

# **Strategic Plan 2018–2022**



Approved by  
Board of Directors  
International Association of Forensic Nurses  
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# Executive Summary

The strategic plan of the International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN) highlights the organization's mission, vision, and values for members, funders, and stakeholders. Developed by IAFN's membership-elected Board of Directors in collaboration with the organization's staff, the strategic plan is based on selected pillars. The pillars support the organization's structural focus, or those attributes that form the foundation for the organization's work. Each pillar contains objectives outlining what the organization seeks to achieve, followed by some of the activities necessary to achieve those objectives. The pillars are steadfast and unchanging. The objectives and activities are dynamic and fluid.

## Organizational Description

In 1992, 72 registered nurses—mostly sexual assault nurse examiners—came together to form the International Association of Forensic Nurses. This founding group envisioned an organization that would encompass the depth and breadth of those who practice nursing where the healthcare system and the legal system intersect.

The International Association of Forensic Nurses has become a professional organization of nurses who provide specialized health care for patients impacted by violence and trauma. Forensic nursing encompasses sexual assault nurse examiners, death investigators, correctional nurse specialists, forensic psychiatric nurses, legal nurse consultants, forensic geriatric specialists, nurse attorneys, forensic clinical nurse specialists, forensic gynecology nurses, nurses working in child maltreatment and those who work in other settings as forensic nursing practice evolves.

With more than 4,000 members from 26 countries, the International Association of Forensic Nurses has a mission to provide leadership in forensic nursing practice by developing, promoting, and disseminating information globally about forensic nursing science. IAFN members currently represent the following countries: Australia, Barbados, Bermuda, Canada, Cayman Islands, England, Germany, Ghana, Guam, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Lebanon, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Saint Helena, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, and the United States.

In addition to being a membership organization, IAFN establishes and provides standards of practice and education for forensic nurses, including the following:

- **Certification.** IAFN currently offers two professional credentials: the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Adult/Adolescent (SANE-A®) and the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Pediatric (SANE-P®). The earned credentials of the SANE-A® and SANE-P® designate that the recipient has

achieved the highest standards of forensic nursing for sexual assault nurse examiners.

- IAFN has created Education Guidelines for sexual assault nurse examiners, intimate partner violence examiners, and nurse medical death investigators.
- *The Core Curriculum for Forensic Nursing*, first edition, is for nurses who aim to work in the forensic nursing field.
- *The Atlas of Sexual Violence* is a durable, portable guide for anyone who cares for or works with patients who have been sexually assaulted, including healthcare providers, social workers, attorneys, and law enforcement personnel.
- *Forensic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* is a one-volume guide that articulates the who, what, when, where, and how of forensic nursing practice for specialists, generalists, and those who work with them.
- The Association provides webinars and online education on a variety of forensic nursing-related topics.
- The Association offers online didactic training for both the Adult/Adolescent SANE (41 hours) and the Pediatric/Adolescent SANE (43 hours).
- The Association partners with sites across North America to offer hands-on clinical skills training for SANEs who have completed their didactic requirements.
- The annual International Conference on Forensic Nursing Science and Practice provides live education and networking opportunities, as well as a forum for nurses, researchers, educators, law enforcement personnel, policy makers, and all related professionals to share (or exchange) important knowledge and experiences related to forensic nursing.
- The Association was awarded a sole source contract from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Indian Health Service (IHS) to develop and coordinate a series of adult and pediatric sexual assault nurse examiner trainings, intimate partner violence forensic examiner trainings, and domestic violence awareness trainings geared toward healthcare providers serving the American Indian/Alaska Native population at all IHS, Tribal, and Urban Indian healthcare facilities.
- The Association provides training and technical assistance for the U.S. Department of Justice's *National Protocol for Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Examinations: Adult and Adolescent* and the *National Protocol for Sexual Abuse Medical Forensic Examinations: Pediatric*.
- The Association defines and advances the global research agenda to enhance nursing's evidence-based response to the needs of forensic populations through its *Journal of Forensic Nursing*.

## **Mission**

To provide leadership in forensic nursing practice by developing, promoting, and disseminating information globally about forensic nursing science and practice.

## **Vision**

Forensic nurses will be universally recognized as the essential component of healthcare's response to violence and trauma.

## **Values**

**Core Value Statement:** Our work will be guided and informed by our commitment to ensuring access to evidence-based, trauma-informed, patient-centered forensic nursing services.

### **Values:**

- Commitment
- Diversity
- Integrity
- Leadership
- Mentorship
- Quality
- Respect

## **Key Message**

The International Association of Forensic Nurses is a professional organization of nurses who provide specialized health care for patients impacted by violence and trauma. We establish and provide standards of practice and education for forensic nurses. Our members have the knowledge and expertise to decrease the healthcare consequences of violence, improve patient recovery, and lower healthcare costs.

