

I am Dr. Sheridan Miyamoto. I am the Founder and Director of the Sexual Assault Forensic Examination Telehealth Center (SAFE-T Center).

The SAFE-T Center was launched in 2016 with a 1-year planning grant from the Department of Justice. That year was critical to our future success as we examined costs, technology, built our infrastructure, and identified our expert response team. Planning allowed us to successfully implement the program in four health systems the following year.

Since 2017, we have partnered with 12 communities, developing a comprehensive Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) team response where it previously didn't exist. We provide SANE training, secure forensic telehealth technology, and expert consultation.

We have conducted over 300 telehealth examinations, providing trauma-informed support for the survivor and guidance to the local nurse on best practices and proper evidence collection.

Research shows our program is effective in growing the SANE workforce, increasing local nurse confidence, and more than tripling the SANE retention rate compared to national rates. We have trained 113 nurses, representing a 300% increase in trained SANEs in our partner communities.

Importantly, the program has an impact on the quality of care delivered to survivors.

- Over 90% of patients reported that having a SAFE-T telehealth consultation improved the quality of care they received.
- 95% of patients stated they felt better after having a forensic exam.
- Over 88% stated their initial fears of coming forward were alleviated during the examination.

Healing begins with quality care. These outcomes show the promise of telehealth to deliver specialty care where it is needed.

The proposed feasibility study is critical to accurately assess need, resources and solutions that can effectively solve the SANE workforce shortage and thoughtfully build capacity for equitable access to quality sexual assault care in Maryland.