## Sharing an important message

Harrison Medical Center's Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) experts help our local, state, and international communities.

Jolene Culbertson, MN, APFNS, APRN; Kate Espy, RN, BSN; and Shea Brinias, RN, teach in a statewide program to help other nurses become proficient as SANE examiners.

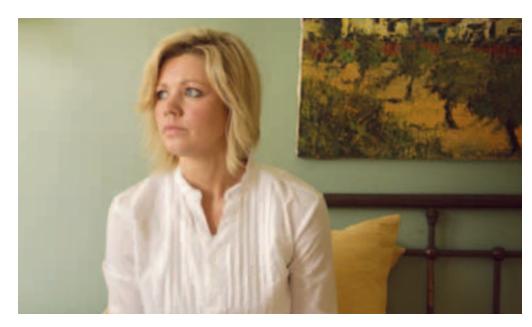
Nodie Sullivan, APRN. has been to Africa twice this year to teach medical personnel how to examine and care for victims of sexual assault.

Soroptimist International of Port Orchard presented Culbertson with the 2009 Making a Difference for Women award for her dedication to improving the lives of women and girls in our community.



**Featured expert:** Jolene Culbertson, MN, APFNS, **APRN SANE** clinical coordinator





## SEXUAL ASSAULT

## Get the help you need

IF SOMEONE HURTS YOU sexually, there are two important things you need to know: The assault is not your fault, and you need to get help.

Any type of sexual activity that you do not agree to may be considered sexual assault or abuse. That includes rape or attempted rape, incest, and child molestation.

Current statistics tell us that only 1 in 4 sexual assaults is reported. In America, a person is sexually assaulted every two minutes.

To make getting help easier for sexual assault victims, Harrison Medical Center offers the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) program, which provides medical screening exams for the victims. With compassionate and dignified care, SANE nurses strive to facilitate the healing process and ensure that victims aren't traumatized yet again by the evidencegathering exam.

"Harrison has the only SANE program serving Kitsap, Mason, Jefferson, and Clallam counties," says Jolene Culbertson, MN, APFNS, APRN, clinical coordinator of the program. Culbertson also has completed postgraduate education in forensic nursing and is a professor in the nursing program at Olympic College.

Culbertson and Kate Espy, RN, BSN, were the first pediatric-certified SANE nurses in Washington and perform all pediatric exams. They, along with a dozen other specially

trained nurses at Harrison, are available around the clock to care for sexual assault victims.

SANE nurses also work directly with police, prosecutors, child protective services, and Kitsap Sexual Assault Center to provide coordinated care.

## **Breaking the silence**

If you're assaulted, call 911 or the police right away. Don't let shame or fear keep you from getting help. You should also:

■ Go to Harrison Bremerton's Emergency Department as soon as you can. Do not change clothes or wash, comb, or clean any part of your body, even your fingernails. A SANE examiner will need to collect evidence. You also will need treatment for any injuries and screening for possible sexually transmitted infections.

If you don't seek care within five days of your assault, or two days if you are under age 13, call Kitsap Sexual Assault Center at 360-479-8500 or 866-831-2050 for assistance. ■ Talk to someone—a trusted friend or family member or a crisis hotline, such as the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800-656-HOPE (4673).

■ Seek counseling. It's normal to feel ashamed, guilty, fearful, or angry. These feelings can lead to depression and other problems. Professional counseling can help you deal with the trauma. National Women's Health Information Center