

## CHAPTER 328

**AN ACT** establishing a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program, supplementing Title 52 of the Revised Statutes and making an appropriation.

**BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. The Legislature finds and declares that the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Model Project established pursuant to P.L.1995, c.187 and approved on July 27, 1995, will expire on July 27, 1997. The project has been successful in ensuring more timely and accurate collection of forensic evidence for use in prosecuting suspected rapists and in creating a compassionate way to treat sexual assault victims, and it is important to continue the program.

2. a. The Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Model Project established pursuant to P.L.1995, c.187 is continued in accordance with the provisions of this act and shall be designated as the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Program in Monmouth county. The Chief of the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy in the Division of Criminal Justice in the Department of Law and Public Safety 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, the Division on Women in the Department of Community Affairs, 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. The chief may contract with any agency, organization or other entity, as appropriate, to effectuate the purposes of this act, and that agency, organization or other entity shall seek, to the maximum extent practicable, to obtain funds from nongovernmental sources as a supplement to State funds appropriated to operate the program.

b. The program shall be designed to use forensic nurse sexual assault examiners, who shall be registered professional nurses or nurse practitioners/clinical nurse specialists licensed in this 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 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-44) 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.

c. The program staff shall offer assistance to other counties which may be interested in establishing a similar program.

3. There is appropriated \$90,000 from the General Fund to the Department of Law and Public Safety to carry out the provisions of this act.

4. The Attorney General, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), may adopt rules and regulations to effectuate the purposes of this act.

5. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved January 9, 1998.