

Adult/Adolescent SANE-SART Course

Forensic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice

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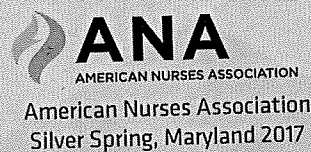
Instructions

- Please read the provided material below:
Forensic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice
- When you are finished reading, you will be provided with a link to take the quiz.

Forensic Nursing

2nd Edition

Scope and Standards of Practice



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The American Nurses Association (ANA) is the only full-service professional organization representing the interests of the nation's 3.6 million registered nurses through its constituent member nurses associations and its organizational affiliates. ANA advances the nursing profession by fostering high standards of nursing practice, promoting the rights of nurses in the workplace, projecting a positive and realistic view of nursing, and lobbying the Congress and regulatory agencies on healthcare issues affecting nurses and the public.

The American Nurses Association and International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN) are international professional nursing specialty associations. This ANA/IAFN publication, *Forensic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice, Second Edition*, reflects the thinking of the forensic nursing specialty on issues that impact forensic nursing practice and should be reviewed in conjunction with state board of nursing policies and practices. State law, rules, and regulations govern the practice of nursing, while *Forensic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice, Second Edition*, guides, defines, and directs forensic nurses in the application of their specialization's professional knowledge, skills, and responsibilities.

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Scope of Forensic Nursing Practice

Definition of Forensic Nursing

Forensic nursing is specialized nursing care that focuses on patient populations affected by violence and trauma—across the lifespan and in diverse practice settings. Forensic nursing includes education, prevention, and detection and treatment of the effects of violence in individuals, families, communities, and populations. Through leadership and inter-professional collaboration, the forensic nurse works to foster an understanding of the health effects, effective interventions, and prevention of violence and trauma in the United States and throughout the world.

Forensic nursing practice is grounded in the rich bio-psycho-social-spiritual education of registered nurses (RNs) and uses the nursing process to assess, diagnose, and treat individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations affected by violence and trauma, and the systems that respond to them. Forensic nursing targets the identification, management, and prevention of intentional and unintentional injuries and death in a global community.

The forensic nurse collaborates with agents in the healthcare, social, and legal systems to investigate and interpret clinical presentations and pathologies by evaluating intentional or unintentional physical and psychological injury and death; describing the scientific relationships between injury and evidence; and interpreting the associated or influencing factors, according to the forensic nursing scope and standards of practice.

The forensic nurse integrates forensic and nursing sciences in the assessment and care of populations affected by physical, psychological, or social violence, trauma, or death within the clinical or community environs. Privacy, respect, and dignity characterize the services the forensic nurse provides to those affected by crime, unlawful acts, trauma, and intentional and unintentional harm. In addition, the forensic nurse strongly advocates for minimum forensic nursing standards of practice in the care of patients. The International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN) in the past provided this definition of

forensic nursing: “Forensic nursing is the practice of nursing globally when health and legal systems intersect” (ANA & IAFN, 2009, p. 3).

The following expanded descriptions of both of the scope and the standards of forensic nursing practice reflect the evolution and complexity of this nursing specialty.

Forensic Nursing Scope and Standards of Practice

A specialty organization has a responsibility to its members and to the public it serves to develop the scope and standards of practice for its specialty. The IAFN, the professional organization for forensic nurses, is responsible for developing and maintaining the scope of practice statement and standards that apply to the practice of all forensic nurses. This complex and comprehensive consensus document has been developed with broad input from the IAFN membership, among others, and uses the ANA framework and guide for scope and standards documents (ANA, 2010b, 2015b). *Forensic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice, Second Edition*, describes a competent level of forensic nursing practice and professional performance that applies to all forensic nurses.

Description of the Scope of Forensic Nursing Practice

The Scope of Forensic Nursing Practice (starting on page 1) describes the *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how* of forensic nursing practice. Each of these questions must be answered sufficiently to provide a complete picture of the dynamic and complex practice of forensic nursing and its evolving boundaries and membership. The definition of forensic nursing provides a succinct characterization of the “what” of forensic nursing. Forensic nurses are registered nurses (RNs) and advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) who specialize in forensic nursing to comprise the “who” constituency and have been educated, titled, and maintain active licensure to practice nursing.

Forensic nursing occurs “when” a need exists for forensic nursing knowledge, wisdom, caring, leadership, practice, or education, anytime, anywhere. Forensic nursing occurs in any environment “where” a patient is in need of forensic nursing care, information, or advocacy. The “how” of forensic nursing practice is defined in the ways, means, methods, and manners that forensic nurses use to practice professionally. The “why” is characterized as forensic nursing’s response to the changing needs of society to achieve positive patient outcomes in keeping with nursing’s social contract with an obligation to society. The depth and breadth of an individual forensic nurse’s practice—within the total scope of forensic nursing practice—depends upon the nurse’s education, experience, role, setting, and the population being served.

The following definitions are provided for clarity and understanding for our readers:

Patients are persons, clients, families, groups, communities, or populations for whom forensic nurses provide services as sanctioned by state regulatory bodies. This global definition is intended to reflect a proactive focus on health and wellness care rather than a reactive perspective to disease and illness.

Forensic nurses (forensic RNs) are individuals who are academically prepared at the undergraduate or graduate level; licensed by a state, commonwealth, territory, government, or regulatory body to practice as an RN; and have received specialized education and training in forensic nursing.

Advanced practice registered nurses specializing in forensic nursing are APRNs who have received specialized training in forensic nursing and who have:

- Completed an accredited graduate level-education program preparing the nurse for one of the four recognized APRN roles (certified registered nurse anesthetist [CRNA], certified nurse-midwife [CNM], clinical nurse specialist [CNS], or certified nurse practitioner [CNP]);
- Achieved a passing score on a national certification examination that measures APRN-, role-, and population-focused competencies and maintain continued competence as evidenced by recertification in the role and population through the national certification program;
- Acquired advanced clinical knowledge and skills preparing the nurse to provide direct care to patients, as well as a component of indirect care; however, the defining factor for all APRNs is that a significant component of the education and practice focuses on direct care of individuals;
- Grounded their practices in the competencies of RNs by demonstrating a greater depth and breadth of knowledge, a greater synthesis of data, increased complexity of skills and interventions, and greater role autonomy;
- Obtained educational preparation to assume responsibility and accountability for health promotion and/or maintenance as well as the assessment, diagnosis, and management of patient problems, which includes the use and prescription of pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic interventions;

- Demonstrated clinical experience of sufficient depth and breadth to reflect the intended license; and
- Obtained a license to practice as an APRN in one of the four APRN roles: CRNA, CNM, CNS, or CNP (APRN Joint Dialogue Group, 2008).

The forensic nurse, regardless of licensure or setting, provides expert, holistic, patient-centered, and trauma-informed care. Patients who have experienced trauma are at risk for both short- and long-term health sequelae, and are vulnerable to re-traumatization when receiving care that does not routinely take into account the effect of trauma on health. With training and expertise in providing care through a trauma-informed lens, the forensic nurse understands the criticality of establishing an unbiased, developmentally appropriate rapport with the patient. Trauma-informed rapport-building involves creating an environment of nurse–patient trust and support; addressing cultural, historical, and gender issues; and giving the patient a voice in their care. The forensic nurse is keenly aware of potential safety issues—before, during, and after the patient’s medical–forensic examination and discharge—and plans accordingly in collaboration with professionals from other disciplines.

The forensic nurse’s scope of practice ranges from providing care for the patient’s bio-psycho-social needs, to maintaining patient privacy and confidentiality, to collecting and documenting evidence, to testifying in a legal proceeding. To perform this specialized practice, the forensic nurse works with an interdisciplinary team composed of medical professionals, community and systems-based advocates, social services workers, faith community leaders, law enforcement personnel, and legal practitioners.

The forensic nurse’s goal is to provide quality nursing care to the forensic patient from the initial point of contact to proffering testimony in a courtroom setting, when necessary. The forensic nurse contributes to positive patient outcomes, improved law enforcement investigations, and just legal proceedings. To capture a sense of the specialized work that is forensic nursing, the IAFN collaborated with documentary filmmakers to present a series of vivid vignettes involving forensic nurses practicing in diverse settings. (See Appendix A: Resources, IAFN & Seedworks Films, 2011, 2012.)

Development and Function of the Standards of Forensic Nursing Practice

The Scope of Forensic Nursing Practice Statement is accompanied by the Standards of Forensic Nursing Practice, which consist of the Standards of Practice and the Standards of Professional Performance. These are authoritative statements of the duties that all forensic nurses—regardless of role,

population, or subspecialty—are expected to perform competently. The standards published herein may serve as evidence of the standard of care, with the understanding that application of the standards depends upon context. The standards are subject to change with the dynamics of the nursing profession and the forensic nursing specialty as new patterns of professional practice are developed and accepted by the forensic nursing community and the public at-large. In addition, specific conditions and clinical circumstances may affect the application of standards at a given time (e.g., during a disaster or epidemic). As with the scope of practice statement, the standards are subject to formal, periodic review and revision.

Standards of Practice for Forensic Nurses

The Standards of Practice for Forensic Nurses describe a competent level of forensic nursing care as demonstrated by the critical-thinking model known as the nursing process. The nursing process includes the components of assessment, diagnosis, outcomes identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation. Accordingly, the nursing process encompasses significant actions taken by registered nurses and forms the foundation of the nurse's decision-making.

Standard 1. Assessment

The forensic nurse collects pertinent data and information relative to the patient's health, death, or the situation.

Standard 2. Diagnosis

The forensic nurse analyzes the assessment data to determine actual or potential diagnoses, problems, and issues.

Standard 3. Outcomes Identification

The forensic nurse identifies expected outcomes for a plan individualized to the patient or the situation.

Standard 4. Planning

The forensic nurse develops a plan that prescribes strategies to attain expected, measurable outcomes.

Standard 5. Implementation

The forensic nurse implements the identified plan.

Standard 5A. Coordination of Care

The forensic nurse coordinates care delivery.

Standard 5B. Health Teaching and Health Promotion

The forensic nurse employs strategies to promote health and a safe environment.

Standard 6. Evaluation

The forensic nurse evaluates progress toward attainment of goals and outcomes.

Standards of Professional Performance for Forensic Nurses

The Standards of Forensic Nursing Professional Performance describe a competent level of behavior in the professional role, including activities related to ethics, culturally congruent practice, communication, collaboration, leadership, education, evidence-based practice and research, quality of practice, professional practice evaluation, resource utilization, and environmental health. All forensic nurses are expected to engage in professional role activities, including leadership, that is appropriate to their education and position. For their professional actions, forensic nurses are accountable to themselves, their patients, their peers, and ultimately, society.

Standard 7. Ethics

The forensic nurse practices ethically.

Standard 8. Culturally Congruent Practice

The forensic nurse practices in a manner that is congruent with cultural diversity and inclusion principles.

Standard 9. Communication

The forensic nurse communicates effectively in all areas of practice.

Standard 10. Collaboration

The forensic nurse collaborates with patient, family, and other key stakeholders in the conduct of nursing practice.

Standard 11. Leadership

The forensic nurse leads within the professional practice setting and the profession.

Standard 12. Education

The forensic nurse seeks knowledge and competence that reflects current nursing practice and promotes futuristic thinking.

Standard 13. Evidence-Based Practice and Research

The forensic nurse integrates evidence and research findings into practice.

Standard 14. Quality of Practice

The forensic nurse contributes to quality nursing practice.

Standard 15. Professional Practice Evaluation

The forensic nurse evaluates one's own and others' nursing practice.

Standard 16. Resource Utilization

The forensic nurse utilizes appropriate resources to plan, provide, and sustain evidence-based nursing services that are safe, effective, and fiscally responsible.

Standard 17. Environmental Health

The forensic nurse practices in an environmentally safe and healthy manner.

The Function of Competencies in Standards

The competencies that accompany each standard may be evidence of compliance with the corresponding standard. The list of competencies is not exhaustive. Whether a particular standard or competency applies depends upon the circumstances. For example, a nurse providing care for a patient who is unconscious and critically ill and who, unaccompanied by family members, arrived at the hospital by ambulance has a duty to collect comprehensive data pertinent to the patient's health (Standard 1. Assessment). However, under the attendant circumstances, that nurse may not be expected to "[a]ssess[] family dynamics and impact on the patient's health and wellness" (one of Standard 1's competencies). In the same instance, Standard 5B. Health Teaching and Health Promotion might not apply at all.

