Thank you for your interest in the Hennepin Assault Response Team (HART, Formerly SARS). In case you are unfamiliar with the work that we do, we are a team of forensic nurse examiners (4 in-office and 15 casual), plus one federal grant project coordinator, and one office specialist, employed by Hennepin Healthcare. Our main activity is providing medical-forensic exams to patients who report sexual assault. A medical-forensic exam is a patient’s opportunity to have evidence collected related to the assault as well as receive medical care from specially-trained nurses. HART offers these exams at 10 hospitals in three counties, and they provide exams to patients of all ages as well as suspects brought in by law enforcement.

In Q2 and Q3 of 2018, HART saw an overall 7% growth in patient volumes compared to 2017. This growth is a trend that has continued annually since the inception of the department.

We are often asked, is sexual assault really happening that much more often, year after year? Frankly, we’re not sure. Sexual violence is a crime that thrives in secrecy, so there is no concrete way to know exactly what’s contributing to our increased case load. However, HART provides extensive education to many different multidisciplinary groups, such as law enforcement, prosecution, child protection, the medical field, students of many different types, military, advocacy, and the community in general. We believe this education, combined with the recent global, national, and local media attention on the topic of sexual violence, is a strong contributor to the growth in our patient volumes. Heightening awareness of our services is key to more people accessing them. If you are interested in receiving some of the aforementioned training or education, please contact our office directly at (612)873-5832.

Training/Education offered by HART:
- Sexual Assault/Abuse
- Strangulation
- Human Trafficking
- The Medical-Forensic Exam
- Suspect Exams
- Interpersonal Violence
- Sexually Transmitted Infections
- Healthy Sexuality

Are you a forensic nurse examiner? Would you like to work for us? Now is your chance; HART is hiring! We are looking for 2 night shift FTE (full time equivalent) forensic nurse examiners. Please visit HennepinHealthcare.org/careers and search "Forensic" to find the job posting.

Continue reading this newsletter to learn more about what we’ve been up to lately; including some incredibly exciting news on page 2. To learn even more about our work, watch for an upcoming New York Times article and a Rasmussen College blog, both with contributions from HART’s coordinator, Kristi Jarvis.
In Q2 and Q3 of 2018, HART's nurses were subpoenaed 70 times, and spent over 70 hours on court related activities: either prepping with prosecutors to testify or in the courtroom testifying. As is the nature of court proceedings, the vast majority of these 70 subpoenas did not result in the nurse having to testify. Many of the cases the nurses are called to testify for are subpoenaed 3 or more times before the actual trial takes place.

A suspect exam that was conducted by HART in June of 2018 has already gone to trial and resulted in a conviction, with testimony from a HART nurse playing an integral role. A stranger case in which HART completed the medical-forensic exam and subsequently provided testimony in also resulted in a guilty verdict. Additionally, two of HART's nurses were subpoenaed to testify in front of Hennepin County's Grand Jury this summer. The jury trial in this case has yet to be scheduled.

Pictured: A typical courtroom in the Hennepin County Government Center where a HART nurse would testify
HART represents the medical-forensic point of view on the following groups and committees:

- Hennepin County SMART (Sexual Assault Multidisciplinary Action Response Team)
- Rice County SMART
- Dakota County Coordinated Response Team
- CornerHouse Multidisciplinary Team
- SCANT (Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Team)
- No Wrong Door Advisory Committee
- No Wrong Door Assessment and Screening Tools Subcommittee
- No Wrong Door Youth Services Advisory Subcommittee
- Statewide Medical-Forensic Exam Access Committee
- MN Human Trafficking Task Force
- Hennepin County Safe Harbor Protocol Team
- Child Abuse Summit Planning Committee

HART has a strong commitment to lifelong learning and professional development. In April of 2018, HART’s 5 FTE nurses attended the End Violence Against Women International (EVAWI) annual conference. They participated in many useful breakout sessions and networked with other professionals who are committed to the eradication of gender-based violence from around the globe.

