

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1622

As Reported by House Committee On:
College & Workforce Development

Title: An act relating to increasing the availability of sexual assault nurse examiner education in rural and underserved areas.

Brief Description: Increasing the availability of sexual assault nurse examiner education in rural and underserved areas.

Sponsors: Representatives Mosbrucker, Orwall, Duerr, Chase, Graham, Wicks, Johnson, J., Walen, Valdez, Bronoske, Callan, Davis, Goodman, Rule, Simmons, Kloba, Pollet, Maycumber, Jacobsen, Riccelli, Caldier, Chambers and Taylor.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

College & Workforce Development: 1/10/22, 1/13/22 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Washington State University College of Nursing to establish two programs: (1) a sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE) online and clinical training program; and (2) a regional SANE leader pilot program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COLLEGE & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Slatter, Chair; Entenman, Vice Chair; Leavitt, Vice Chair; Chambers, Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Hansen, Hoff, Kraft, Paul, Pollet, Sells and Sutherland.

Staff: Megan Mulvihill (786-7304).

Background:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

A sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE) is a registered nurse specifically trained to provide evidentiary examinations of sexual assault victims. In addition to other services, SANEs provide medical assistance while also assessing, documenting, and preserving evidence for potential prosecutions. The SANEs conduct forensic examinations where sexual assault evidence kits are collected. Although there is no state-issued license or endorsement for a SANE, the International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN) grants SANE certification to registered nurses who:

- complete training that meets the IAFN SANE Education Guidelines;
- meet clinical practice requirements;
- pass an examination; and
- comply with ongoing training requirements.

The only entity that offers SANE training in the state is Harborview Medical Center.

Summary of Bill:

Online and Clinical Training Program.

The Washington State University (WSU) College of Nursing must establish a SANE training program that has three elements: (1) online training to provide nurses in rural and underserved communities access to at least 40 hours of didactic training; (2) a clinical training site at WSU College of Nursing with clinical training requirements established by the United States Department of Justice; and (3) scholarships for nurses to complete the training. The WSU College of Nursing must submit annual reports to the Legislature on the use and impact of the online and clinical training.

Regional Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Leader Pilot Program.

The WSU College of Nursing must establish a regional SANE leader pilot program. The WSU College of Nursing must develop and train lead SANEs and assist in the development of support mechanisms and role requirements for regional lead SANEs. Regional lead SANEs participating in the program must:

- establish the number of SANEs in their communities;
- report on the educational needs of their communities;
- produce recommendations on how to best increase the number of SANEs in their communities; and
- develop community-based action plans for SANE recruitment.

The WSU College of Nursing must submit annual reports to the Legislature on the impact of the pilot program with a final report due January 1, 2026. The regional SANE pilot program expires July 1, 2026.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) A few years ago the Legislature established the SANE Task Force, and as a part of that, survivors were asked where the system was broken. This bill tries to fix those broken pieces by increasing the number of SANEs available. There is a national shortage of SANEs that has been exacerbated by COVID-19, and without these nurses, forensic evidence may be lost and it becomes harder to prosecute effectively. When there are not enough SANEs, some emergency rooms tell victims to go home until a SANE is available. This increases trauma and reduces evidence collection. The SANEs are trained on how to provide a higher rate of care, a higher DNA rate, how to document injuries, and how to testify in court. Properly trained SANE nurses can mitigate the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder as well. Rape is serial. If it happens once, it will happen again, so prosecution is imperative.

Only having SANE training at Harborview Medical Center is a barrier. This would provide training on both sides of the state and expand access to rural areas. The WSU College of Nursing is the largest producer of nurses. If approved and funded, the WSU College of Nursing is ready to provide the training first at Spokane and then at Yakima.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Gina Mosbrucker, prime sponsor; Erica Hallock and Shawn Reed, Washington State Nurses Association; and Chris Mulick, Washington State University.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.