Evolution of Forensic Nursing

The milestones in the development of forensic nursing practice that are listed on the following/next page underscore the importance of this nursing practice specialty in identifying, managing, and preventing intentional and unintentional injuries in a global community. In addition, forensic nursing practice has traditionally provided a role in assessing and providing care for victims, suspects, the accused, and perpetrators of crime, trauma, and intentional harm, particularly those who have a mental or emotional disorder related to the commission of a crime or unlawful act.

Milestones of Forensic Nursing Practice

These key events highlight the critical steps in the development and formalization of forensic nursing:

1948	Article V in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights declares: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment" (United Nations, 1948).
1975	John Butt, MD, chief medical examiner in Alberta, Canada, recognizes the registered nurse as a valuable resource to the field of death investigation (Lynch & Duval, 2011).
1984	The U.S. Surgeon General identifies violence as a public health issue and healthcare providers as key agents in ameliorating the effects of violence in our communities (Koop, 1986).
1990	Virginia Lynch, RN, Forensic Clinical Nurse Specialist, conceptualizes and operationalizes the role of the forensic nurse examiner (Lynch, 1990).
1991	The ANA publishes a position paper, asserting that violence against women is a nursing practice issue (ANA, 1991).
1991	The American Academy of Forensic Sciences recognizes forensic nursing as a scientific discipline (Lynch & Duval, 2011).

1992	The IAFN is established as the first professional nursing organization for forensic nurses (IAFN, 2017a).
1995	ANA's Congress of Nursing Practice recognizes forensic nursing as a specialty practice area (ANA & IAFN, 1997).
1997	ANA and IAFN jointly publish the first edition of the <i>Scope and Standards of Forensic Nursing Practice</i> (ANA & IAFN, 1997).
2001	IAFN develops and publishes <i>Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Education Guidelines</i> (IAFN, 2015).
2004	IAFN develops and publishes <i>Core Competencies for Advanced Practice Forensic Nursing</i> (IAFN, 2004).
2005	IAFN publishes the first issue of <i>Journal of Forensic Nursing</i> .
2009	ANA and IAFN jointly publish the first edition of <i>Forensic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice</i> (ANA & IAFN, 2009).
2009	IAFN develops and publishes <i>Forensic Nurse Death Investigator (FNDI) Education Guidelines</i> (IAFN, 2013a).
2012	IAFN develops and publishes the <i>Intimate Partner Violence Nurse Examiner Education Guidelines</i> (IAFN, 2013b).
2015	IAFN publishes the <i>Core Curriculum for Forensic Nursing</i> (Price & Maguire, 2015).
2017	ANA and IAFN jointly publish <i>Forensic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice, 2nd Edition</i> .

Forensic nurses continue to create and disseminate new and existing evidence-based and research-informed knowledge, encourage collaboration among nurses and specialty practices, and promote interprofessional collaboration. The IAFN, the professional organization for forensic nurses, serves an integral role in the continued development of forensic nursing practice across settings, roles, and populations. The IAFN supports the forensic nurse

- In the development of international professional networks;
- Through the recognition and expansion of the unique aspects of forensic nursing practice;
- Through the provision of innovative, evidence-based forensic nursing education;
- In the establishment of the scope and standards of forensic nursing practice;

- In the creation of credentialing processes for forensic nurses; and
- In the development of the core curriculum for forensic nursing.

Forensic nursing is a multifaceted and complex specialty practice. Its responsibilities, functions, roles, and skills derive from general nursing practice, yet the specialty of forensic nursing has developed in accordance with its distinctive practice environments and populations. Forensic nursing practice, concerned primarily with individuals and populations affected by violence and trauma, their families, communities, and the systems that respond to them, may include but is not limited to

- Assessment, diagnosis, identification of outcomes, planning, implementation, evaluation of, and scientific inquiry about human, programmatic, and system responses to injury and interventions following injury to individuals, families, groups, communities, cultures, and environments;
- Identification of the pathology of intentional or unintentional injury in persons who are living or deceased;
- Episodic care for populations affected by trauma, including those legally defined as victims, suspects, the accused, and perpetrators;
- Recognition, collection, packaging, preservation, and transfer of specimens/samples holding potential evidentiary value within the legal system;
- Participation in the generation, dissemination, and use of evidence-based research in forensic nursing practice delivered to patients, communities, and systems;
- Utilization of formative and summative evaluation processes in forensic nursing roles and environments internationally;
- Administration, organization, and coordination of the forensic nursing role in programs, systems, and environments where forensic nurses practice;
- Involvement and influence in both internal and external systems where professional and societal regulation of forensic nursing practice affect public health and safety;
- Development and support of local, regional, and global public policy to support public health as it relates to injury or death and the prevention of injury in a variety of cultures and communities;
- Promotion of and accountability to the ethical principles and vision of ethical practice within forensic nursing;

- Development and implementation of professional and community education programs of interest to forensic nurses that address prevention and interventions in primary, secondary, and tertiary settings; and
- Development and promotion of interprofessional collaboration between the forensic nurse and other professionals—such as community and systems-based advocates, forensic scientists, and legal professionals—in all roles and practice environments.

Prevalence of Forensic Nurses

The National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses (NSSRN), which the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) conducts approximately every four years, does not report the number of nurses who work within the forensic nursing specialty (DHHS, HRSA, 2010). The survey focuses on educational background, primary/secondary employment setting, primary/secondary position, job satisfaction, salaries, and additional demographic characteristics.

Because forensic nurses serve populations affected by trauma or violence—which are not limited to one setting and are not represented by a specific patient demographic—forensic nurses remain one of the most diverse groups of clinicians in the nursing profession (e.g., patient populations served, practice settings, and forensic healthcare services provided). This unique dynamic confounds the ability of a survey such as the NSSRN to capture accurate practice data specific to forensic nursing. In addition, as the NSSRN reveals, many RNs hold both a part-time and a full-time position (>12%) or multiple part-time positions (another 14%), further confounding the difficulty of identifying unique specialty practices (DHHS, HRSA, 2010). Although more than 3,700 members currently comprise the IAFN (2017a), this number cannot be extrapolated as representative of the total number of nurses who work full-time, part-time, or intermittently as forensic nurses.

Populations Served by Forensic Nurses

Forensic nurses care for and treat individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations in systems where intentional and unintentional injuries occur. These include but are not limited to patients who have been

- Victims, suspects, the accused, or perpetrators of interpersonal violence (e.g., child abuse, elder and vulnerable person abuse, intimate partner abuse and assault, sexual abuse/assault, gang violence, human trafficking);

- Victims, suspects, the accused, or perpetrators of incidents involving human factors (e.g., occupational accidents, motor vehicle collisions, acts of terrorism, forensic-related deaths) (Harris, 2013); and
- Victims of natural causes of trauma and population evacuation (e.g., seismic or weather-related disasters).

Forensic nurses address the forensic healthcare needs of some of society's most vulnerable, marginalized, and often disadvantaged populations, both living and deceased (e.g., children; individuals with congenital and developmental disabilities; LGBTQI—or “Two Spirit” individuals; residents of institutions; patients with mental illness; and individuals who are substance users, homeless, trafficked, or incarcerated). Forensic nurses also respond to community forensic healthcare needs by concentrating on programmatic and systems change (e.g., in the event of threats to public health and safety, responding to environmental hazards with death and mass-casualty incident investigations, providing forensic nursing programs and education, and participating in policy and program development and legislation).

Forensic nurses possess both fundamental and specialized nursing knowledge and skills, including an understanding of the healthcare, social, and legal systems, and knowledge about forensic and public health sciences. Forensic nurses collaborate with professionals in health, social, governmental, and legal systems to investigate and interpret clinical presentations and pathologies. Forensic nurses accomplish this by evaluating physical and psychological injury, whether intentional or unintentional, describing the scientific relationships of the injury and potential evidentiary items, and interpreting the factors that influence them.

Settings for Forensic Nursing Practice

Forensic nurses provide care throughout the domains of nursing practice, administration, education, research, and consultation (ANA & IAFN, 1997, 2009; IAFN, 2004). Furthermore, forensic nurses practice independently and collaboratively as needed in various settings whenever and wherever health and legal issues intersect. Forensic nurses also interact with other systems in healthcare, community, and legal environments, including the following:

- Hospital and pre-hospital settings and clinics
- Long-term care, skilled nursing, and rehabilitation settings
- Legal or investigative arenas
- Commercial, not-for-profit, and non-profit organizations

- Governmental organizations and programs
- Educational and industrial settings
- Residential and correctional institutions

The systems where forensic nurses practice vary, depending on location, funding sources, community standards, and legal influences, and include but are not limited to the following:

- Tribal health-First Nations, native, indigenous populations
- Health care (e.g., hospitals, surgery centers, community clinics)
- Investigative (e.g., medical examiner, coroner, law enforcement agencies, regulatory agencies)
- Judicial (e.g., criminal, civil, and family courts)
- Correctional (e.g., jails, prisons, and detention centers)
- Public sector (e.g., military, local, state, provincial, and federal agencies)
- Social services (e.g., child/adult protective services, advocacy centers)
- Educational (e.g., K–12 schools, colleges, universities)
- Private sector (e.g., industries, agencies, firms)
- International organizations (e.g., World Health Organization [WHO])

In addition, forensic nurse entrepreneurs establish businesses reflecting their forensic nursing practice and consultation expertise. Forensic nurses also serve on local, regional, national, and international advisory boards and working groups to establish best practices, build consensus, and enact change to better serve and represent populations affected by violence and trauma.

The *core* of forensic nursing specifies the definitions, roles, behaviors, and processes inherent in forensic nursing practice. The *boundaries* of forensic nursing are both internal and external with sufficient resilience to adapt to changing societal needs and demands. The *intersections* reflect where the boundaries of forensic nursing practice overlap with those of other professional groups by virtue of nursing's unique application of a common body of knowledge, environment, and focus. *Specialization* in forensic nursing incorporates a multitude of subspecialty areas specific to the forensic health needs of patients in communities and across settings, populations, and systems.

Regardless of the practice setting, the forensic nurse integrates knowledge of nursing science, criminal justice, public health, the forensic sciences, and the phenomena related to violence and trauma across the life span in providing forensic health care to patients, families, communities, and populations.

Roles and Practices of the Forensic Nurse

Forensic nursing roles and practices vary across settings, populations served (e.g., pediatric, adult, older adult), and the type of violence or trauma experienced (e.g., sexual abuse, intimate partner violence [IPV], violence resulting in death). Thus, forensic nursing practices may be described based on setting, population, type of violence, or a combination thereof, in addition to the specific role of the nurse (e.g., clinician, researcher, educator, medicolegal death investigator). For example, forensic nursing roles may include clinical practice, education, administration, research, and consultation in any one or more of the following focal areas of violence or injury:

- Sexual violence
- Intimate partner violence (IPV)
- Physical abuse, maltreatment, and neglect
- Interpersonal violence
- Elder and vulnerable person abuse
- Violence resulting in death
- Intentional and unintentional injury or death
- Mass disaster
- Violence as a global healthcare issue affecting individuals, families, groups, communities, and systems

Forensic nursing specifically responds to the specialized needs of populations affected by violence and trauma as seen in the following four examples.

Forensic Nursing and Sexual Assault

One well-known domain in forensic nursing practice is responding to the trauma of sexual assault and abuse and intervening through actions in systems to mitigate the impact of sexual violence on individuals, families, groups, communities, and society. In a variety of settings—including emergency departments, clinics, and coroner/medical examiner offices—forensic nurses provide care for patients who have experienced sexual assault.

In 2015, the IAFN published updated guidelines for the education of the nurse practicing in the role of sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE) (IAFN, 2015). The forensic nurse who has completed this specialized education is an expert in history-taking, assessment, identification of injury, treatment of trauma response and injury, documentation (written and photographic) and collection of samples for forensic analysis and its management, emotional and social support required during a post-trauma evaluation and examination, and the documentation of injury and the testimony required to bring such cases through the legal system (IAFN, 2015; Speck & Peters, 1999).

As outlined in the 2015 *Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Education Guidelines*, another distinct aspect of the SANE role is the use of a patient-centered and legally objective approach, integrating patient advocacy and observation; recognition of specific injury related to sexual assault; sample collection for forensic analysis; mitigation of and protection against adverse health outcomes, including vicarious trauma; and identification of community resources to support the patient reporting sexual assault (IAFN, 2015). Accordingly, a forensic nurse practicing in the role of a SANE has education reflecting specialized knowledge about legal systems, forensic evidence, ethics, pathophysiology, injury and potential for injury, reproductive health, epidemiology, technology, psychology associated with sexual assault, along with targeted training about the unique patient population served.

The SANE is responsible for representing the patient encounter to the courts and society. This may include the evaluation and treatment of the forensic patient's health status and bio-psycho-social-spiritual responses; the health and forensic assessment, including history taking, identification of injury, specimen collection, and evidentiary outcomes; as well as the systems response in the courts and the community-at-large to the sexual assault.

