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IAFN Ensures Continuity of Forensic Nursing Care Through Program Transfer to the Emergency Nurses Association

Program transfer unites two leading nursing organizations behind a shared mission: ensuring all patients have access to expert forensic nursing care

[BALTIMORE, MD] — The International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN) and the Emergency Nurses Association (ENA) today announced a formal program transfer through which ENA will assume stewardship of IAFN's membership and continuing education programs. This agreement ensures the long-term vitality of the forensic nursing specialty and preserves the professional community, resources, and credentialing pathways that thousands of forensic nurses rely on.

The transfer marks a pivotal moment for both organizations and for the forensic nursing field, bringing together two pillars of the nursing profession under a shared commitment to patient safety, access to care, and the advancement of specialized nursing practice.

A Decision Rooted in Mission and Values

Following a comprehensive evaluation process, IAFN's leadership assessed multiple organizations as potential stewards of its programs. Candidates were evaluated on the basis of values alignment, organizational capacity, and demonstrated commitment to sustaining forensic nursing's mission. ENA emerged as the clear top choice for education and membership programming — an organization whose own mission of advancing emergency nursing care is deeply interwoven with the work of forensic nurses every day.

Forensic nurses frequently operate at the intersection of emergency care and trauma-informed practice, serving survivors of violence, abuse, and neglect. ENA's infrastructure, advocacy reach, and education platforms provide an ideal home for IAFN's programs and professional community.

“My nursing career began in the Emergency Department and it continues to be a place where I practice as an APRN and a Forensic Nurse. This experience helps me understand both the diversity of settings in which forensic nurses work and the strong connection our specialty has to emergency care. Those shared values are deeply

aligned with ENA's, and I am confident this program transfer will preserve the core of forensic nursing, strengthen our profession, and ensure patients continue to receive the trauma-informed care they deserve."

— Karin A. Wickwire, DNP, CRNP, SANE-A, SANE-P, IAFN Board President

What the Program Transfer Includes

Under the terms of the agreement, IAFN will transfer to ENA all right, title, and interest in the assets that form the foundation of its programs and professional community. The full scope of transferred assets includes:

Membership: ENA will assume stewardship of IAFN's full membership infrastructure. Current IAFN members will transition to ENA membership, gaining access to ENA's full suite of member benefits, professional networks, and community platforms.

Continuing Education: ENA will take ownership of IAFN's complete education catalog, including all programs, courses, webinars, presentations, podcasts, and workshops, along with all related content, materials, and author and speaker agreements licensing the rights in those materials. All copyrighted works — including white papers, books, manuals, handbooks, and charts — as well as any other intellectual property used in connection with IAFN's offerings, products, and services will transfer in full, ensuring the breadth of IAFN's educational contribution to forensic nursing remains intact and accessible.

IAFN members will receive more detailed information about the dissolution, transition timeline, and membership transfer process in the coming weeks.

"After decades in forensic nursing and as a leader in IAFN, I understand deeply what it means to have a true community of practice - one that safeguards the ethical core of nursing while giving the specialty the platform it needs to grow. Finding that community in ENA was not accidental; it was the result of intentional, values-driven work and our history of successful partnership. I am profoundly grateful to our members and staff, whose patience and unwavering support carried us through what has been, at times, an extraordinarily challenging process."

— Jennifer Pierce-Weeks, BSN, RN, SANE-A, SANE-P, Chief Executive Officer, IAFN

ENA's Commitment to the Forensic Nursing Community

In its 56th year, ENA serves as the leading organization for emergency nurses through

its robust educational programs and clinical resources, a strong advocacy voice and a vibrant network of 40,000 members worldwide. ENA continues to work with IAFN leaders on a seamless transfer that honors the identity and expertise of IAFN and forensic nursing.

“Emergency nurses and forensic nurses share common bonds as skilled, compassionate care providers shaped by their unique patient experiences and a commitment to their values. Uniting these two talented specialties within the ENA community will only strengthen these connections to benefit clinical skill development and the spirit of collaboration which benefit patient care.”

— **Dustin Bass, DNP, MHA, RN, CEN, NEA-BC, President, ENA**

This transition represents an evolution of the long-standing partnership and collaborations between ENA and IAFN, two organizations with complementary missions dedicated to serving nurses who have committed their careers to caring for some of the most vulnerable patients in their most difficult moments.

ENA is committed to providing a smooth transition to a welcoming environment for IAFN members, who will soon receive an invitation to ENA’s quarterly Virtual Town Hall on March 25.

“ENA takes great pride in this historic opportunity to lead forensic nursing’s future in ways that preserve the mission IAFN has pursued for three decades. It is a tremendous privilege and responsibility to carry on IAFN’s legacy, and we will do so by welcoming IAFN members into our community and establishing ENA as the new home for undeniably vital forensic nursing resources.”

— **Bridget Walsh, Interim Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer, ENA**

IAFN’s Path Forward

For more than 30 years, IAFN has served as the leading organization for forensic nurses through its comprehensive educational programs, clinical standards, certification pathways, and a dedicated community of more than 6,000 members across 25 countries. As IAFN transitions its programs to ENA, the organization remains committed to ensuring continuity and excellence in forensic nursing practice.

IAFN will dissolve as a legal entity following the completion of the program transfer. The Board made this decision deliberately and with the mission at the forefront — by transferring its programs, community, and assets to ENA, IAFN ensures that forensic nurses continue to have a professional home and that patients continue to have access to expert forensic nursing care.

The *Journal of Forensic Nursing* will continue publication under Wolters Kluwer, preserving the field's premier peer-reviewed research and protecting the scholarly record that forensic nursing practitioners and researchers depend on. Forensic nursing certification will transition to the **American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)**, safeguarding the integrity and portability of credentials held by certified forensic nurses nationwide.

Together, these arrangements reflect IAFN's commitment to leaving nothing essential behind — ensuring that every pillar of the forensic nursing profession has a trusted institutional home.

“I am confident that ENA and our other longtime partners will honor and carry forward the legacy of the International Association of Forensic Nurses while providing the strength and scale needed for the future of our specialty. This program transfer represents a transformational moment for forensic nursing—one that positions our work for continued success, growth, and recognition as an essential and integrated component of healthcare.”

— Karin A. Wickwire, DNP, CRNP, SANE-A, SANE-P, IAFN Board President

About the International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN)

The International Association of Forensic Nurses is the only global professional nursing organization devoted to the science and practice of forensic nursing. Founded in 1992 by 72 registered nurses in Minneapolis, Minnesota, IAFN grew to more than 6,000 members from more than 25 countries. The Association advances forensic nursing through education, research, clinical practice standards, and advocacy to ensure that all patients have access to forensic nursing care. IAFN offers two certifications: Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner – Adult/Adolescent (SANE-A®) and Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner – Pediatric/Adolescent (SANE-P®). More than 1,000 forensic nursing programs are registered through IAFN's listings, including hospitals, clinics, and community-based forensic nursing services.

About the Emergency Nurses Association (ENA)

The Emergency Nurses Association is the premier professional nursing association dedicated to defining the future of emergency nursing through advocacy, education, research, innovation, and leadership. Founded in 1970, ENA has proven to be an indispensable resource to the global emergency nursing community. With 40,000 members worldwide, ENA advocates for patient safety, develops industry-leading practice standards and guidelines, and guides emergency health care public policy.

ENA members have expertise in triage, patient care, disaster preparedness, and all aspects of emergency care. Additional information is available at www.ena.org.

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IAFN retained Tangelo Tree Consulting to facilitate the program transfer process and member communications.