



### D48 Sexual Child Abuse and Forensic Nursing

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The goals of this presentation are to provide an overview of the development of forensic nursing in Southern Italy and to illustrate the unique contribution of professional nurses in a child abuse center.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by demonstrating how nurses are utilized within the GIADA project of Pediatric Hospital "Giovanni XXIII" of Bari (Southern Italy).

GIADA Project is a new program implemented in the pediatric hospital. It was established in 2000 by the department of Psychology to address domestic violence and the abuse of women and children. GIADA is a multidisciplinary team effort and in addition to clinical forensic nursing services, includes expertise by psychologists, pediatricians, gynecologists, medical-legal physicians, radiologists, biologists, dentists, and social work services.

Three scenarios will be presented to highlight the contributions of the clinical forensic nurse (CFN) and how this important specialty compliments other disciplines in these forensic cases.

**Case # 1 – 12-year-old female:** A 12-year-old female was brought to the hospital by a CFN from the foster home where she had been living. The girl reported that her "foster grandfather" had been sexually molesting her and that she was experiencing continual pain in her vagina and anal areas.

**Case # 2 – 7-year-old female:** A 7-year-old girl was brought into the hospital by her mother after she noticed a rash on her genital area as well as a yellow secretion from the vagina. The parents were divorced and the girl had weekly visits with her father. Her mother suspected that her ex-husband was sexually abusing his daughter.

**Case # 3 – 4-year-old female:** A 4-year-old female was brought to the hospital by her mother with bleeding in her vagina. Her underwear was stained with blood and was experiencing severe pain in her pelvic region. Her mother reported that she had fallen out of a closet and she injured herself on the corner of the bed. It was immediately clear to the CFN that the patient history did not match the injury and further investigation was necessary.

**Conclusion:** The clinical forensic nurse continues to be a valuable member of the forensic team often in the position to identify victims of crime immediately. The CFN is essential in starting the chain of events necessary to manage medical evidence, obtain legal documentation and make referrals to the appropriate services.

**Clinical Forensic Nursing, Child Abuse, Sexual Abuse**