Forensic Nursing and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

Forensic nurses are also providing care and working with patients who are victims of IPV. Intimate partner violence encompasses the continuum of violent and abusive experiences in which multiple variations of harm, neglect, abuse, and violence occur between people in intimate relationships (IAFN, 2013b). IPV is a serious health issue, and the Institute of Medicine (IOM) has called for professional healthcare organizations to develop guidelines that will better inform clinicians about violence and abuse (IOM, 2002). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) has since provided guidelines for Women's Preventative Services that include screening and counseling for domestic violence, and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (Pub. L. No. 111-148, 111-148, 124 Stat. 119) includes provisions for routine screening and counseling of domestic or interpersonal violence.

In 2013, IAFN published *Intimate Partner Violence Education Guidelines* to inform the education needs for forensic nurses working with patients who have experienced IPV. As described in *Intimate Partner Violence Education Guidelines* (IAFN, 2013b), the forensic nurse's role in providing the medical-forensic evaluation of the patient requires application of the nursing process (assessment, diagnosis, outcomes identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation) to the care delivered. The forensic nurse who provides care to patients who are victims of IPV employs a holistic and comprehensive approach (IAFNb, 2013). This approach integrates addressing IPV from a trauma-informed model of care (Harris & Falot, 2001), including documentation and photography; recognition of specific injuries related to IPV; mitigation of and protection against adverse health outcomes, including vicarious trauma; and identification of community resources to support the patient (IAFN, 2013). The forensic nurse also provides education to healthcare professionals, collaborative partners, and the public on the dynamics and effects of IPV (IAFN, 2013b).

Forensic Nursing and Medicolegal Death Investigation

Forensic nurses involved in medical death investigation bring nursing skills of observation, data collection, and analysis to the determination of manner and cause of death. One objective of the forensic nurse in this setting is to advocate for the forensic patient (the deceased) through the application of nursing skills and knowledge. Forensic nurses have an obligation to consider health promotion beyond the present investigation, using the outcomes of death. The forensic nurse investigating death promotes health among colleagues, families, and communities of the deceased through the manner and tone of investigation. The forensic nursing role includes the preservation of dignity, caring, and protection of human rights even after death.

The forensic nurse death investigator (FNDI) meets the unique forensic needs of individuals served by the medical examiner/coroner system and other regulatory agencies investigating deaths. These nurses have additional education and clinical preparation in conducting a death investigation and forensic evaluation. The FNDI strives to ensure that a competent forensic evaluation and death scene investigation are conducted in all situations. To achieve this goal, the FNDI applies nursing knowledge and the nursing process in all aspects of death investigation, including assessment of the scene, medical-forensic evaluation of injuries, collection/evaluation of specimens, and care of survivors.

In 2013, IAFN published guidelines for the education of the FNDI (IAFN, 2013b). As described in the *Forensic Nurse Death Investigator Education Guidelines* (IAFN, 2013a), the nursing process (assessment, diagnosis, outcomes identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation) applies to forensic investigation in three separate stages:

1. Investigation of the death;
2. Investigation of the decedent's family and/or survivors; and
3. Effects on the community (Wooten, 2003).

These components are interrelated and dynamic, much like the human DNA strand. The six steps of the nursing process are interwoven in the different elements of the FNDI role. They include actions such as assessing the scene at a death, planning for additional sample collection, implementing referrals when caring for survivors, and evaluating all actions taken during an investigation (IAFN, 2013a). The FNDI also uses the nursing process to assess the needs of the community and implement a plan to support and educate community members as needed (Vessier-Batchen, 2007).

Forensic Nursing and Psychiatric–Mental Health/Correctional Settings

Forensic nursing includes the psychiatric–mental health nurse who applies knowledge of psychiatric principles and nursing theory to the care of persons in acute care, community-based, or correctional settings who have psychological or mental disorders (Shives, 2011). The psychiatric nurse may encounter patients who, by virtue of their emotional or mental disorder, commit or are likely to commit crimes or trauma against themselves or others.

The forensic nurse in a psychiatric–mental health setting possesses particularized knowledge and competencies in the assessment, care, and evaluation of individuals with mental disorders as they relate to criminal behavior. The forensic nurse applies principles of forensic psychiatry and nursing to clinically assess, evaluate, and treat individuals or populations with crime-related mental disorders. In addition, the forensic nurse possesses expertise in providing care for patients with mental disorders in secure settings and refining that care to minimize the patient's risk of victimization, self-injury, or injury to others (Mason & Mercer, 1996).

Diversity of Forensic Nursing Skills

Forensic nurses provide direct services to individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations; they affect the systems where they function. In addition, forensic nurses provide consultative services to nursing, medical, social, and other healthcare and legal professionals and entities. Moreover, forensic nurses provide factual and expert court testimony regarding both intentional and unintentional injury of the living or the deceased.

The forensic nurse develops and evaluates programs of care related to intentional and unintentional injury, crime, victimization, violence, abuse, death, and

exploitation at the individual, community, state, provincial, district, regional, national, and international levels. For example, the RN practicing in a risk management department in a hospital setting develops protocols for the collection of data and responses to indicators of patient or staff risk in the healthcare setting, including injuries, preventable deaths, and other issues related to safety. In contrast, the forensic nurse working in a healthcare setting uses forensic nursing expertise (e.g., knowledge of medical and scientific investigation, sample collection/preservation, and intentional and unintentional injury) in the clinical investigation of injury and trauma and liability of crime-related trauma affecting specific populations, such as older adults, persons with disabilities (Humphreys & Campbell, 2011), or those who die unexpectedly.

Although the forensic nurse and the risk management nurse collaborate across legal, social, and healthcare systems to provide evidence-based data that support solutions to risk, the forensic nurse has particular expertise in cases relevant to a legal action, such as, but not limited to, homicide, sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or child maltreatment. Unlike the risk management nurse, the forensic nurse has specialized knowledge to identify indicators of criminal activity and risk for injury and is educated to distinguish intentional from unintentional trauma or injury. Although a risk management nurse would focus on the epidemiological trail of a virus or bacterium in an open system, the forensic nurse would focus on the evidence of intentional harm by individuals or groups that contribute to the spread of infection or epidemic (e.g., biohazardous contamination, HIV/AIDS).

The nurses in these two roles may work in collaboration or the forensic nurse may be the designated investigator in the healthcare system when intentional harm is suspected. The forensic nurse may also serve in a consultative, administrative, or leadership role for the institution when intentional harm is suspected (e.g., unexpected or clustered death). The forensic nurse is able to recommend measures to mitigate the opportunity for intentional harm in systems that are willing to implement changes to reduce risk.

Individual forensic nursing practice clearly differs according to both the nurse's experience and educational preparation, and the characteristics of the patient population. Other major factors include the cultural, social, and legal systems in the forensic nursing practice setting.

The following list conveys examples of the significant diversity of skills of the forensic nurse:

- Application of public health and forensic principles to the RN's practice, including bio-psycho-social-spiritual aspects of forensic nursing care in the scientific investigation/evaluation, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of trauma and/or death of victims, suspects, the

accused, and perpetrators, including the measurement of outcomes and outputs of the practice;

- Development and implementation of systems relevant to forensic nursing, including the development of systems that care for individuals, families, groups, and communities in relation to injury, both intentional and unintentional; the care of individuals, families, groups, communities, or populations involved with criminal and civil justice systems; and the measurement of the quality and safety of outcomes;
- Development of quality forensic nursing care strategies through evidence-based practice and inquiry to determine injury causation and identify measures to prevent injury and death, both intentional and unintentional;
- Development, analysis, and implementation of health policy relevant to forensic nurses and patient populations in forensic settings;
- Development and implementation of ethically sound, evidence-based, and culturally relevant processes within forensic nursing settings and systems;
- Development, analysis, reporting, and dissemination of relevant forensic data, evidence-based outcomes, and outputs;
- Identification, collection, and organization of data relevant to forensic nurses;
- Provision of testimony, both fact and expert, in judicial settings, competency hearings, civil and family hearings, and other venues;
- Design, evaluation, reporting, implementation, and dissemination of evidence-based and peer-reviewed research relevant to forensic nurses;
- Analysis of outcomes and influence in justice systems and on legislation that pertains to forensic nursing practice and healthcare quality, safety, outcomes, and outputs;
- Consultation with nursing practice communities and the interprofessional communities of medicine, legal systems, advocacy agencies, governments, and their agents;
- Interprofessional collaboration with justice, political, and social systems, and the individuals who work within those systems;
- Interprofessional education regarding forensic nursing practice;
- Leadership, administration, and management within forensic and healthcare settings;

- Medical–forensic histories for the purpose of diagnosis, treatment, and/or referral;
- Evaluation of crime scenes and trauma within settings relevant to the forensic nurse;
- Analysis of forensic health care through continuous quality review processes;
- Provision of ethical, safe, evidence-based, direct patient care related to injury, crime, victimization, violence, abuse, and exploitation;
- Provision of safe, evidence-based forensic mental health care;
- Collection and preservation of samples and items with potential legal/evidentiary value;
- Integration of evidence-based and evidence-informed forensic nursing practice to improve the care of patients globally; and
- Creation and implementation of forensic nursing systems and environments to improve the quality of forensic patient care, safety, and outcomes.

Ethics and Forensic Nursing Practice

Forensic Nursing Applications of the Code of Ethics for Nurses

The current edition of *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements* (“the Code”) (ANA, 2015a) serves as the ethical framework in nursing regardless of practice setting or role, and provides guidance for nurses now and into the future. The nine provisions of the Code explicate the key ethical concepts and actions for all nurses in all settings in the following context:

Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements (the Code) establishes the ethical standard for the profession and provides a guide for nurses to use in ethical analysis and decision-making. . . . The Code arises from the long, distinguished, and enduring moral tradition of modern nursing in the United States. It is foundational to nursing theory, practice, and praxis in its expression of the values, virtues, and obligations that shape, guide, and inform nursing as a profession (ANA, 2015a, p. vii).

The Code also describes the ethical characteristics of the professional nurse:

Individuals who become nurses, as well as the professional organizations that represent them, are expected not only to adhere to the values, moral norms, and ideals of the profession but also to embrace

them as a part of what it means to be a nurse. The ethical tradition of nursing is self-reflective, enduring, and distinctive. A code of ethics for the nursing profession makes explicit the primary obligations, values, and ideals of the profession. In fact, it informs every aspect of the nurse's life (ANA, 2015a, p. vii).

Detailed descriptive interpretive statements for each of the nine provisions of the Code are available at <http://www.nursingworld.org/codeofethics>. The following examples demonstrate how the ethical provisions of the Code (ANA, 2015a, p. v) can be applied to forensic nursing:

Provision 1. The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.

Karen is working with a statewide sexual violence council to develop a new medical–forensic examination documentation form. The current form only allows for documenting “male” or “female.” She requests that the revised form include not only dichotomous sexual identity options but also additional options so patients who so identify may feel both acknowledged and accepted when disclosing a sexual assault.

Provision 2. The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.

While obtaining the initial history from a patient who reports having been sexually assaulted, Anna assesses the patient as being at high risk for HIV exposure. Anna recognizes that HIV prophylaxis is time-sensitive. To ensure her care is patient centered, she alters the order of the forensic-medical–forensic examination to provide the patient with HIV prophylaxis, delaying the collection of samples for forensic analysis until after the patient receives HIV prophylactic medications.

Provision 3. The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.

Peter is providing care to a patient who discloses being strangled during a fight with her boyfriend. Peter identifies strangulation as one of several significant risk factors for lethal intimate partner violence (IPV). Additionally, he understands the dynamics of IPV and the associated health consequences. He discusses with the patient the risks to her health and safety in her present relationship, safety plans with her for when she is discharged, and educates her about services available in the community, including safe housing at a local domestic violence shelter.

Provision 4. The nurse has authority, accountability, and responsibility for nursing practice; makes decisions; and takes action consistent with the obligation to promote health and to provide optimal care.

Megan provides training to all local law enforcement agencies on the frequency of strangulation in intimate partner violence incidents, how to ask victims whether strangulation has occurred, the health consequences, and the need for proper medical evaluation, documentation, and treatment in the event of strangulation.

Provision 5. The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth.

Pamela completed the initial medical-forensic evaluation on a two-year-old boy who was severely beaten by his father one week ago. She had been checking on the child in the pediatric intensive care unit every day. The child was pronounced brain dead, taken off life support, and died today. Pamela has a son the same age. She has been experiencing nightmares and has been irritable with her colleagues. Pamela realizes she is experiencing signs of vicarious trauma. She consults her supervisor and requests to be taken off call until she can see a therapist, life coach, or other employee assistance person.

