



WSU College of Nursing Report of the SANE Program

January 12, 2026

BACKGROUND

The Washington State University College of Nursing received funding to develop and deliver a comprehensive sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE) training program for registered nurses in Eastern Washington in July 2022 following the adoption of HB 1622 (2022). This bill supported WSU College of Nursing in developing both didactic and clinical education, funded scholarships for Washington state residents to attend the program, and to develop a pilot SANE leader program.

At the time the proposal was submitted for legislative consideration, there were only two SANE education options:

- A hybrid program (online and in-person) offered at Harborview Medical Center in Seattle.
- A fully online program offered by the International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN), the national organization who approves courses and offers the certification exam.

A SANE is a registered nurse trained to conduct evidentiary examinations of sexual assault victims including professional trauma-informed care procedures to sensitively manage patients and prepare them for the legal proceedings associated with sexual assault. Upon completion of the training requirements, they also complete the IAFN certification exam to demonstrate they meet the highest standards of education for the role. There is no state-issued license or endorsement to qualify as a SANE.

Training to be a SANE includes 40 hours of didactic education and 16-hours of simulated clinical practice and demonstrate clinical skills taught by experienced, SANE-certified nurses.

Since HB 1622's passage in 2022, additional efforts have emerged to address gaps in SANE education. In 2024, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) awarded the MultiCare Hospital system \$1.5 million to develop SANE training program for its hospitals statewide. Their program allows up to 25% of their seats to be available to non-MultiCare employees as well.

WSU SANE EDUCATION PROGRAM OUTCOMES (RCW 28B.30.360)

DIDACTIC EDUCATION

During the funding period, 2022-25, the College hired a certified SANE to prepare the 40-hour fully online didactic course and a trained Instructional Designer to post the completed training modules in the online platform and ensure their online function would be well organized and presented. The educational program development was paused due to numerous factors including the transition of key college leaders in spring 2025, University budget reductions, and most importantly the discontinuation of IAFN's course approval process as detailed below. Additionally, it is noted that since this funding, federal resources have also been allocated through grants resulting in the development of SANE education at other area agencies.

SIMULATED CLINICAL IMMERSION

While the 40-hour didactic course was under development, the 2-day simulated clinical training was developed by the WSU College of Nursing, approved by IAFN, and launched in 2023. This portion of the

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training was in greater demand as nurses who had already completed the IAFN online education were seeking opportunities for the simulated clinical immersion. Since initiating this training, we have offered 8 training events including one in Yakima, Washington as described in the expectations of this funding, with a total of 44 attendees. In 2025, we introduced a \$200 scholarship for Washington state nurses, and 13 participants utilized this opportunity. We will offer our next training event in May 2026.

SANE LEADER PILOT PROGRAM

The pilot SANE Leader Program was intended to convene educators from Washington SANE training sites to develop statewide strategies for SANE workforce expansion. However, the establishment of a new multi-state Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2024 through the Washington Center for Nursing (WCN) made this program redundant (appendix A).

This regional MOU connects Washington, Colorado, Wyoming, and New Mexico to:

- Coordinate SANE program development;
- Share educational resources;
- Support educators through HRSA funding cycles;
- Address persistent regional shortages in SANE training.

Because the goals of the MOU fully aligned with—and exceeded—the aims of the pilot, a separate leader program under HB 1622 was deemed duplicative and has not been pursued further. WSU College of Nursing will remain engaged in the WCN workgroup.

CHALLENGES

Throughout 2025, the College faced numerous challenges in providing SANE education and has focused its efforts on the opportunities that are meaningful and achievable.

