**CONTINUING EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Course Code: Rural Sexual Assault Course-Expanded (RSACE) Micro-credential**

Approximately 12 hours

Northwestern Polytechnic acknowledges that our campuses are located on Treaty 8 territory, the ancestral and present-day home to many diverse First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. We are grateful to work, live and learn on the traditional territory of Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation, and Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, who are the original caretakers of this land.

We acknowledge the history of this land and we are thankful for the opportunity to walk together in friendship, where we will encourage and promote positive change for present and future generations.

**INFORMATION/REGISTRATION:** <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/ce/courses/index.html?cat=844>

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Cathy Carter-Snell, PhD RN SANE-A

**PHONE:** 403-542-4529

**EMAIL:** cartersnell@forensiceducation.ca

**DELIVERY MODE(S):** Online, self -paced. Learners have 90 days to complete the micro-credential. Learners can arrange virtual appointments with the course instructor to discuss course concepts or related cases if desired.

**PREREQUISITE/COREQUISITE:**

Learners must be a registered nurse (RN), registered midwife, nurse practitioner, registered paramedic, or physician.

The course is focused on in-hospital care of clients after recent sexual assault and assumes learners have a background of assessment and intervention skills.

**RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS:**

Learners must have access to a computer with a good internet connection.

There are no required texts for this course. All required content is available within the course learning management system.

**CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:**

This course is designed for registered nurses or physicians working in rural or remote settings who choose to care for a client who was recently sexually assaulted (e.g. last 7 days) within the rural setting. While the content prepares the health professional to provide sufficient comprehensive care remotely, it also is supportive of rural care where collaboration with urban professionals is available (e.g. travelling specialized examiners, telehealth, Healthlink or RAPID consultations). It is based on principles of comprehensive evidence-based trauma informed practice. The exemplar for the evidence collection is the RCMP sexual assault evidence kit but the principles are applicable to kits from other police forces.

The course incorporates and builds on the free Enhanced Emergency Sexual Assault Services ([EESAS course](http://www.forensiceducation.ca/courses/EESAS)) which is available to multidisciplinary professionals who provide front line services in rural/remote areas. That course is designed to provide a group of front-line responders with sufficient information to collaborate to provide comprehensive care or to take appropriate actions until an examiner can take over care.

This course (RSACE) expands on those concepts with more in-depth discussions of topics unique to health professionals. A pre-existing knowledge of anatomy, physiology and assessment skills is assumed. Expanded content examples include interviewing considerations, assessment features with particular presentations (e.g. drug facilitated assaults), specific examination techniques, injury interpretations, evidence considerations, and court testimony/documentation. If the learner has already completed EESAS they will still be required to complete the quizzes for the EESAS portions of the course to proceed to the specialized modules but review of the EESAS module may not be required.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

The health professional in a rural or remote setting will be able to do the following after completion of this course:

1. Understand the impact of sexual assault from a physical, psychological, and legal perspective.
2. Develop or confirm the necessary knowledge and skills to provide comprehensive health care to clients after recent sexual assault
3. Collaborate with other team members (internal/external) to support comprehensive care as needed

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Upon successful completion of this course, learners will be able to:

1. Describe the risk factors for sexual assault, including intimate partner violence
2. Discuss the roles of professionals involved in supporting victims of sexual assault and areas for collaboration, including trauma informed care.
3. Describe physical and psychological consequences of sexual assault for the victim and their family and the role of the SANE in reducing secondary traumatization
4. Describe trauma informed care concepts and how they relate to sexual assault care
5. Discuss issues related to consent, history taking and examination of sexual assault victims.
6. Describe methods to evaluate, examine and improve care for sexual assault victims.
7. Identify injuries and discuss their implications in sexual assault.
8. Discuss considerations for special populations such as male victims, same-sex victims, disabled and elderly.
9. Describe techniques for collection and storage of evidence according to forensic standards.
10. Describe ethical, cultural, and socioeconomic factors which may impact an evaluation and treatment of victims.
11. Describe appropriate interventions for pregnancy and infection prophylaxis.
12. Identify potential methods to support victims in the acute phase after sexual assault including psychological first aid.
13. Differentiate burnout, compassion fatigue, and secondary traumatic stress including key considerations in self-care to reduce risks.
14. Discuss differences in fact vs. expert witness testimony related specifically to the sexual assault examiner.

**TIMELINES & EVALUATIONS:**

Learners have 90 days to complete the course material.