Provision 6. The nurse, through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains, and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality health care.

Sam leads a monthly journal club for his forensic nursing unit. The forensic nurses review a journal article and discuss how they might use the information to enhance the unit's response to violence and trauma, improve patient care, or inform testimony in court cases.

Provision 7. The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy.

Maria has been studying how nurse death investigators affect the family grief process. She has submitted her findings for publication.

Provision 8. The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities.

Kim, who works for a hospital's SANE program, is an active member of the Latino community. Although Latinos comprise 30% of the town's population,

only 5% of the patients who report sexual assault are Latino. Kim creates focus groups in her community to identify why Latinos are not reporting. She also provides staff education to enhance cultural knowledge and skills and improve care and services to Latino patients.

Provision 9. The profession of nursing, collectively through its professional organizations, must articulate nursing values, maintain the integrity of the profession, and integrate principles of social justice into nursing and health policy.

The International Association of Forensic Nurses worked to support the passage of the Violence Against Women Act 2013, which for the first time, provides in-statute protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

Ethical Principles and Priorities of Forensic Nurses

Despite the diversity of patient populations served, practice settings, and forensic and healthcare services provided, all forensic nurses share skills and a body of knowledge related to the identification, assessment, and analysis of forensic patient data. Forensic nurses apply a unique combination of processes rooted in nursing science, the forensic sciences, and public health to care for patients, families, communities, and populations. Because human worth is the philosophical foundation upon which forensic nursing is based, the practice of forensic nursing is consistent with *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretative Statements* (ANA, 2015a), *Vision of Ethical Practice* (IAFN, 2008), and *ICN Code of Ethics for Nurses* (International Council of Nurses [ICN], 2012).

Accordingly, forensic nurses demonstrate an awareness of, and an adherence to, regional and international laws governing their practice. Forensic nurses uphold ethical principles promoted by the nursing profession that protect the rights of, and advocate for, individuals, families, groups, and communities in the systems that respond to these patients. The forensic nurse seeks evidence-based and evidence-informed resources related to the health, safety, legal, and ethical issues involving the forensic patient. Forensic nurses deliver services in a non-judgmental and non-discriminatory manner that is sensitive to the diverse cultural needs of the patient and the community.

The forensic nurse practices with compassion and respect for the uniqueness of patients, including the moral and legal rights associated with self-determination within forensic settings and systems. Forensic nurses collaborate to address the forensic health needs of the patient. When conflicting situations arise (e.g., from bias, prior victimization, addiction, vicarious trauma, or interprofessional situations), forensic nurses examine the conflicts between

personal and professional values, strive to preserve the patient's best interest, and preserve their professional integrity by establishing and respecting boundaries.

Nurses have a lifelong commitment to learning and maintaining professional competence. This includes self-evaluation, coupled with peer review, to ensure the nurse's forensic nursing practice meets the highest standard. Forensic nurses are required to have knowledge of matters that are relevant to the current forensic nursing scope and standards of practice, including topical issues related to forensic nursing and nursing ethics (i.e., professional, clinical, and organizational ethics), including concerns and controversies.

Forensic nurses participate in the advancement of practice through administration, education, and knowledge development—as well as development of healthcare policy and professional standards—and dissemination of knowledge germane to forensic nursing practice. This may come from shared domains in nursing (such as public health, genetics, and genomics) or other professions (such as medicine, clinical forensic medicine, public health, and the forensic sciences).

Most importantly, the forensic nurse has responsibilities to the public to respond appropriately to improve access to forensic nursing care and bring social change that creates a world without violence (ANA, 1991, 2010a, 2015a; CNA, 2008b; IAFN, 2008; ICN, 2012).

Levels of Forensic Nursing Practice

RNs Specializing in Forensic Nursing

The forensic nurse is a registered nurse (RN) who is licensed and authorized by a state, commonwealth, or territory to practice nursing. Each jurisdiction establishes professional licensure of the healthcare professions to protect the public safety and authorize the practice of that profession. Because of this, the requirements for RN and APRN licensure vary widely. The RN is educationally prepared for competent practice at the entry level upon graduation from an accredited diploma, associate, baccalaureate, or master's degree nursing program and is qualified by national examination (e.g., National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses, known as NCLEX-RN) for RN licensure. The licensing jurisdiction then grants the legal title of registered nurse, shortened to RN, allowing nurses to use the RN credential after their name as long as their license remains in an active status. The ANA has consistently affirmed the baccalaureate degree in nursing as the preferred educational preparation for entry into nursing practice in the United States.

The RN is educated in the art and science of nursing with the goal of helping individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations attain, maintain,

and restore health whenever possible. Experienced nurses may become proficient in one or more practice areas or roles and may elect to concentrate on care of the patient in clinical nursing practice specialties (e.g., forensic nursing). Others influence nursing and support the direct clinical care rendered to patients. Credentialing is one form of acknowledging such specialized knowledge and experience (e.g., SANE-A[®], SANE-P[®]). Credentialing organizations (e.g., Commission for Forensic Nursing Certification) may mandate specific nursing educational requirements as well as timely demonstrations of knowledge and experience in the specialty practice.

RNs seeking to practice forensic nursing may pursue advanced academic studies to prepare for specialization in forensic nursing. Educational requirements vary by subspecialty (e.g., sexual assault, intimate partner violence, death investigation), employer requirements, and academic educational program. New models for forensic nursing educational preparation are evolving in response to the changing healthcare, education, and regulatory practice environments.

A continued commitment to the forensic nursing profession requires forensic nurses to remain involved in continuous learning, thereby strengthening individual practice within varied settings (see Standard 12. Education, page 64). Participation in civic activities, membership in and support of professional associations, collective bargaining, and workplace advocacy also demonstrate forensic nursing commitment. Forensic nurses commit to their profession by using their skills, knowledge, and abilities to act as visionaries; promoting safe practice environments; and supporting resourceful, accessible, and cost-effective delivery of health care to serve the ever-changing needs of the population.

The forensic nurse develops, promotes, and implements evidence-based practice for individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations within systems. In addition, the forensic nurse engages in research and formative and summative program evaluation in systems of care for victims, suspects, the accused, and perpetrators, and the complex health problems associated with violence, criminal acts, and associated trauma for individuals, families, groups, and communities. Health promotion activities provided by the forensic nurse emphasize the identification and prevention of violence and the resulting trauma and injury—as well as the systems changes necessary to respond to this complex patient phenomenon in all types of communities.

Forensic nurses who pursue advanced education at the graduate or doctoral level may select programs and courses of study that do not prepare them for licensure and recognition as an APRN. As may the RN who specializes in forensic nursing, the graduate level-prepared forensic nurse who specializes in forensic nursing may also seek credentialing as a form of acknowledging

specific knowledge and experience (e.g., AFN-BC). Credentialing organizations, such as the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), may mandate specific nursing and forensic nursing educational requirements as well as timely demonstrations of knowledge and experience in the specialty practice.

Advanced Practice Registered Nurses Specializing in Forensic Nursing

Another evolution of nursing practice was the development of educational programs to prepare nurses for advanced practice in direct care roles. These advanced practice registered nurse (APRN) roles include certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs), certified nurse midwives (CNMs), clinical nurse specialists (CNSs), and certified nurse practitioners (CNP). Each has a unique history and context, but all share a focus on direct care to individual patients. Advanced Practice Registered Nurse is a regulatory title and includes the four roles listed above. State law and regulation further define criteria for licensure for the designated APRN roles. The need to ensure patient safety and access to APRNs by aligning education, accreditation, licensure, and certification is shown in the Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification, and Education (APRN JDG, 2008).

APRNs specializing in forensic nursing hold master's or doctoral degrees, have attained expanded and specialized knowledge and skills specific to forensic nursing practice, and are licensed, certified, and approved to practice in their roles as a CNS, nurse practitioner, nurse anesthetist, or CNM. The APRN must obtain a minimum of a graduate degree in nursing with an emphasis in an acknowledged specialty area (e.g., family nurse practitioner) for the prevention of trauma and the diagnosis and treatment of illnesses and responses to trauma, violence, and injury or death.

The APRN specializing in forensic nursing collaborates with criminal/civil justice and healthcare professionals to care for, diagnose, treat, and provide follow-up care for patients affected by injury or death. The APRN diagnoses, treats, and manages acute illness and chronic responses to injury or death in individuals, groups, and communities in the context of the medicolegal system. The APRN prescribes medications and develops healthcare interventions within the scope of practice defined by professional organizations, regulatory agencies (e.g., state board of nursing), and institutions. The health promotion activities of the APRN specializing in forensic nursing emphasize the identification and prevention of risks associated with violence, trauma, and injury or death in systems that respond to the care of patients. An APRN who specializes in forensic nursing and gains advanced forensic education may also apply for and achieve Advanced Forensic Nursing Board Certification (AFN-BC) through the ANCC.

Educational Preparation for Forensic Nursing

Historically, registered nurses have refined and developed their forensic nursing skills through clinical practice and continuing education. Today, five primary routes exist for preparation in forensic nursing (Burgess, Berger, & Boersma, 2004):

1. *Continuing education coursework*—Nurses gain additional skills and knowledge about topics of interest to forensic nurses through continuing education courses.
2. *Certificate programs*—These provide content that is relevant to the forensic nurse, establish entrance requirements and often include clinical internships that result in a certificate detailing the completion of coursework.
3. *Undergraduate nursing education*—Undergraduate academic programs in accredited schools of nursing offer electives, minors, or concentrations in forensic nursing that contribute to a degree in nursing.
4. *Graduate nursing education*—Formal graduate study enhances the knowledge and skills acquired in baccalaureate and prelicensure nursing programs. Following matriculation and completion of the forensic core content and prescribed forensic clinical experiences, the forensic nurse receives a master's or doctoral degree in nursing with a specialization in forensic nursing science.
5. *Post-doctoral education or fellowships*—Formal forensic nursing core content and prescribed forensic clinical experiences enhance the specific content and skills acquired in the terminal nursing degree programs. The programs may award diplomas.

Universities, schools of nursing, community colleges, and continuing education providers offer formal educational opportunities for the specialty of forensic nursing at all academic levels. Entry-level schools of nursing offer introductory classes as electives. Accredited academic institutions offer degrees and certificates at graduate levels. Some forensic nursing education is provided by local, state, provincial, or federal governmental agencies, as well as by entrepreneurs. The IAFN (2004) has published core domains, content, and performance measures in an outline of the curriculum for nurse educators and forensic nurses in practice. Entry-level forensic nursing practice requires completion of a basic nursing program leading to licensure as a RN coupled with specialized forensic nursing education (e.g., elective courses, continuing education, and certificate and certification programs).

The principles of forensic nursing education are rooted in nursing science, public health, and forensic sciences (Speck, 2000). Forensic nursing education focuses on conditions and outcomes that are specific to forensic patients who are involved or potentially involved with the legal system as either victims, the accused, suspects, or perpetrators. Specialized components of education include the following:

- Unique forensic terminology;
- Intentional and unintentional injury;
- Prevention;
- Identification, diagnosis, treatment, and management of patients who include individuals, families, groups, communities, and systems;
- Psychology and psychopathology;
- Victimology;
- Sample collection and preservation;
- Photo documentation; and
- The scientific investigation of death.

The forensic nurse brings all the expertise of the professional nurse to the practice of forensic nursing. Forensic nursing practice is summarized in the concepts of Wounding and Healing, Ethics, and Evidence, coupled with a fundamental understanding of the law and legal processes (WHEEL); these principles are essential to the comprehensive practice of forensic nursing (Speck, 2000).

To remain current in clinical practice and knowledgeable about advancements in technology and legal issues that bear on the practice of forensic nursing, a forensic nurse has a lifelong commitment to learning. Several states or provincial governments mandate continuing education for the forensic nurse to maintain licensure and certification. Education that is current and reflects evidence-based and evidence-informed practice is necessary to ensure safe healthcare delivery and advocacy for forensic patients and employers. Annual conferences, professional meetings held for forensic nursing interest groups, and educational programs and scientific publications serve as educational resources for practitioners at all levels of education and document the practitioner's experience in the forensic nursing specialty. Issues such as differences in judicial processes among local, state, provincial, regional, national, and international venues; dissemination of advances in the forensic sciences and forensic nursing science; and the evolutionary revisions to healthcare standards pose educational challenges to the forensic nurse of the future.

