



Culturally Responsive Care for Sexual Assault Survivors

“Violence is a healthcare Issue.”- IHS & Medical Forensic Standpoint

Implementation & MMIP Patients

- Create a readiness assessment checklist - forensic health care programs:
- Identify program infrastructure and personnel, identify and build champions.
- Develop systems policies and procedures.
- Implement program expansion - ongoing training and education.
- Ensure supplies are stocked and equipment is functional, ensure equipment maintenance.
- Expand services, introduce trauma-informed, culturally appropriate safety screening questions, and network with Tribal Coalitions/Advocates to ensure proper resources are available on discharge .
- Conduct preventative outreach and training activities with local schools, gyms/rec centers, health clinics.
- Incorporate all members of the MDT/SART/CCRT into training, education, understanding policy, procedures, roles, and responsibilities, and conduct peer review to ensure quality, trauma-informed care is provided to all individuals.

Stigma & Barriers to Healthcare



- Lack of traditional values, beliefs, teachings, and medicine.
- Lack of culturally competent training and education across all healthcare disciplines.
- Lack of program development, network, and collaboration.
- Lack of community-based resources and services.
- Lack of Prevention services.
- Revictimization

“IHS strives to ensure best practices are followed by the healthcare providers as it relates to forensic healthcare.”





IHS & The Medical Forensic Examination Includes

- Medical-Forensic History
- Physical Assessment, Documentation, and Photographs
- Detailed Ano-Genital Exam
- Collection of Forensic Evidence
- Treatment options
- Collaboration of Resources & Appropriate Referrals
 - Behavioral/Mental Health Services
 - Advocacy Services
 - Coordination with the Criminal Justice System
 - Discharge Teaching and Safety Planning

Purpose of these exams within IHS

- Provide a safe environment for possible disclosure.
- Medical care
- Educate about health effects of IPV/DV/SA
- Resources, referral, safety planning

Best Practices

Multidisciplinary Approach: Sexual Assault Response Team/Multidisciplinary Team/Coordinated Community Response Team (SART/MDT/CCRT)

- I/T/U Medical Forensic Examiners (SANE/FNE/SAFE/SAEs)
- Behavioral Health/Social Worker
- Tribal Advocacy (community and/or systems-based)
- Law Enforcement (e.g., local, Tribal, State, FBI, BIA, etc.)
- Prosecution
- Crime lab personnel
- Adult Protective Services/Child Protective Services
- Local/state/Tribal representatives
- I/T/U sites work collaboratively within their SART/MDT/CCRT throughout the forensic healthcare response.
- Each exam is tailored to the specific circumstance. The patient assists in making decisions and is the one who is ultimately in control of the examination.
- To support and guide practice, SANE/FNE/SAFEs have access to:
 - Indian Health Manual
 - National Protocol for Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Examinations
 - National Best Practices for Sexual Assault Kits: A Multidisciplinary Approach
 - Medical Forensic Health Care – Guidebooks
 - Training, education, and technical assistance from the Forensic Nurse Consultant
 - Additional Resources, Webinars, Toolkits, Collaborative Intra-Agency Partners, Committees, etc.





IHS & Best Practices: A Trauma-Informed Approach

IHS emphasizes the importance of a trauma-informed approach which considers the impact of trauma and patient/victim safety. The use of trauma-informed approaches places an emphasis on the following:

- Appropriately screening for IPV/DV, Sexual Assault, Human Trafficking, and Abuse
- Attending to a patient's emotional safety, as well as their physical safety
- Strengthening a patient's capacity to recover from the traumatic effects of abuse and violence by providing information, resources, services, and support.
- Educating patients, service providers, and the community about the impact of trauma on patient/survivors' health and well-being

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