In the process of WSU establishing the program, we identified the need to develop the simulated clinical immersion program first. Simultaneously, we developed [online resources](#) pointing new learners to the IAFN online educational offering. We then established the first dates for the immersive clinical training experience and launched those. As [MultiCare's SANE program](#) was announced in 2024, we coordinated with their developers to provide access to our clinical immersion for their learners as they first focused on developing the didactic education. MultiCare's goal is to educate 300 nurses throughout their system and have already educated 80 new SANEs. We have a collaborative relationship with MultiCare SANE Educators by sharing planned simulated clinical immersion dates and supporting their hiring of standardized patients. MultiCare also plans to offer their own simulated clinical immersion as well. Since MultiCare's SANE education program launched, we have noted a 67% decrease in searches for SANE education in our online data analytics.

Starting in April 2025, the College of Nursing has changed in significant ways which has impacted our progress on the SANE didactic education program. The leadership of the College of Nursing transitioned with the resignation of the Dean. This resulted in a pause in the didactic education development as the Dean was a major contributor to this effort. Additionally, in June 2025, the instructional designer who was dedicated to supporting the development of the SANE program ended her contract with us. Lastly, the lead nurse overseeing clinical simulation

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education transitioned out of employment with the college in June 2025. Also, the Washington state budget reductions imposed on the University in July 2025 resulted in the college focusing efforts on the reallocation of staff in various units to achieve the necessary budget reduction. This impact was felt across the college and necessitated that we focus on stabilizing new workflows.

The most significant challenge at this time is the lack of access to educational approval as well as the certification exam. In November 2025, IAFN notified constituents that they had experienced a substantial fraud event which resulted in their decision to pause numerous activities they offer while navigating their legal concerns (appendix B). This included pausing approvals for any new SANE programs and the certification exam for new applicants. This effectively ends the possibility of approving a completed didactic education program. Additionally in December, IAFN also announced they will no longer approve and offer continuing education credit for the 2-day simulated clinical immersion program (appendix C).

NEXT STEPS

The College of Nursing has now stabilized its workforce since the transition of leadership and the impacts from the fiscal year's budget reduction. We will continue to offer the 2-day clinical immersion and reinvigorate our efforts to complete the didactic education program through the following steps:

- Continue the planned simulated clinical immersion in May 2026. We are coordinating these events with MultiCare's scheduled events to be complementary to each program and anticipate offering two per year at WSU.
- Despite IAFN's plan to discontinue approving the continuing education (CE) credits for clinical immersions, we will continue to offer CEs for these events through our continuing education provider.
- We will initiate recruitment of a certified SANE to complete the didactic education modules while we await notification of another forensic organization who will assume educational approvals and certification exams in the future. In the meantime, the online education program offered through IAFN's website remains available.

CONCLUSION

WSU has expanded access to SANE clinical training in Washington, successfully training 44 nurses and establishing a sustainable clinical immersion model. Despite challenges—particularly around program approval—the College remains committed to strengthening the SANE workforce and supporting statewide needs and is steadfast in its endeavor to offer a complete SANE education program.



Dr. Anne Mason
Dean, WSU College of Nursing

**Memorandum of Understanding
SANE Collaborative Partners**

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) outlines the terms of the relationship between the Colorado Center for Nursing Excellence (“Applicant”) and the New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Program (“NMCSAP”), the Washington Center for Nursing and the Wyoming Center for Nursing collectively referred as “Partners”.

WHEREAS these Partners agree to the defined roles and responsibilities defined in this MOU in support of developing and implementing *A Five-State Rural Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners Workforce Collaborative* (“Program”) funded by HRSA starting July 1, 2024.

WHEREAS these Partners represent four of the five-state collaborative. Each state has a shortage of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (“SANE”) certified RNs, especially in rural areas, and agree this multi-state effort will support the recruitment and training of a total of at least 60 SANE nurses per each grant year. This Program will have a strong focus on rural communities in addition to a focus on diverse nurses.

WHEREAS the overall goals of the HRSA-funded SANE program, as stated in the SANE Notice of Funding Opportunity, are to:

- Increase the number of trained and certified SANEs.
- Increase the number of available SANE trainings.
- Expand access to sexual assault forensic examinations, especially in rural areas.
- Foster an environment that supports SANE training, practice and retention.