Assignments

There are a total of 14 modules consist of videos (30-45 min in length) with an accompanying manual. Learners must achieve 80% or higher on the module quizzes in order to proceed to the next module, multiple attempts are permitted.

**COURSE CONTENT:**

Each online module consists of one or more video lectures and quizzes. There are also videos (RCMP kit contents and comprehensive examination) and a manual to accompany the course. The course builds on the Enhanced Emergency Sexual Assault Services (EESAS) 4-hour course, but this is specifically for nurses and physicians and is more in depth. If participants have already completed EESAS they will be able to move through those modules by successfully completing the module quiz.

Plain text modules are consistent with EESAS, modules in **bold** are unique to RSACE

* Module 1 – Sexual Assault and Trauma Informed Practice
	+ Myths and realities of sexual assault
	+ Offender characteristics-behaviours: acquaintance, intimate partner, stranger
	+ Effects of sexual assault
	+ Risks for sexual assault: vulnerable populations, ACEs, intersectionality, Intimate partner violence, conflict/disaster
	+ Impact of professionals on client outcomes
	+ Trauma informed services
	+ Enhanced Sexual Assault Services model
* Module 2 – Psychological Considerations
	+ Normal stress response
	+ Stress Disorders: ASD, PTSD, dissociation, tonic immobility, Rape trauma syndrome
	+ Effects of stress on memory, behaviours
	+ Prevention of stress disorders: resiliency, communications, psychological first aid
	+ Indirect violence & self-care (burnout, compassion fatigue, vicarious violence)
* Module 3
	+ Module 3A Triage
		- Responding to disclosures
		- Police involvement on arrival, mandatory reporting
		- Evidence at triage: chain of custody, evidence preservation
		- Eating, drinking, and voiding at triage guidelines
		- Triage disposition
		- Introduction to drug facilitated sexual assault (DFSA), toxidromes, testing
	+ **Module 3B Toxicology**
		- **Signs of abuse, human trafficking/sexual exploitation, intimate partner violence**
		- **Toxidromes and toxicology testing**
		- **Application to DFSA cases**
* Module 4
	+ 4A Consent, History and Interview and Reporting
		- Legal age for consent to sexual activity
		- Mandatory reporting
		- Consent to treatment, mature minor considerations
		- Medical vs. police sexual assault interview
		- Sexual assault history guidelines
	+ **4B Trauma informed Interviewing Considerations**
		- **Sexual assault legislation & implications for interviews**
		- **Cognitive interviewing techniques**
		- **Sexual assault interview in-depth (with video case reviews)**
* Module 5
	+ 5A Injuries and Documentation
		- Injury terminology & BALD STEP guide
		- Injuries with sexual assault
			* Blunt, penetrating, burns, blast, patterned, pattern of injuries
		- Documentation
		- Photographs
	+ **5B Expanded injury Interpretation**
		- **Issues with injury research, patterns of injuries**
		- **Factors affecting injury identification: skin colour, experience, timing**
* Module 6
	+ 6A Body Examination and Evidence Collection
		- Preparation for exam
		- Considerations through exam: prevention of dissociation, continued consent
		- Primary, secondary assessment
		- Body injuries
		- Evidence collection from body
	+ **6B Expanded body examination**
		- **Focused assessment**
			* **Head injuries**
			* **Strangulation**
* Module 7
	+ 7A Genital Examination; Evidence Collection
		- External genital exam and evidence
		- Adjuncts to visualization: toluidine, foley exam
		- Internal genital exam and evidence
		- Anal-rectal exam
		- Special populations; men, children, elderly
	+ **7B Expanded genital exam considerations**
		- **Adjuncts: colposcopy, anoscopy**
		- **Child sexual abuse and exploitation, Adam’s criteria**
		- **Elder abuse legislation, reporting, considerations**
		- **Transgender examination considerations**
		- **Injury interpretation expanded**
* Module 8 – Intervention and Discharge Considerations
	+ Testing and treatment considerations
	+ Interventions: pregnancy, STI prophylaxis, HIV PEP
	+ Discharge considerations: when to return to ER, suicide screening, safety, wound care, medical follow-up
	+ Counselling post-discharge
	+ Evidence transfer police, third option, anonymous kits
	+ Quality assurance
	+ Court testimony: Fact witness
* **Module 9 – Legal Reports and Court Testimony**
	+ **Legal systems: levels of court, judge/jury, court protocols**
	+ **Medicolegal & export reports**
	+ **Expert qualification (Daubert, Mohan)**
	+ **Sexual assault prevention/intervention in disasters**