing students about sexual assault and wounds sustained during sexual violence. For the purpose of this thesis, the original 50 question examination was abbreviated to 19 questions after consultation with the tool's authors and distributed to both undergraduate junior nursing students and accelerated career entry nursing students. Statistical analyses including box plots and standardized *t*-tests were used to evaluate differences in groups based upon gender and junior vs. ACE level in the program. *T*-test analyses found that the scores were relatively similar across both genders and both program types. Although there was no statistically significant difference between gender and level in the program it was apparent that students did not have a strong knowledge base of SANE as demonstrated by the survey scores. Out of a possible score of 100%, the highest score attained as the final exam grade was under a 50%. The scores ranged from 10%-48%. The results of this study indicate that nursing students need theoretical content related to trauma care and the role of a hospital based sexual assault nurse examiner.