WHEREAS, each Partner brings expert staff, organizational and community resources to this effort that together can be combined to the significant and positive benefit of their state’s residents and SANE support capacity.

THEREFORE, the Partners agree to the following responsibilities as follows:

Colorado Center for Nursing Excellence agrees to:

- Provide overall project coordination and support, including a Project Director, financial and grant management, project logistics and administrative support;
- Develop and implement a set of structured project coordination and support activities working with and through the Partners to enable the recruitment and training of SANE Nurses;
- Provide the “SANE Nurse Retention through Resilience” training program, follow-up coaching and problem-solving support, focused on SANE nurse stress management and SANE nurse retention, for all individual program participants;
- Organize, lead and support the SANE Multi-State Collaborative Advisory Committee;
- Pay Partners \$1,000 per SANE student participant recruited and supported through the Program. These funds will be disbursed quarterly upon receipt of invoice from the Partners;
- Pay SANE student participants a financial stipend. Payments are made based on a defined schedule that supports and reinforces the student’s participation in multiple elements of the training and certification.

- Provide technical and program support to all Partners in support of Program goals and implementation;
- Administer evaluation and performance tests to measure the impact and evolution of the Program as well as coordinate the total project evaluation process per HRSA requirements; and
- Be responsible for all financial, program and data reporting to HRSA in support of the necessary grant administration responsibilities.

Partners agree to the following program activities and outcomes:

- Build and maintain partnerships in their respective states with a collection of academic, healthcare and community organizations such as Federally Qualified Health Centers, Critical Access Hospitals, schools of nursing programs and community based organizations such as rape crisis and sexual assault prevention/support organizations centers;
- Work with healthcare providers and clinics as well as nursing schools to support academic-practice partnerships in order to recruit SANE program participants and to help them secure clinical and experiential training;
- Recruit for three grant years starting 7/1/24 through 6/30/27 for each Partner’s required number of SANE nurse participants, with a focus on rural communities and diverse nurses. Partners agree to the following Program student participant goals per grant year: Colorado - 15, New Mexico - 5, Wyoming - 12, Washington - 10;
- To the degree possible:
 - Provide problem solving support to the SANE participants of their respective states through the SANE Fellow entire process of IAFN training, SANE Nurse Retention Through Resilience training, Mentoring by SANE Nurses, securing clinical hours to become certified SANE, national SANE certification and securing employment as a SANE RN;
 - Participate regularly in the Multi-State SANE Collaborative Steering Committee meetings;
 - Ensure that the SANE nurses participate in multiple elements of the SANE program;
 - Coordinate with the Colorado Center for Nursing Excellence on the appropriate distribution of financial stipends for each SANE participant;
 - Support HRSA program requirements for program performance data collection, sharing the required participant data with the Center

CONCURRENCE: This MOU is contingent on receiving funding from HRSA for the proposed SANE Program, and is effective from the date it is signed until such time as it would be canceled by either party with ninety (90) days notice. By signing below, Partners agree to the terms of this MOU.

Alexandria Taylor
 Executive Director
 New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Program

Alexandria Taylor 3/21/2024
 97CC57D1A9474A9...
 Sofia Aragon

Executive Director
 Washington Center for Nursing

Sofia Aragon 3/20/2024
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 Jeanine Niemoller

Director/Co-Chair
 Wyoming Center for Nursing

Jeanine Niemoller 3/27/2024
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 Ingrid Johnson

President/CEO
 Colorado Center for Nursing Excellence

Ingrid Johnson 3/20/2024
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**Statement from the IAFN Board of Directors
on Restructuring IAFN
November 13, 2025**

As of November 13, 2025, IAFN is beginning the process of a radical restructuring. The goal of this restructuring is to ensure the future of forensic nursing and the ongoing work toward our vision, a world where all patients have access to forensic nursing care.

