

ASSEMBLY HEALTH COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 2519

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 10, 1997

The Assembly Health Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 2519.

As amended by the committee, this bill permanently establishes the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program in Monmouth county as a continuation of the two-year Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Model Project established pursuant to P.L.1995, c.187.

The Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Model Project, which will expire on July 27, 1997, was established in Monmouth county by the Chief of the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy in the Division of Criminal Justice in the Department of Law and Public Safety.

The program is designed to use forensic nurse sexual assault examiners, who are registered professional nurses or nurse practitioner/clinical nurse specialists licensed in the State and trained in forensic science, in accordance with regulations adopted by the New Jersey Board of Nursing with the approval of the Attorney General, to perform sexual assault examinations in an area of the hospital designated solely for sexual assault examinations. The program shall continue to work cooperatively with the rape crisis center operated by the Women's Center of Monmouth County, Inc., in providing assistance to each victim. A representative of the county prosecutor's office or the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy shall meet with each victim, and counseling and other appropriate services pursuant to subsection c. of section 6 of P.L.1985, c.404 (C.52:4B-44c) shall be provided to each victim. The program shall provide the victim with the opportunity to tend to personal hygiene needs and to obtain fresh clothing, as appropriate.

The committee amendments:

-- clarify the purpose of the bill to continue the model project established pursuant to P.L.1995, c.187 as a permanent program;

-- provide that the Chief of the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy shall oversee the program in consultation with an advisory committee comprised of: the person designated by the advisory committee to serve as the program coordinator, and a representative from at least each of the following: the Attorney General, each hospital participating in the program, the Women's Center of Monmouth

County, Inc., a law enforcement agency within the county, and the county prosecutor's office; and

-- add a \$90,000 appropriation to the Department of Law and Public Safety to fund the program.