



**Emergency Department**

John Moore, RN, MHA  
Director  
Alan Mayer, MD  
Medical Director

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TO: Jay Grant, CCCS, Butte Pre-Release and Women's Transitional Unit  
Jeni Nichols, Butte Connections Corrections Program  
Travis Hettick, START  
Alex Vukovich, WATCH Program

RE: SANE Sexual Abuse Medical Exam in the Emergency Department

This letter will detail for your program the sexual abuse examination performed in the Emergency Department at St. James Healthcare.

A SANE (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner) is a registered nurse (RN) who has specialized training in treating sexual assault victims. They are generally called sexual assault trained examiners. They are usually available through the Emergency Department 24 hours a day to help victims of sexual assault. St. James is continually developing the nursing staff in SANE training in order to have the majority of nursing staff skilled in this area. They not only examine a victim as a health professional, but they approach their work with special sensitivity and knowledge about sex crimes. They assess, document, and preserve evidence for the legal aspect of their cases. Their work is vital to adequately serving victims of sexual assault and their job is multi-faceted and specialized beyond typical medical examinations or emergency care.

A SANE exam has many components. It usually begins with an interview and prepares the victim for the exam. Included are STD evaluation and preventative care, HIV testing, pregnancy risk and prevention, as well as counseling.

Documenting evidence is equally important as proper gathering of evidence is important for any legal case that transpires. They also provide referrals to legal aid or advocacy groups. They provide emotional support and evaluate the emotional state to determine if further evaluation or treatment is needed.

In addition to the SANE component of the exam, all patients not having medical evaluation prior to coming to the Emergency Department will receive a medical physical evaluation by the medical provider on staff. There are instances when a patient is seen by a medical provider prior to coming to the Emergency Department and therefore would only need a SANE exam. Most of our cases are acute sexual exams and are seen by the Emergency Department provider as well.

Finally, there are many complex issues involved with this nursing field, such as confidentiality, consent, mandated reporting, uncooperative victims, and child protective services. We work closely and collaboratively with Butte Silver Bow prosecutor and police.

Thank you for your continued support of St. James Healthcare and for all you do for the people in our community. Please feel free to contact me if you any further information.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Moore".

John Moore, RN, MHA  
Director of Emergency/Trauma Services  
St. James Healthcare