Specialty Certification in Forensic Nursing

Forensic nurses demonstrate competence to the public through education and recognition of their pursuit of excellence in practice. Certification in forensic nursing is a priority for the specialty. Certification demonstrates practice competencies and skills that reflect evidence-based practice. The forensic nurse exhibits expertise in a forensic nursing role through a credentialing process designed to recognize nursing experience in the clinical arena coupled with additional education and validation of knowledge. The forensic nurse acquires and maintains formal credentials available through certifying bodies in the forensic nursing specialty. The forensic nurse contributes to the evidence-based and research-informed knowledge, practice standards, and establishment of criteria for specialty certification.

Certification offers tangible recognition of professional achievement in a defined functional or clinical area of nursing, such as advanced forensic nursing (e.g., AFN-BC), sexual assault nursing (e.g., SANE-A® or SANE-P®), or medicolegal death investigation (e.g., D-ABMDI, F-ABMDI). Through these credentialing processes, forensic nurses earn credentials recognized by the profession and the public at-large. These processes include board certification by examination or by portfolio. The portfolio process for credentialing includes education, clinical hours of practice, peer evaluation of clinical competency, and demonstration of theoretical knowledge.

Professional Competence in Forensic Nursing Practice

“The public has a right to expect [forensic] RNs to demonstrate professional competence throughout their careers” (ANA, 2015b, p. 213). The forensic nurse is individually responsible and accountable for maintaining professional competence. “Regulatory agencies define minimal standards of competence to protect the public. The employer is responsible and accountable to provide a practice environment that is conducive to competent practice. Assurance of competence is the shared responsibility of the profession, individual nurses, professional organizations, credentialing and certification entities, regulatory agencies, employers, and other key stakeholders (ANA, 2014)” (ANA, 2015b, p. 213). The forensic nursing specialty nursing organization also is responsible to shape and guide the processes for ensuring the competence of the forensic nurse.

Evaluating Competence

Competence in forensic nursing practice can be evaluated by the individual nurse (self-assessment), nurse peers, and nurses in the roles of supervisor, coach, mentor, or preceptor. In addition, other aspects of forensic nursing performance may be evaluated by professional colleagues and patients.

Evaluation of competence involves the use of tools to capture objective and subjective data about the individual's knowledge base and actual performance. Those tools must be appropriate for the specific situation and the desired outcome of the competence evaluation. "However, no single evaluation tool or method can guarantee competence" (ANA, 2014, p. 6).

"Ongoing discussions and research on the definitions, meaning, evaluation, and relationship of competence and competency in educational and organizational literature inform nursing professionals about these topics (Hodges, 2010; Levine & Johnson, 2014)" (ANA, 2015b, p. 25). IAFN joins ANA in supporting this important work in the definition, measurement, and validation of nursing and healthcare professional competencies and values major contributions as work associated with the following:

- Evidence-based nursing (Melnyk, Gallagher-Ford, Long, & Fineout-Overholt, 2014);
- Interprofessional competencies (Interprofessional Education Collaborative Expert Panel [IECEP], 2011);
- Leadership competencies (ANA Leadership Institute, 2013); and
- Cultural competence (Guidelines for Implementing Culturally Competent Nursing Care) (ANA, 2015b, p. 45; Douglas et al., 2014) and competencies (ANA, 2015b, pp. 69–70).

Leadership in Forensic Nursing

The ANA recognizes nurse leaders as nurses who "do more than delegate, dictate, and direct" (ANA, 2016). Forensic nurse leaders operate within all nursing practice levels and settings and help advance forensic nursing philosophies and science in patient care, nursing, public health, the forensic sciences, and healthcare policy as it relates to the patient health outcomes.

As researchers, educators, forensic nurse leaders further the understanding of how violence affects the lives of individuals, families, groups, and communities. Forensic nurse leaders conduct research in forensic nursing practice, programs, and processes in global settings for the purposes of recognizing patterns of injury in patient populations, developing new care methodologies, and disseminating the evidence base to guide forensic nursing practice. As administrators, forensic nurse leaders create new, patient-centered models of care for victims of violence while meeting the legal needs of the criminal justice system. Finally, forensic nurse leaders are active at local, state, provincial, national, and international levels of government to advocate for both the needs of their patients and for policies that recognize that violence is a preventable healthcare problem.

International Context of Forensic Nursing

During the past decade, health care and the profession of nursing have undergone dramatic changes worldwide. Various nursing organizations have developed ethical codes to guide all nurses in their nursing practice setting (ANA, 2015a; CNA, 2008b; IAFN, 2008; ICN, 2012). Evolving professional and societal needs and expectations necessitate further clarity regarding the scope of practice for the nurse. Similarly, the demand for the credentialing of nurses in specialty practice mandates consistent and standardized processes for defining the focus and competencies of specialty practice (American Board of Nursing Specialties, 2016; ANA, 2010b, 2015b).

ANA has responded with updated versions of the three documents that provide the foundation of nursing practice in the United States: the *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements* (2015a), *Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice, Third Edition* (2015b), and *Nursing's Social Policy Statement: The Essence of the Profession* (2010a). The Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) affirmed similar changes with its adoption of the *Joint Position Statement: Scopes of Practice* (Canadian Medical Association, CNA, & Canadian Pharmacists Association, 2003) and *Advanced Nursing Practice: A National Framework* (CNA, 2008a).

These and other documents, such as the CNA's *Framework for the Practice of Registered Nurses in Canada* (2015), Australia's National Nursing and Nursing Education Taskforce's *National Specialisation Framework for Nursing and Midwifery* (2006), and the ICN's *Position Statement: Scope of Nursing Practice* (2013), delineate the boundaries of professional nursing practice and provide a framework within which nursing specialties globally can establish role expectations across all settings, including practice, education, administration, and research. The organization and content of these documents—as well as the expansion and evolution of the forensic nursing specialty internationally (Schober & Affara, 2006)—have necessarily altered the format and content of the scope and standards of forensic nursing practice.

Forensic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice, Second Edition, defines and comprehensively describes forensic nursing as a specialty and provides direction for continued progress and recognition internationally. Designated as a nursing specialty in 1995 by the ANA, forensic nursing represents the response of nurses to the swiftly changing healthcare environment and to the global challenges of caring for victims, suspects, the accused, and perpetrators of intentional and unintentional injury. The scope of forensic nursing practice exists within flexible boundaries across diverse settings and populations. Forensic nurses care for individuals, families, groups, and communities whose status or care is, in part, determined by legal or forensic issues. These patients present in a variety of settings, including in healthcare, educational, legal, legislative, and scientific systems.

The practice of all professional nurses now includes many of the concepts previously deemed unique to the forensic nursing specialty, including violence, prevention of injury and death, victimization, abuse, and exploitation. As the body of knowledge and the skill sets identified as unique to forensic nursing expand, so does the practice of forensic nursing. The statement of the specialty's scope and standards of practice is intended to serve as a foundation for legislation and regulation of forensic nursing and for the development of institutional policies and procedures in settings in which forensic nurses practice. Given rapid changes in healthcare trends and technologies, the standards in this document are intended to be dynamic, nimble, and visionary, allowing flexibility in response to emerging issues and practices of forensic nursing both nationally and internationally.

Professional Trends and Issues in Forensic Nursing

Forensic Nursing Education

Patients' forensic healthcare needs and the care environment are increasingly complex. Nurses and forensic nursing specialists must make critical decisions, be adept at using a variety of sophisticated medical and forensic technology and information management systems, coordinate care among a variety of professional and community agencies, lead change from within their organizations, and affect national policy. Consequently, nursing students need to develop a broader range of competencies in the areas of health policy and healthcare financing (including understanding health insurance and reimbursement for forensic healthcare services), community and public health, leadership, quality improvement, and information management and systems thinking, in addition to becoming excellent clinicians (IOM, 2011).

According to the IOM (2011), to meet this demand, nurses should achieve higher levels of education, while educational systems and other stakeholders should support seamless academic progression and endorse innovative ways for nursing students to achieve their degrees through online, virtual, simulated, and competency-based learning. Curricula design should adequately prepare entry-level nurses and center on optimal patient outcomes. Schools of nursing must also build their capacities to prepare more graduate level-prepared students to assume roles in advanced practice, leadership, teaching, and research (IOM, 2011).

Nursing as a profession continues to face dilemmas in entry into practice, recognition of the autonomy of APRNs, maintenance of competence, complexity of multistate licensure, and the appropriate educational credentials for licensure and professional certification. Forensic nurses have a professional responsibility to maintain competence in their area of practice. Employers who provide opportunities for professional development and continuing education

promote a positive practice environment in which nurses can maintain and enhance their skills and competencies.

This is an exciting time of progress and evolution for interprofessional education. According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), interdisciplinary education is “[a]n educational approach in which two or more disciplines collaborate in the learning process with the goal of fostering interprofessional interactions that enhance the practice of each discipline” (1995, p. 1). Students from differing professions learn what each brings to the healthcare team and how each needs to foster communication, collaboration, conflict resolution, and mutual respect before graduation and entry into practice.

Forensic nursing educational programs continue to grow as an increasing number of accredited universities and colleges worldwide develop master’s and doctoral curricula in the specialty of forensic nursing (AACN, 2006, 2008). Master’s and doctoral education programs reflect the expanding scientific evidence base of forensic nursing. Forensic nursing education follows the trends for specialties using distance learning based on advanced technology, electronically supported simulations, and telemedicine. This trend supports access to education for and by forensic nursing graduate students in remote locations worldwide and improves access to quality forensic nursing care to the patient populations residing in remote communities. Future forensic nurses will assume leadership positions and create new venues for forensic nursing practice, such as entrepreneurial endeavors and legislative representation. Future forensic nurses will widely influence nursing practice and policy; elements of forensic nursing content will continue to be woven throughout nursing coursework at all levels of nursing education.

Technological Advances

Technology can drive effectiveness and efficiency, provide convenience, extend care to populations with limited access to transportation, and serve as a major influence on how nurses practice (Huston, 2013; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2013). When designed and implemented to support nurses’ work and workflow, technology can provide data transparency and offer a better work environment for nurses. As Dr. Pamela Cipriano has noted, work environments include conventional locations—hospitals, clinics, and patient homes—as well as virtual spaces, such as online discussion groups, email, interactive video, and virtual interaction (as cited in IOM, 2010a). Cipriano states that, ideally, technology eliminates redundancy and duplication of documentation; reduces errors; eliminates interruptions for missing supplies, equipment, and medications; and eases access to data, thereby allowing the nurse more time with the patient (as cited in IOM, 2010a). Perhaps, one of the most daunting challenges for nurses will be to retain the human element

in practice. Other challenges include balancing cost with benefits, training the nursing workforce with a plan for sustainment, and ensuring the ethical use of technology (Huston, 2013).

Technology affects forensic nursing across all domains of practice, including patient care, coordination of care, and clinical and professional services. Although technology can enhance forensic nursing practice, it is also adversely used in the abuse, control, and harassment of patients/victims (e.g., sexual exploitation, intimate partner violence, child pornography). Forensic nurses must be cognizant that the same technologies used to promote forensic nursing care may have been used to inflict harm on the patient (e.g., camera, video equipment, digital recording devices).

Records and records storage: Forensic nurses must also be aware of technology and storage issues related to medical–forensic record retention policies and practices, including record storage requirements and destruction implications outside the normal, expected parameters for the medical record. The storage requirements for forensic nursing documentation should envisage secure criminal justice access to the medical–forensic record, the statutes of limitations for criminal and civil proceedings, the implications for cold cases, and future technological advances in the sciences.

Healthcare services delivery and coordination: Technology—such as telehealth, telemedicine, wireless transmission of secured data, and digital transmission of patient data across tablets or mobile devices—has forever changed the delivery and coordination of healthcare services. Advances in technology that influence nursing practice and patient care also affect forensic nursing practice. Forensic nurses are expected to evaluate and integrate new technologies for delivering forensic healthcare services. At times, this evaluation may comprise a critical appraisal of whether a new technology enhances or impedes patient/victim-centered care.

Limitations and implications of technology: Forensic nurses must remain diligent in reviewing and critically assessing the literature related to new technologies (or new applications of existing technologies) to understand the limitations of use or the interpretation of results. In addition, forensic nurses are expected to be aware of any legal regulations regarding the use of technology, including, but not limited to, licensure across state lines and the secure use and maintenance of electronic medical records (e.g., Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, Pub. L. No. 104-191, 110 Stat. 1936; Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act of 2009, Pub. L. No. 111-5, 123 Stat. 226).

Advances in forensic science technology and techniques (e.g., Y-STR, next-generation sequencing) directly affect the forensic nurse regarding sample

collection, preservation, and timeframes for providing medical–forensic examinations. In addition, forensic nurses must be aware of how perpetrators may use technology to inflict harm. For example, technology can be used to identify, locate, track, access, control, or intimidate patients/victims. Lastly, technology offers additional options for victims of violence, such as mobile applications for documenting injury, reporting crimes, and locating services. Forensic nurses are expected to incorporate the needs, expectations, and implications of an ever-evolving, technologically savvy society.