Additionally, in the spirit of growth and furthering the field of forensic nursing, Kristi Jarvis, the coordinator of HART, and Stephanie Duttenhafer, HART’s former office specialist, spent the summer with one of Hennepin Healthcare’s grant writers, Julie Watt. Kristi, Julie, and Stephanie composed a grant proposal that, if funded, would endow HART with the financial resources to provide 3 combined SANE-A/SANE-P courses per year, at no cost to the nurses who participate. After an agonizing month of waiting, HART received news that they had been awarded the grant. In total, the project, titled "Train to Retain: SANE Expansion in the Upper Midwest" received $1.49 million dollars. Kristi will be balancing her current role as HART's coordinator as well as the grant's program director. Stephanie has assumed the role of project coordinator on the grant, and will be training HART's replacement office specialist soon. If you are a nurse who is interested in attending this training, please do not hesitate to contact Stephanie via email at Stephanie.Dutenhafer@hcmed.org. More information will be sent out as the project is finalized.
One of the larger events of Q2 was a two-day conference hosted by the Otto Bremer Trust Center for Safe and Healthy Children and the Hennepin County Attorney’s Office. This was the first inaugural Child Abuse Summit, which was a multidisciplinary conference with attendees from around the globe. HART provided presentations and a number of nurses attended as well. Opening remarks were provided by Hennepin County Attorney, Mike Freeman. The summit also included 2 panel presentations about two pediatric fatalities. Plans for the 2019 Child Abuse Summit are well underway.
PRESENTATIONS AND TRAININGS
Q2 & Q3

- Hennepin County Attorney's Office - Domestic Violence & Strangulation
- Minneapolis Police Academy - The Medical-Forensic Exam and the Role of the Forensic Nurse Examiner (presented twice); Strangulation
- MN Sex Crimes Investigator's Association Spring Conference - The Medical Forensic-Exam and the Role of the Forensic Nurse Examiner
- Tri-County Law Enforcement Association Half-Day Conference - The Medical Forensic Exam and the Role of the Forensic Nurse Examiner, Child Sexual Abuse, Strangulation, Neurobiology of Trauma, Forensic Experiential Trauma Interview Technique
- OJP Conference on Crime and Victimization - Panel presentation with Minneapolis Police and Hennepin County Attorney’s Office on the benefit of suspect examinations
- Minnesota Perinatal Organization Annual Conference - Human Trafficking for the Healthcare Professional
- Women's Health: Family Planning and Reproductive Health Program Annual Conference - Human Trafficking for the Healthcare Professional
- 360 Communities, OutFront Minnesota, and Sojourner - The Intersection of Sexual Violence Advocacy and Forensic Nursing
- MN Forensic Nurse’s Association - Sexually Transmitted Infections in Adolescents and Vulnerable Adults
- University of MN Police Department - The Medical Forensic Exam and the Role of the Forensic Nurse
- MN Medical Examiner's and Coroner's Conference - Panel presentation with the Otto Bremer Trust for Safe and Healthy Children, the Hennepin County Attorney's Office, and the Hennepin County medical examiner on a pediatric fatality case
HART performed 572 exams in Q2 and Q3 of 2018. This is a 7% increase over Q2 and Q3 in 2017 (534).

Each person represents 10 exams

Exam Type Breakdown:

- CornerHouse 10%
- Suspect 3%
- Pediatric 7%
- Adolescent 16%
- Adult 65%

Adult (exams on patients 18 and older): 370
Adolescent (exams on patients 13-17): 89
Pediatric (exams on patients under 13): 38
CornerHouse (exams on patients 0-17 done at CornerHouse): 58
Suspect (exams done on patients suspected of committing sexual assault): 17

Exams done by HART, YTD 2018 (Q1, Q2, & Q3) - a 7% increase over 2017 YTD total of 786

$1.49 Million

Amount awarded to HART via federal grant for their project entitled Train to Retain: SANE Expansion in the Upper Midwest

97

Highest number of exams done by a HART nurse in 2018 - The YTD average is 40 exams/nurse

27

The average age of HART's patients in 2018

4

Number of HART full time nurses

15

Number of HART casual nurses

1

Number of Office Specialist and Grant Project Coordinators

Pictured: HART's dedicated Exam room located at Hennepin Healthcare

Pictured: HART's dedicated Exam room located at Hennepin Healthcare