## **Envisioned Future**

IAFN is the recognized authority on forensic nursing and provides the tools for transformational change in nursing's response to violence. The Association and its members are valued for their collaborative leadership across systems. Regulatory bodies and certifying agencies look to the Association for guidance on setting standards of care for forensic nursing services in a variety of settings. The Association serves as a global network for forensic nurses to exchange ideas, serve as mentors, and enhance their practice.

# Social Justice Pillar

Forensic nurses articulate social justice as a core value.

## Objectives

1. Membership will identify and define social justice as an organizational pillar as it relates specifically to forensic nursing.
2. Identify core strengths and gaps related to social justice within the Association.
3. Create opportunities for education and discussion related to social justice within the Association.
4. Increase formal and informal partnerships/collaborations with organizations that prioritize social justice values.

## Activities/Strategies for 2018–2019

1. Establish an ad hoc Social Justice Committee.
2. Produce a position statement/paper that defines social justice for forensic nursing.
3. Offer effective learning strategies to influence attitudes promoting social justice; creating empathy and advocating for marginalized patients and populations.
4. Conduct outreach to allied organizations working to address diversity, equity, and social justice within health care and related fields for possible partnerships/collaborative opportunities.
5. Create an Indigenous Populations Community within the membership to assist in identifying population-specific needs.

## Strategies for 2019-2020

1. Provide core training on privilege, oppression, and social justice theory in relation to forensic nursing (board, staff, members).
2. Publish a special issue examining Social Justice in Forensic Nursing via the *Journal of Forensic Nursing*.

## Future Strategies

1. Incorporate social justice issues into the annual conference offerings.
2. Seek funding through grants and contracts that support social justice in forensic nursing.

# Access Pillar

Forensic nurses are available to provide expert and compassionate care in every community.

## **Objectives**

1. Promote universal access to forensic nursing care through a marketing of the specialty.
2. Quantify/identify the unique role of forensic nurses in specific clinical practice areas.
3. Identify and support diversifying the forensic nursing workforce into roles beyond SANE practice through implementation of the strategies below.
4. 100% of Level 1 Trauma Centers in the United States will have 24/7-access to a sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE).

## **Activities/Strategies for 2018–2019**

1. Provide forensic nurses with strategies to demonstrate the impact that forensic nursing practice can have on health outcomes in the living patient, including:
  - a. Defining the broader role of the forensic nurse in the clinical setting.
  - b. Updating the core curriculum to define the patient populations served by the clinical forensic nurse.
  - c. Ensuring that the role of the clinical forensic nurse includes SANE.
2. Develop and implement a plan to increase the awareness of forensic nursing among healthcare clinicians and healthcare systems.
3. Re-evaluate organizational member types and benefits.
4. Develop and implement a membership expansion plan.
5. Survey all Level 1 Trauma Centers to identify the depth of gaps in SANE services.
6. Attend and conduct outreach at the ANCC National Magnet Conference®.
7. Expand and market the SANE 365 project with additional educational tools for hospital administrators in an effort to reach a critical mass of SANEs.
8. Pursue key funding sources that will increase patient access to forensic nursing care in all communities, including rural and urban, to build new programs or sustain existing ones.

## **Future Strategies**

1. Once the clinical forensic nurse core curriculum is completed, develop and implement a clinical forensic nurse training program based on that curriculum.
2. Explore collaboration with the Society of Trauma Nurses to encourage provision of clinical forensic nursing services at Level 1 Trauma Centers.
3. Explore collaboration with the American College of Surgeons (Committee on Trauma) to encourage provision of clinical forensic nursing services at

Level 1 Trauma Centers.

4. Develop and conduct a needs assessment for the role of IAFN in the further development of other specialty areas of forensic nursing (i.e., death investigation, corrections, etc.)

## **Education Pillar**

Forensic nurses are provided with innovative, evidence-based forensic nursing education and valid, reliable, and legally defensible professional certification opportunities.

### **Objectives**

1. Increase engagement with clinically practicing nurses who serve forensic patient populations.
2. Increase engagement with educators across the spectrum of nursing education.
3. Increase engagement with hospital administrators to support forensic nursing education, clinical practice, and certification.
4. Demonstrate the value of forensic nursing knowledge and expertise to healthcare systems and networks globally.
5. Increase the consistency and quality of forensic nursing education offered through the Association.
6. Develop and execute the annual public policy agenda.
7. Continue to be a sole source provider of forensic nursing education.