IAFN's decision to restructure is the result of challenges within the broader operating environment for nonprofits and membership associations. Over the past five years, IAFN has weathered many storms, from the pandemic to more recent federal funding disruptions. These challenges were compounded by the [discovery of fraud in 2024](#), which was perpetrated by a former, trusted employee.

As a result, IAFN's board of directors is reassessing how we can move forward sustainably, with integrity and with our vision at the forefront. We are actively pursuing purposeful partnerships to preserve our critical work, along with other strategies.

While we pursue these strategies, our financial position requires that we also take immediate actions to downsize our portfolio of work. IAFN will suspend the following program activities:

- Membership sales
- Live educational offerings, including IAFN's annual conference
- The approvership program
- "Ask a nurse" for individualized support, aside from grant-funded activities
- SANE-A and SANE-P certification and recertification
- The Journal of Forensic Nursing

IAFN will continue to operate its current federally-funded grant programs. In addition, the current content available in our online learning library will remain available. Our online, members-only community and message board will also remain open. The IAFN Foundation, a separate 501c3 organization, will maintain its operations.

Streamlining our work will also result in further reductions to our staff. Over the next four weeks, we will say goodbye to 19 of IAFN's staff members. We are devastated by this loss. We are grateful for the contributions of every team member affected by this decision, all of whom have shown an unwavering commitment to our mission, vision, and values.

These decisions are difficult and not made lightly. The IAFN Board has established a clear guiding principle as we move forward: *every decision must advance our goal of ensuring all patients have access to forensic nursing care.*

We are committed to keeping stakeholders informed throughout this transition. We will share some additional information about practical next steps, including regarding certification, in the near future.



FW: Important Update: IAFN Clinical Skills Lab Program Transition

From Nechanicky, Aimee Elizabeth <aimee.nechanicky@wsu.edu>

Date Mon 12/29/2025 8:18 AM

To Mason, Anne Michele <anne.mason@wsu.edu>

Cc Preston, Alicia <alicia.preston@wsu.edu>

Good Morning Anne,

Please see IAFN's email below. Beginning in 2026, they will no longer provide continuing education credit for the 2-Day Clinical Skills Course. As an approved provider through the Montana Nurses Association (MNA), we have the option to continue offering CE independently if that is the preferred path forward.

Thank you,

**AIMEE NECHANICKY, MA (she/her)**

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM COORDINATOR

College of Nursing, SNRS 233

Washington State University

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From: Jen Pierce-Weeks <jpw@iafn.org>

Sent: Sunday, December 28, 2025 5:40 AM

Cc: Jen Pierce-Weeks <jpw@forensicnurses.org>

Subject: Important Update: IAFN Clinical Skills Lab Program Transition

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Good Morning Everyone,

I'm writing to share an important update regarding IAFN's Clinical Skills Lab (CSL) program.

For over a decade, IAFN has partnered with sites like yours to enhance SANE training through our evaluated CSL curriculum. This skills-based approach has successfully prepared didactically trained SANEs for clinical practice. As part of this initiative, IAFN provided complimentary continuing education credits to sites that adopted our curriculum—a benefit your site has valued as an approved partner.

Our original agreement was scheduled to conclude at the end of 2025 as we reassessed and updated the CSL curriculum. With IAFN's recent organizational restructure, we've made the decision that beginning in 2026, IAFN will no longer approve sites or provide CE credits for Clinical Skills Labs.

The impact of your work has been significant—you've helped increase both the number and competency of practicing SANEs. We encourage you to explore continuing education options through other ANCC-approved providers to sustain the excellent training you provide.

Thank you for your dedication and partnership over these years. Your commitment to SANE education has made a lasting difference in forensic nursing practice.

Please don't hesitate to contact me directly with any questions or concerns.

Jennifer Pierce-Weeks, BSN, RN, SANE-A, SANE-P
(she/her/hers)
Chief Executive Officer

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