



# The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe Of Michigan

## PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

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### **Providing critical sexual assault victim services in Isabella County** *Community partners re-introduce SANE services*

A community partnership in Isabella County has reinstated 24/7 medical and trauma care for victims of sexual assault or abuse. The Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner program at McLaren Central Michigan provides critical services for those 12 years or older in need.

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners are registered nurses who have completed specialized education and clinical preparation in the medical forensic care of a patient who has experienced sexual abuse. SANE services – which include emergency contraception, trauma response, sexually transmitted infection testing and treatment, forensic medical care, and referral to further support services – are vital for evidence collection to identify and hold offenders accountable. Most important, however, is the survivor's treatment and recovery.

Isabella County's previous SANE program ended in 2013 due to a reduction in grant funding. In the interim, sexual assault survivors had to travel an hour or more to receive services from other programs in mid-Michigan.

In 2013, the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe was awarded a federal grant to establish a Sexual Assault Response Team – a multidisciplinary team aimed at establishing a victim-centered response to sexual assault in Isabella County.

"It became immediately evident that without a SANE program we were missing the crucial component of medical forensic services," said Brooke Huber, Sexual Assault Response Team lead at the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan.

The team submitted a request for grant monies to be re-allocated in support of SANE efforts. The request was approved in September 2015 and the SANE program officially re-launched at McLaren Central Michigan in June 2016.

“We are excited to welcome back this crucial service for Mount Pleasant,” said Lt. Larry Klaus of the Central Michigan University Police Department. “Now, we are able to implement a patient-centered response to sexual assault and abuse.”

Huber primarily led the efforts to re-instate the SANE program by building a collaborative team of key stakeholders which include the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, Central Michigan University, McLaren Central Michigan and Women’s Aid Service.

“We found success amongst hurdles in implementing this program because of the key players involved,” Huber said. “Each member of our team is passionately committed to ensuring the best care is provided to survivors in these situations.”

SANE services can be accessed by contacting McLaren’s Emergency department at 989-772-6777 or presenting directly to the emergency room. From there, the survivor will be taken to a private area within the hospital. Advocate accompaniment is available 24/7, and trained advocates are available to provide support to the survivor throughout the SANE exam and processes which follow.

An event celebrating the re-launch of a SANE program in Isabella County will be held August 11 from 5 to 7 p.m. at McLaren Central Michigan. The public is welcome to attend and meet the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners, advocates and members of the team involved in developing the program.

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