Availability and Access to Forensic Nursing Services

Forensic nurses serve widely diverse populations of patients affected by violence, including populations “never-served” by the healthcare community until the health and legal systems intersect. Due to the recognized need for forensic health care for populations that have experienced specific forms of violence involving unique dynamics, forensic nurses provide care to specific populations such as the following:

- Older adults
- Persons who are victims of human trafficking
- Persons seeking political asylum who have been tortured and/or experienced violence in their country of origin, during transit, or in internment facilities
- Persons affected by gang-related violence
- Persons who are stalked
- Persons who are affected by systematic violence
- Women and girls who have experienced female genital mutilation
- Persons who have been victimized through the use of technology (e.g., child pornography, cyberbullying, stalking)
- Persons who have been subjected to human rights violations (e.g., torture, government-sanctioned violence, mass killing and associated exhumations)
- Persons accused or suspected, but not yet convicted, of crimes
- Persons convicted of crimes

Forensic nurses serve as change agents and engage in specialized education and cross-sector training to identify and meet the unique needs of these specific forensic patients. Forensic nurses are critical to effecting change and

increasing availability and access to services for all persons affected by violence. Collaborating with individuals, communities, organizations, and governments that support the development of the forensic nursing role brings international recognition to the forensic nursing specialty. The specialty knowledge—with acceptance and understanding of the scope and standards of practice—will continue to improve the response to patients across the globe who require forensic health care in multidisciplinary systems.

Forensic Nursing and Public Health: A Global Focus

Forensic nursing and public health nursing are inextricably linked, particularly in the primary, secondary, and tertiary care regarding intentional and unintentional injury involving individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations. Future master's and doctoral curricula internationally will use the graduate public health nursing competencies (QUAD Council, 2011) as a basis for forensic care of populations served by forensic nurses. Incorporation of public health concepts is essential in master's and doctoral education competencies (AACN, 2006). In addition, an emphasis on prevention, health promotion, formative and summative program evaluation, and sustainability helps to meet the pressing needs in patient populations at risk for injury and death from violence and trauma. The forensic nurse influences policy, practice, legislation, and trends when addressing issues of population-focused care related to intentional and unintentional injury, and death prevention and intervention. As a well-educated and respected professional, the forensic nurse links principles of public health and forensic sciences to forensic nursing practice, resulting in a broadening foundation for evaluating and managing injury and preventable death in populations worldwide. (For more on the international aspects of forensic nursing, see pages 32–33.)

Forensic Nursing Research and Its Global Influence

Forming the foundation for evidence-based practice, research supports the forensic nurse's role. Forensic nursing research is expected to accelerate; forensic nurse clinicians, educators, and researchers require and produce scientific evidence to support their growing practices. Informatics provides the conduit for the rapid dissemination of forensic nursing research (O'Carroll & Public Health Informatics Competencies Working Group, 2002). Forensic nursing research influences government policy, legislation, and action as the scientific base increases and the forensic nursing community expands its graduate education, experience, and credentialing processes. The international interprofessional community should increasingly acknowledge forensic nurses as valuable team members in addressing issues around persons and populations who have experienced violence, trauma, and abuse.

Summary of the Scope of Forensic Nursing Practice

Forensic nurses remain one of the most diverse groups of clinicians in the nursing profession with respect to patient populations served, practice settings, and forensic and healthcare services provided. The forensic nurse seeks educational opportunities to enhance her or his ability to better serve the ever-growing forensic healthcare needs of patients and populations. In addition, the forensic nurse must maintain and foster strong interprofessional relationships to meet the comprehensive forensic healthcare needs of patients and to ensure that patient-centered and trauma-informed care is provided throughout the continuum of care. Acts of violence, trauma, disaster, and crime-related deaths do not occur in a vacuum. Forensic nurses are acutely aware of how these acts directly and indirectly affect patients, families, communities, systems, and all of society. Forensic nurses continue to respond to the public health issue of violence across the life span through evidence-based and research-informed primary, secondary, and tertiary forensic nursing interventions.

Standards of Forensic Nursing Practice

Significance of Standards

The Standards of Forensic Nursing Practice are authoritative statements of the duties that all forensic nurses—regardless of role, population, or subspecialty focus—are expected to perform competently. The standards published herein may be used as evidence of the standard of care, with the understanding that application of the standards is context dependent. The standards are subject to change with the dynamics of the nursing profession and the specialty of forensic nursing, as new patterns of professional practice are developed and accepted by the profession and the public. In addition, specific conditions and clinical circumstances may affect the application of the standards at a given time (e.g., during a natural disaster or epidemic). The standards are subject to formal, periodic review and revision.

The competencies that accompany each standard may demonstrate compliance with the corresponding standard. The list of competencies is not exhaustive. Whether a particular standard or competency applies depends upon the circumstances. The competencies presented for the forensic nurse level are applicable to *all* forensic nurses. Standards may include additional competencies delineated for the APRNs specializing in forensic nursing.

Standards of Practice for Forensic Nurses

Standard 1. Assessment

The forensic nurse collects pertinent data and information relative to the patient's health, death, or the situation.

Competencies

The forensic nurse:

- ▶ Collects pertinent data, including but not limited to demographics; social determinants of health; health disparities; and physical, functional, psychosocial, emotional, cognitive, sexual, cultural, age-related, environmental, spiritual/transpersonal, clinical-forensic, and economic assessments in a systematic, ongoing process with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.
- ▶ Collects data of physical and behavioral findings in a systematic and ongoing process to provide nursing care to patients while identifying the implications of those findings.
- ▶ Recognizes the importance of the assessment parameters identified by the WHO; the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, as with its Healthy People 2020 initiative (DHHS, 2015); or other organizations that influence nursing practice.
- ▶ Integrates knowledge from global and environmental factors into the assessment process.
- ▶ Elicits the patient's values, preferences, expressed and unexpressed needs, and knowledge of the medical-forensic healthcare situation.
- ▶ Recognizes the impact of her or his personal attitudes, values, and beliefs on the assessment process.

- ▶ Identifies barriers to effective communication based on psychosocial, literacy, financial, and cultural considerations.
- ▶ Assesses the impact of family dynamics on the patient's health and wellness.
- ▶ Engages the patient and other interprofessional team members in holistic, culturally sensitive, and developmentally appropriate data collection.
- ▶ Prioritizes data collection based on the patient's immediate condition, anticipated needs of the patient or situation, and preservation of samples with potential evidentiary value.
- ▶ Uses evidence-based assessment techniques, instruments, tools, available data, information, and knowledge relevant to the situation to identify patterns and variances.
- ▶ Uses analytical models and problem-solving tools in forensic nursing practice.
- ▶ Applies ethical, legal, and privacy guidelines and policies to the collection, maintenance, use, and dissemination of data and information.
- ▶ Recognizes the patient as the authority of his or her health by honoring care preferences.
- ▶ Documents relevant data accurately and in a manner that is accessible to the interprofessional team members as appropriate.
- ▶ Assesses the effect of interactions among individuals, family, group, community, and social systems on health, illness, safety, violence, trauma, and preventable death across the life span.
- ▶ Synthesizes the results and information leading to clinical understanding.

Additional competencies for the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing

In addition to the competencies of the forensic nurse, the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing:

- ▶ Initiates and interprets diagnostic tests and procedures that are relevant to the patient's current status and forensic nursing practice.
- ▶ Uses advanced assessment, knowledge, and skills to maintain, enhance, or improve health and social conditions.

Standard 2. Diagnosis

The forensic nurse analyzes assessment data to determine actual or potential diagnoses, problems, and issues.

Competencies

The forensic nurse:

- ▶ Identifies actual or potential risks to the patient's health and safety or barriers to health, which may include but are not limited to interpersonal, systematic, cultural, or environmental circumstances.
- ▶ Identifies clinical findings while recognizing normal and abnormal developmental and physical variations of the patient.
- ▶ Uses assessment data, standardized classification systems, technology, and clinical decision support tools to articulate actual or potential diagnoses, problems, and issues.
- ▶ Verifies the diagnoses, problems, and issues with the individual, family, group, community, population, and interprofessional colleagues.
- ▶ Prioritizes diagnoses, problems, and issues based on mutually established goals to meet the needs of the patient across the health–illness continuum.
- ▶ Collaboratively assists within the healthcare team in the formulation of a differential diagnosis based on the assessment, history, physical examination, and diagnostic test results.
- ▶ Documents diagnoses, problems, and issues in a manner that facilitates the determination of the expected outcomes and plan.

Additional competencies for the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing

In addition to the competencies of the forensic nurse, the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing:

- ▶ Utilizes complex data and information obtained during the medical–forensic history, examination, diagnostic procedures, and review of medical–forensic documents in identifying diagnoses.

- ▶ Formulates a differential diagnosis based on the assessment, history, physical examination, and diagnostic test results.
- ▶ Systematically compares and contrasts clinical findings with normal and abnormal variations and developmental status in formulating a differential diagnosis.
- ▶ Assists staff in developing and maintaining competence in the diagnostic process.
- ▶ Uses information and communication technologies to analyze diagnostic practice patterns of nurses and other members of the inter-professional healthcare and multidisciplinary team.
- ▶ Employs aggregate-level data to articulate diagnoses, problems, and issues incurred by patients accessing medical–forensic healthcare services and organizational systems.

Standard 3. Outcomes Identification

The forensic nurse identifies expected outcomes for a plan individualized to the patient or the situation.

Competencies

The forensic nurse and the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing:

- ▶ Engage the patient, interprofessional team, and others in partnership to identify expected outcomes.
- ▶ Formulate culturally sensitive, developmentally appropriate expected outcomes derived from assessments, patient preferences, and diagnoses.
- ▶ Use clinical expertise and current evidence-based practice to identify health risks, benefits, costs, and/or the expected trajectory of the condition.
- ▶ Collaborate with the patient and family to define expected outcomes integrating the patient's developmental level, culture, values, and ethical considerations, including those associated with risks, benefits and costs, medical-forensic factors, clinical expertise, and current scientific evidence.
- ▶ Generate a timeframe for the attainment of expected outcomes.
- ▶ Develop expected outcomes that facilitate coordination of care and access to resources necessary for healing and patient safety.
- ▶ Modify expected outcomes based on the evaluation of the status of the patient and situation.
- ▶ Identify expected outcomes that incorporate cost and clinical effectiveness, best practices, and reflect trauma-informed patient care.
- ▶ Define expected outcomes that align with the outcomes identified by members of the interprofessional team.
- ▶ Differentiate outcomes that require care process interventions from those that require system-level actions.
- ▶ Advocate for outcomes that reflect the patient's developmental level, culture, values, and ethical concerns.

- ▶ Identify expected outcomes to effect systems changes to impact patient care.
- ▶ Evaluate the actual outcomes in relation to expected outcomes, safety, and quality standards.
- ▶ Document expected outcomes as measurable goals.

Standard 4. Planning

The forensic nurse develops a plan that prescribes strategies to attain expected, measurable outcomes.

Competencies

The forensic nurse:

- ▶ Develops an individualized, developmentally appropriate, holistic, evidence-based plan in partnership with the patient, family, interprofessional team, and others as appropriate.
- ▶ Establishes the plan priorities with the patient, family, interprofessional team, and others as appropriate.
- ▶ Advocates for responsible and appropriate use of interventions to minimize unwarranted or unwanted treatment and/or patient suffering.
- ▶ Prioritizes elements of the plan based on the assessment of the patient's level of risk and safety needs.
- ▶ Includes evidence-based strategies in the plan to address each of the identified diagnoses, problems, or issues. These strategies may include but are not limited to:
 - ▶ Promotion and restoration of health;
 - ▶ Prevention of illness, injury, disease, and death;
 - ▶ Facilitation of healing;
 - ▶ Alleviation of suffering; and
 - ▶ Applicable supportive care.
- ▶ Incorporates an implementation pathway that describes steps and milestones.
- ▶ Considers the potential short- and long-term effects of violence and trauma across the life span for the patient, family, and community.
- ▶ Identifies cost and economic implications of the plan on the patient, family, caregivers, and other affected parties.
- ▶ Develops a plan that reflects compliance with current statutes, rules and regulations, and standards.

