



OFFICE OF THE
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COUNTY OF SHASTA

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PRESS RELEASE
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS APPROVE EXTENSION
OF SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICES AGREEMENT

Today the Shasta County Board of Supervisors unanimously agreed to approve an agreement with the City of Redding and Shasta Regional Medical Center to continue funding a program that allows specially trained nurses to be on-call for adult victims of sexual assault. These nurses, called SART (Sexual Assault Response Team) nurses, are specially trained to work with victims of sexual assault and they conduct the important work of collecting evidence necessary to prosecute, and sometimes, exonerate those accused of sexual assault.

Under the agreement, Shasta Regional Medical Center, the City of Redding and Shasta County will equally split the approximately \$100,000 a year needed to fund the program. Last year, the City of Redding and Shasta County split the total cost equally. Shasta Regional Medical Center's contribution helps ease the financial burden borne by the City and the County. The Redding City Council approved their 1/3 contribution on May 6, 2008. The contributions by the entities demonstrate the importance of the program.

Having the nurses on-call means that rape victims do not have to spend needless and traumatic hours in an emergency room waiting for a SART nurse to be called in. Prior to the program's existence, some rape victims became frustrated with the delays and left the hospital before the exam with valuable evidence being lost. Since the program, victims have reported great satisfaction with the service being provided. For the period of July 1, 2007-June 30, 2008, 61 SART exams were performed on victims of sexual assault at Shasta Regional Medical Center.

District Attorney Jerry Benito and Shasta Women's Refuge Executive Director Maggie John have lobbied each of the contributing partners for funds over the last 2 years. On behalf of their agencies and the victim's of sexual assault, they wish to thank the Shasta County Board of Supervisors, the Redding City Council and Shasta Regional Medical Center. For further information, contact District Attorney Jerry Benito at 245-6310, Shasta Women's Refuge Executive Director Maggie John at 244-0118, or Cyndy Gordon, Vice President of Operations/C.N.O., for Shasta Regional Medical Center at 244-8348.