### **Activities/Strategies for 2018–2019**

1. Market IAFN's ANCC-accredited Approver Unit inside and outside membership.
2. Provide online education and training.
3. Provide the annual International Conference on Forensic Nursing Science and Practice.
4. Provide onsite education and training.
5. Identify best practice standards for development of standardized competency validation tools for forensic nursing practice.
6. Provide SANE Course Review and approval to acknowledge compliance with the IAFN SANE Education Guidelines.
7. Update the IAFN Adult/Adolescent SAFE Clinical Skills 16-hour curriculum.
8. Provide the IAFN Adult/Adolescent SAFE Clinical Skills 16-hour curriculum.
9. Partner with SANE programs to host the Adult/Adolescent SAFE Clinical Skills 16-hour clinical simulation training.

10. Widely market all IAFN Education and Certification offerings.
11. Provide technical assistance to developing, growing, and struggling SANE programs and their communities in an effort to increase sustainability and competency.
12. Expand the Certification program by marketing directly to hospitals.
13. Monitor the public policy agenda and leverage partners for a stronger annual Forensic Nurses Lobby Day.
14. Support and participate in efforts to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act.
15. Access key funding sources that support education of forensic nurses.
16. Identify and partner with other national and international nursing organizations to promote the need for and value of forensic nursing services across the lifespan.

### **Future Strategies**

1. Develop and conduct a needs assessment of schools of nursing at the baccalaureate and graduate levels relative to forensic nursing.
2. Consult with educational programs to introduce concepts of forensic nursing into all basic nursing curricula.
3. Partner with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing to offer education on strategies to incorporate forensic concepts into nursing education.
4. Pilot online quality improvement/peer review programs.

## **Global Network Pillar**

Forensic nurses throughout the world have a community of their own to seek advice, mentorship, and information.

### **Objectives**

1. Define global involvement of the Association relative to forensic nursing and outreach to specific countries.
2. Increase conference attendance from outside North America.
3. Increase global membership (outside North America) 10 percent by 2022.
4. Explore expansion of advocacy for international public policy issues.

### **Activities/Strategies for 2018–2019**

1. Survey international (outside North America) members to determine the extent of forensic nursing practice in their countries/communities.

2. Survey non-member international nursing groups to determine the extent of forensic nursing practice in their countries/communities.
3. Based on survey findings, develop a list of three countries to prioritize for targeted efforts to expand IAFN membership and education in forensic nursing practice; this process will serve as a model for further international expansion.
4. Solicit nurses with ties to international forensic nursing initiatives to collaborate with IAFN and promote their initiatives.
5. Explore models for non-US-based affiliations.
6. Explore models to offer formal or informal forensic nursing mentorship programs.
7. Collaborate with partners (i.e., International Association of Chiefs of Police, U.S. Agency for International Development, International Council of Nurses, Peace Corps, U.S. Indian Health Service, etc.) to provide forensic nursing educational and technical assistance opportunities.

### **Future Strategies to Explore**

1. Explore on-the-ground training and technical assistance opportunities outside North America.
2. Explore providing training at an international nursing conference outside North America.
3. Explore translation services relative to specific publications and education.

## **Public Awareness Pillar**

Forensic nurses are valued, respected, and seen as integral to health care.

### **Objectives**

1. Develop core messages and key points related to the Association and forensic nursing.
2. Develop a comprehensive social media, communications, and marketing plan for the Association and its activities.
3. Create relationships with broader local and international nursing communities.

### **Activities/Strategies for 2018–2019**

1. Execute core message development.
2. Execute social media, communications, and marketing plans.

3. Identify and initiate contact with key national and international nursing/forensic/allied organizations.

### **Future Strategies**

1. Expand Forensic Nurses Week more fully to reach a global audience.

## **Research Pillar**

The International Association of Forensic Nurses will become the leader in facilitating the promotion and dissemination of forensic nursing research.

### **Objectives**

1. Establish a forensic nursing research agenda by the end of 2018.

### **Activities/Strategies for 2018–2019**

1. Publish the forensic nursing research agenda in the *Journal of Forensic Nursing*.
2. Support the IAFN Research Committee in promoting research that impacts forensic nursing practice.
3. Support research that provides an evidence base for the practice of forensic nursing.
4. The Research Committee will explore the cost and legal implications of the Association's role as a potential distributor of annual research funds, and present its findings and any subsequent proposal to the Board for consideration.
5. Two Research Committee members will review annual conference abstract submissions, including posters.

### **Future Strategies to Explore**

1. Collaborate with academic institutions offering forensic nursing graduate programs to create partnerships in forensic nursing research with strong forensic nursing clinical programs.
2. The Research Committee will produce a quarterly update of research articles to be highlighted on the IAFN website.
3. Explore ways to improve research representation at IAFN's annual conference.