- ▶ Modifies the plan according to the ongoing assessment of the patient's response and other outcome indicators.
- ▶ Documents the plan using standardized language or recognized terminology.
- ▶ Actively participates in the development and continuous improvement of systems that support the planning process.
- ▶ Contributes to the design and development of interprofessional processes to address the identified diagnoses, problems, or issues.
- ▶ Designs innovative forensic nursing practices based on clinical practice experience, scientific advances, and research.
- ▶ Contributes to the development, evaluation, and continuous improvement of organizational systems that support the planning process.

Additional competencies for the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing

In addition to the competencies of the forensic nurse, the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing:

- ▶ Designs strategies and tactics to meet the multifaceted and complex needs of patients and medical–forensic situations.
- ▶ Leads the design and development of interprofessional processes to address the identified diagnoses, problems, or issues.

Standard 5. Implementation

The forensic nurse implements the identified plan.

Competencies

The forensic nurse:

- ▶ Partners with the patient and/or family to implement the plan in a safe, developmentally appropriate, effective, efficient, timely, patient-centered, and equitable manner (IOM, 2010b).
- ▶ Integrates interprofessional team members in implementation of the plan through collaboration and communication across the continuum of care.
- ▶ Demonstrates caring behaviors to develop therapeutic relationships.
- ▶ Provides culturally congruent, developmentally appropriate, holistic care that focuses on the patient and addresses and advocates for the needs of diverse populations across the life span.
- ▶ Uses evidence-based interventions and strategies to achieve the mutually identified goals and outcomes specific to the problem or needs.
- ▶ Integrates critical thinking and technology solutions in implementing the nursing process to collect, measure, record, retrieve, trend, and analyze data and information so as to enhance nursing practice and patient outcomes.
- ▶ Delegates according to the health, safety, and welfare of the patient, considering the circumstance, person, task, direction or communication, supervision, and evaluation, as well as the state nurse practice act regulations, the institution, and regulatory entities while maintaining accountability for care.
- ▶ Documents implementation and any modifications, including changes or omissions, of the identified plan.
- ▶ Uses systems, organizations, and community resources to lead effective change and implement the plan.
- ▶ Applies quality principles while articulating methods, tools, performance measures, and standards as they relate to implementation of the plan.

- ▶ Leads interprofessional teams to communicate, collaborate, and consult effectively.
- ▶ Demonstrates leadership skills that emphasize ethical and critical decision-making, effective working relationships, and a systems perspective.
- ▶ Serves as a consultant to provide additional insight and potential solutions.
- ▶ Provides clinical consultation for patients and professionals related to complex clinical cases to improve forensic nursing care and patient outcomes.

Additional competencies for the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing

In addition to the competencies of the forensic nurse, the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing:

- ▶ Uses prescriptive authority, procedures, referrals, treatments, and therapies in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations.
- ▶ Prescribes traditional and integrative evidence-based treatments, therapies, and procedures that are compatible with the patient's cultural preferences and norms.
- ▶ Prescribes evidence-based pharmacologic agents and treatments according to clinical indicators and results of diagnostic and laboratory tests.
- ▶ Translates evidence and research into practice.
- ▶ Uses theory-driven approaches to effect organizational or systems change.

Standard 5A. Coordination of Care

The forensic nurse coordinates care delivery.

Competencies

The forensic nurse:

- ▶ Organizes the components of the plan.
- ▶ Collaborates with the patient and/or family to help manage health care based on mutually agreed-upon outcomes.
- ▶ Manages the patient's care to reach mutually agreed-upon outcomes.
- ▶ Engages patients in self-care to achieve preferred goals for quality of life.
- ▶ Assists the patient and/or family to identify options for care.
- ▶ Communicates with the patient, the interprofessional team, and community-based resources to effect safe transitions and continuity of care.
- ▶ Advocates for delivery of dignified and holistic care by the interprofessional team.
- ▶ Provides leadership in the coordination of interprofessional health care for integrated delivery of patient services to achieve safe, effective, efficient, timely, developmentally appropriate, patient-centered, and equitable care (IOM, 2010b).
- ▶ Identifies system and community resources that enhance delivery of care and referrals for patients across continuums.
- ▶ Provides leadership in coordination of medical–forensic care delivery with the interprofessional team.
- ▶ Documents the coordination of care.

Additional competencies for the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing

In addition to the competencies of the forensic nurse, the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing:

- ▶ Synthesizes data and information to prescribe and provide necessary system and community support measures, including modifications of environments.
- ▶ Provides leadership in coordination of medical–forensic care as part of the interprofessional healthcare team to deliver integrated care for patients across the life span.

Standard 5B. Health Teaching and Health Promotion

The forensic nurse employs strategies to promote health and a safe environment.

Competencies

The forensic nurse:

- ▶ Provides opportunities for the patient to identify needed healthcare promotion, disease prevention, and self-management topics.
- ▶ Uses health promotion and health teaching methods in collaboration with the patient's values, beliefs, health practices, developmental level, learning needs, readiness and ability to learn, language preference, spirituality, culture, and socioeconomic status.
- ▶ Uses feedback and evaluations from the patient to determine the effectiveness of the employed strategies.
- ▶ Uses technologies to communicate health promotion, disease prevention, and preventative death information to the patient.
- ▶ Provides patients with information about intended effects and potential adverse effects of the plan of care.
- ▶ Engages patient alliance and advocacy groups in health teaching and health promotion activities for patients.
- ▶ Provides anticipatory guidance to patients to promote health and prevent or reduce the risk of negative health outcomes, violence, trauma, and related deaths across the life span.

Additional competencies for the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing

In addition to the competencies of the forensic nurse, the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing:

- ▶ Synthesizes empirical evidence on risk behaviors, gender roles, learning theories, behavioral change theories, motivational theories, translational theories for evidence-based practice, epidemiology, and

other related theories and frameworks when designing health education information and programs.

- ▶ Evaluates health information resources for applicability, cultural and developmental appropriateness, accuracy, readability, and comprehensibility to develop quality health information resources for the patient population served.

Standard 6. Evaluation

The forensic nurse evaluates progress toward attainment of goals and outcomes.

Competencies

The forensic nurse:

- ▶ Conducts a holistic, systematic, ongoing, and criterion-based evaluation of the goals and outcomes in relation to the structure, processes, and timeline prescribed in the plan.
- ▶ Collaborates in the evaluation process with the patient and others involved in the care or situation.
- ▶ Determines, in partnership with the patient and other stakeholders, the patient-centeredness, effectiveness, efficiency, safety, timeliness, and equitability (IOM, 2001) of the strategies in relation to the responses to the plan and attainment of outcomes. Other defined criteria (e.g., Quality and Safety Education for Nurses) may be used as well.
- ▶ Uses ongoing assessment data to revise the diagnoses, outcomes, plan, and implementation strategies.
- ▶ Shares evaluation data and conclusions with the patient and other stakeholders in accordance with federal and state regulations.
- ▶ Documents the results of the evaluation.

Additional competencies for the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing

In addition to the competencies of the forensic nurse, the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing:

- ▶ Synthesizes evaluation data from the patient, community, population and/or institution to determine the effectiveness of the plan.
- ▶ Engages in a systematic evaluation process to revise the plan to enhance its effectiveness.
- ▶ Uses results of the evaluation to create, develop, or recommend process, policy, procedure, or protocol revisions when warranted.

Standards of Professional Performance for Forensic Nurses

Standard 7. Ethics

The forensic nurse practices ethically.

Competencies

The forensic nurse and the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing:

- ▶ Integrate the *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements* (ANA, 2015a), IAFN's *Vision of Ethical Practice* (2008), the *ICN Code of Ethics for Nurses* (2012), and other comparable documents to guide forensic nursing practice and articulate the moral foundation of forensic nursing.
- ▶ Practice with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of all people.
- ▶ Advocate for patients' rights to informed decision-making and self-determination.
- ▶ Seek guidance in situations where the rights of the individual conflict with public health guidelines.
- ▶ Endorse the understanding that the primary commitment is to the patient regardless of setting or situation.
- ▶ Maintain therapeutic relationships and professional boundaries.
- ▶ Advocate for the rights, health, and safety of the patient and others.
- ▶ Safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of patients, others, and their data and information within ethical, legal, and regulatory parameters.

- ▶ Demonstrate professional accountability and responsibility for nursing practice.
- ▶ Maintain competence through continued personal and professional development.
- ▶ Demonstrate commitment to self-reflection and self-care.
- ▶ Contribute to the establishment and maintenance of an ethical environment that is conducive to safe, quality health care.
- ▶ Advance the profession through scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of policy.
- ▶ Collaborate with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, enhance cultural sensitivity and congruence, reduce health disparities, and promote equitable services for patients accessing forensic nursing services.
- ▶ Articulate nursing values to maintain personal integrity and the integrity of the profession.
- ▶ Integrate principles of social justice into forensic nursing practice and policy.
- ▶ Participate in interprofessional teams to assess and respond to ethical risk, benefits, and outcomes for patients.

Standard 8. Culturally Congruent Practice

The forensic nurse practices in a manner that is congruent with cultural diversity and inclusion principles.

Competencies

The forensic nurse:

- ▶ Demonstrates respect, equity, and empathy in actions and interactions with all patients.
- ▶ Participates in lifelong learning to understand cultural preferences, worldview, choices, and decision-making processes of diverse patient populations.
- ▶ Recognizes her or his own values, beliefs, and cultural heritage.
- ▶ Applies knowledge of variations in health beliefs, practices, and communication patterns in all forensic nursing practice activities.
- ▶ Identifies the stage of the patient's acculturation and accompanying patterns of needs and engagement.
- ▶ Considers the effects and impact of discrimination and oppression on practice and health within and among vulnerable cultural groups in the community specifically served and in the larger context of potential patients.
- ▶ Uses skills and tools that are created with input and appropriately vetted for the culture, literacy, and language of the population served.
- ▶ Communicates with appropriate language and behaviors, including the use of medical interpreters and translators in accordance with patient preferences.
- ▶ Identifies the cultural-specific meaning of interactions, terms, and content.
- ▶ Respects patient decisions based on age, developmental stage, tradition, belief and family influence, and stage of acculturation.
- ▶ Advocates for policies that promote health and prevent harm among culturally diverse, under-served, or under-represented patient populations.

- ▶ Promotes equal access to services, care, tests, interventions, health promotion programs, enrollment in research, education, and other opportunities.
- ▶ Educates nurse colleagues and other professionals about cultural similarities and differences of persons, families, groups, communities, and populations.
- ▶ Advances organizational policies, programs, services, and practices that reflect respect, equity, and values for diversity and inclusion.
- ▶ Engages patients, key stakeholders, and others in designing and establishing internal and external cross-cultural partnerships.
- ▶ Develops recruitment and retention strategies to achieve a multicultural workforce.
- ▶ Leads interprofessional teams to identify the cultural and language needs of the patient and populations served.
- ▶ Conducts research to improve health care, outreach, and healthcare outcomes for culturally diverse patient populations.
- ▶ Evaluates tools, instruments, and services provided to culturally diverse populations.

Additional competencies for the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing

In addition to the competencies of the forensic nurse, the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing:

- ▶ Promotes shared decision-making solutions in planning, prescribing, and evaluating processes when the patient's cultural preferences and norms may create incompatibility with evidence-based practice.

Standard 9. Communication

The forensic nurse communicates effectively in all areas of practice.

Competencies

The forensic nurse and the advanced practice registered nurse who specializes in forensic nursing:

- ▶ Assess their own communication skills and effectiveness.
- ▶ Demonstrate cultural empathy when communicating.
- ▶ Assess communication ability, health literacy, resources, and preferences of healthcare patients to inform the interprofessional team and others.
- ▶ Use appropriate language interpretation/translation resources to ensure effective communication.
- ▶ Incorporate appropriate alternative strategies to communicate effectively with patients who have visual, speech, language, or communication difficulties.
- ▶ Use developmentally appropriate communication styles and methods that demonstrate caring, respect, deep listening, authenticity, and trust.
- ▶ Convey accurate information.
- ▶ Maintain communication with the patient, family, interprofessional team, and others to facilitate safe transitions and continuity in care delivery.
- ▶ Contribute the forensic nursing perspective in interactions with others and in discussions with the interprofessional team.
- ▶ Expose care processes and decisions when they do not appear to be in the best interest of the patient.
- ▶ Disclose to the appropriate level their concerns related to potential or actual hazards and errors in care or the practice environment.
- ▶ Demonstrate continuous improvement of communication skills.
- ▶ Assume a leadership role in shaping or establishing environments that promote healthy communication.

Standard 10. Collaboration

The forensic nurse collaborates with the patient and other key stakeholders in the conduct of nursing practice.

Competencies

The forensic nurse and the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing:

- ▶ Identify the areas of expertise and contribution of other professionals and key stakeholders.
- ▶ Clearly articulate the forensic nurse's role and responsibilities within the team and to the patient.
- ▶ Use the unique and complementary abilities of all members of the team to optimize attainment of desired outcomes.
- ▶ Partner with the patient, family, and key stakeholders to advocate for and effect change, leading to positive outcomes and quality care.
- ▶ Use appropriate tools and techniques, including information systems and technologies, to facilitate discussion and team functions in a manner that protects dignity, respect, privacy, and confidentiality.
- ▶ Promote engagement through consensus building and conflict management.
- ▶ Use effective group dynamics and strategies to enhance team performance.
- ▶ Exhibit dignity and respect when interacting with others and giving and receiving feedback.
- ▶ Partner with all stakeholders to create, implement, and evaluate a comprehensive plan.
- ▶ Participate in interprofessional activities including but not limited to education, consultation, management, technological development, or research to enhance outcomes.
- ▶ Provide leadership for establishing, improving, and sustaining collaborative relationships to achieve safe, quality care for patients.
- ▶ Advance interprofessional plan-of-care documentation and communication, rationales for plan-of-care changes, and collaborative discussions to improve patient outcomes.

Standard 11. Leadership

The forensic nurse leads within the professional practice setting, the forensic nursing specialty, and nursing profession.

Competencies

The forensic nurse and the advanced practice forensic nurse specializing in forensic nursing specializing in forensic nursing:

- ▶ Contribute to the establishment of an environment that supports and maintains respect, trust, and dignity.
- ▶ Encourage innovation in practice and role performance to attain personal and professional plans, goals, and vision.
- ▶ Communicate ethically to manage change and address conflict.
- ▶ Mentor colleagues for the advancement of forensic nursing practice and the profession to enhance safe, quality health care.
- ▶ Retain accountability for delegated nursing care.
- ▶ Contribute to the evolution of the profession through participation in professional organizations.
- ▶ Influence policy to promote health.
- ▶ Influence decision-making bodies to improve the professional practice environment and patient outcomes.
- ▶ Enhance the effectiveness of the interprofessional team.
- ▶ Promote advanced practice nursing and role development by interpreting its role for patients and policy-makers.
- ▶ Model expert practice to interprofessional team members and patients.
- ▶ Mentor colleagues in the acquisition of clinical knowledge, skills, abilities, and judgment.

Standard 12. Education

The forensic nurse seeks knowledge and competence that reflects current forensic nursing practice and promotes futuristic thinking.

Competencies

The forensic nurse and the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing:

- ▶ Identify learning needs based on nursing knowledge and the various roles the nurse may assume.
- ▶ Participate in ongoing educational activities related to forensic nursing, interprofessional knowledge bases, and professional topics.
- ▶ Mentor forensic nurses who are new to their roles for the purpose of ensuring successful enculturation, orientation, and emotional support.
- ▶ Demonstrate a commitment to lifelong learning through self-reflection and inquiry for learning and personal growth.
- ▶ Seek experiences that reflect current practice to maintain and advance knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes, and judgment in clinical practice or role performance.
- ▶ Acquire knowledge and skills relative to the role, population, specialty, setting, and global or local health situation.
- ▶ Participate in formal consultations or informal discussions to address issues in nursing practice as an application of education and knowledge.
- ▶ Identify modifications or accommodations needed in the delivery of education based on patient and family members' needs.
- ▶ Share educational findings, experiences, and ideas with peers.
- ▶ Support acculturation of forensic nurses who are new to their roles by role modeling, encouraging, and sharing pertinent information relative to optimal care delivery.
- ▶ Facilitate a work environment that supports the ongoing education of healthcare professionals.

- ▶ Maintains a professional portfolio that provides evidence of individual competence and lifelong learning.
- ▶ Develop and deliver academic curricula to nurses seeking undergraduate and advanced degrees in forensic nursing.

Standard 13. Evidence-Based Practice and Research

The forensic nurse integrates evidence and research findings into practice.

Competencies

The forensic nurse:

- ▶ Articulates the values of research and its application relative to the individual healthcare setting and practice.
- ▶ Identifies questions in the healthcare setting and practice that can be answered by forensic nursing research.
- ▶ Uses current evidence-based knowledge, including research findings, to guide practice.
- ▶ Incorporates evidence when initiating changes in nursing practice.
- ▶ Participates in the formulation of evidence-based practice through research.
- ▶ Promotes ethical principles of research in practice and the healthcare setting.
- ▶ Appraises nursing research for optimal application in practice and the healthcare setting.
- ▶ Shares peer-reviewed research findings with colleagues to integrate and advance knowledge in forensic nursing practice.
- ▶ Integrates research-based practice in all settings.
- ▶ Uses current healthcare research findings and other evidence to expand knowledge, skills, abilities, and judgment; enhance role performance; and increase knowledge of professional issues.
- ▶ Uses critical thinking skills to connect theory and research to practice.
- ▶ Integrates nursing research to improve quality in forensic nursing practice.

Additional competencies for the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing

In addition to the competencies of the forensic nurse, the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing:

- ▶ Contributes to forensic nursing knowledge by conducting or synthesizing research and other evidence that discovers, examines, and evaluates current practice, knowledge, theories, criteria, and creative approaches to improve healthcare outcomes, and shares findings with interdisciplinary colleagues and other forensic nurses.
- ▶ Encourages other forensic nurses to develop research skills and provides mentorship to others in this area.
- ▶ Performs rigorous critique of evidence that is derived from databases to generate meaningful evidence for forensic nursing practice.
- ▶ Advocates for the ethical conduct of research and translational scholarship with particular attention to the protection of the patient as a research participant.
- ▶ Promotes a climate of collaborative research and clinical inquiry.
- ▶ Disseminates research findings through activities such as presentations, publications, consultation, and journal clubs.

Standard 14. Quality of Practice

The forensic nurse contributes to quality nursing practice.

Competencies

The forensic nurse:

- ▶ Ensures that nursing practice is safe, effective, efficient, equitable, timely, and patient-centered (IOM, 1999, 2001).
- ▶ Identifies barriers and opportunities to improve forensic health-care safety, effectiveness, efficiency, equitability, timeliness, and patient-centeredness.
- ▶ Recommends strategies to improve forensic nursing quality.
- ▶ Uses creativity and innovation to enhance forensic nursing care.
- ▶ Participates in quality improvement initiatives.
- ▶ Collects data to monitor the quality of forensic nursing practice.
- ▶ Contributes to efforts to improve forensic healthcare efficiency.
- ▶ Provides critical review and/or evaluation of policies, procedures, and guidelines to improve the quality of forensic health care.
- ▶ Engages in formal and informal peer review processes.
- ▶ Collaborates with the interprofessional team to implement quality improvement plans and interventions.
- ▶ Documents forensic nursing practice in a manner that supports quality and performance improvement initiatives.
- ▶ Achieves professional certification, when available.
- ▶ Incorporates evidence into forensic nursing practice to improve outcomes.
- ▶ Provides leadership in the design and implementation of quality improvement initiatives.
- ▶ Promotes a practice environment that supports evidence-based health care.
- ▶ Contributes to forensic nursing and interprofessional knowledge through scientific inquiry.
- ▶ Encourages professional or specialty certification.

- ▶ Engages in development, implementation, evaluation, and/or revision of policies, procedures, and guidelines to improve forensic healthcare quality.
- ▶ Uses data and information in system-level decision-making.
- ▶ Influences the organizational system to improve outcomes.
- ▶ Designs innovations to improve outcomes.

Additional competencies for the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing

In addition to the competencies for the forensic nurse, the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing:

- ▶ Analyzes trends in forensic healthcare quality data, including examination of cultural influences and factors.
- ▶ Engages in comparison evaluations of the effectiveness and efficacy of diagnostic tests, clinical procedures and therapies, and treatment plans in partnership with patients to optimize health and healthcare quality.
- ▶ Designs quality improvement studies, research, initiatives, and programs to improve health outcomes in diverse settings.
- ▶ Applies knowledge obtained from advanced preparation, as well as current research and evidence-based information, to clinical decision-making at the point of care to achieve optimal health outcomes.
- ▶ Uses available benchmarks to evaluate practice at the individual, departmental, or organizational level.

Standard 15. Professional Practice Evaluation

The forensic nurse evaluates one's own and others' nursing practice.

Competencies

The forensic nurse:

- ▶ Engages in self-reflection and self-evaluation of forensic nursing practice on a regular basis, identifying areas of strength as well as areas in which professional growth would be beneficial.
- ▶ Adheres to the guidance regarding professional practice as specified in *Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* (ANA, 2015b) and *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements* (ANA, 2015a).
- ▶ Ensures forensic nursing practice is consistent with regulatory requirements pertaining to licensure, relevant statutes, rules, and regulations.
- ▶ Promotes incorporation of appropriate professional practice guidelines for the specific geographic region or practice area.
- ▶ Uses organizational policies and procedures as well as patient preference to guide forensic nursing professional practice.
- ▶ Influences organizational policies and procedures to promote inter-professional, evidence-based practice.
- ▶ Provides evidence for practice decisions and actions as part of the formal and informal evaluation processes.
- ▶ Seeks formal and informal feedback from healthcare patients, peers, colleagues, supervisors, and others regarding her or his practice.
- ▶ Provides peers and others with formal and informal constructive feedback regarding their practice or role performance.
- ▶ Takes action to achieve goals identified during the evaluation process.

Additional competencies for the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing

In addition to the competencies for the forensic nurse, the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing:

- ▶ Develops and/or identifies the tools used for evaluation of clinical forensic nursing practice.
- ▶ Engages in formal processes that involve feedback of forensic nursing practice from patients, peers, professional colleagues, and others.
- ▶ Assimilates the results of formal and informal evaluations into practice, policy, and protocols for enhancing the care of forensic patients.

Standard 16. Resource Utilization

The forensic nurse utilizes appropriate resources to plan, provide, and sustain evidence-based and research-informed nursing services that are safe, effective, and fiscally responsible.

Competencies

The forensic nurse:

- ▶ Assesses patient care needs and resources available to achieve desired outcomes.
- ▶ Assists the patient in factoring costs, risks, and benefits in decisions about care.
- ▶ Assists the patient in identifying and securing appropriate services to address needs across the healthcare continuum.
- ▶ Delegates in accordance with applicable legal and policy parameters.
- ▶ Identifies the impact of resource allocation on the potential for harm, complexity of the task, and desired outcomes.
- ▶ Advocates for resources that support and enhance forensic nursing practice.
- ▶ Integrates telehealth and mobile health technologies into practice to promote positive interactions between patients and forensic nurses and other healthcare providers.
- ▶ Uses organizational and community resources to implement inter-professional plans.
- ▶ Addresses discriminatory healthcare practices and the effect on resource allocation.
- ▶ Designs innovative solutions to use resources effectively and maintain quality.
- ▶ Creates evaluation strategies that address cost-effectiveness, cost/benefit, and efficiency factors associated with forensic nursing practice.

- ▶ Assumes complex and advanced leadership roles to initiate and guide change.
- ▶ Engages organizational and community resources to formulate and implement interprofessional plans.

Additional competencies for the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing

In addition to the competencies of the forensic nurse, the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing:

- ▶ Develops healthcare resources for patients, families, and communities that support and enhance forensic nursing practice.
- ▶ Formulates innovative solutions for patient care problems that use resources efficiently and effectively, and maintain quality.
- ▶ Designs evaluation processes to demonstrate effective resource utilization, avoid duplication of services, and promote patient safety and satisfaction while reducing cost.

Standard 17. Environmental Health

The forensic nurse practices in an environmentally safe and healthy manner.

Competencies

The forensic nurse and the advanced practice registered nurse specializing in forensic nursing:

- ▶ Promote a safe and healthy workplace and professional practice environment.
- ▶ Use environmental health concepts in practice.
- ▶ Assess the environment to identify risk factors.
- ▶ Reduce environmental health risks to self, colleagues, and patients.
- ▶ Communicate information about environmental health risks and exposure reduction strategies.
- ▶ Advocate for the safe, judicious, and appropriate use and disposal of products in health care.
- ▶ Incorporate technologies to promote safe practice environments.
- ▶ Use product or treatments consistent with evidence-based practice to reduce environmental threats.
- ▶ Participate in developing strategies to promote healthy communities and practice environments.
- ▶ Analyze the effect of social, political, and economic influences on the global environment and human health experience.
- ▶ Create partnerships that promote sustainable global environmental health policies and conditions that focus on prevention of hazards to people and the natural environment (ANA, 2007).

Instructions

Thank you for reading *Forensic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice!*

- Visit the link below to take the quiz
- Enter your name, email address, and the password to begin

[Take Quiz](#)

Password: hospital