

Debra Patterson, PhD, MA, LMSW

Dr. Patterson is an Associate Professor in the School of Social Work at Wayne State University. She holds a Ph.D. in community psychology with a concentration in organizational and social change from Michigan State University. Her research examines sexual assault victims/survivors' barriers to help-seeking; culturally specific trauma-informed services; sexual assault nurse examiner programs; and improving professional and familial responses towards survivors of sexual and interpersonal violence. Her research also focuses on training attrition, knowledge attainment and retention, and competency development. Dr. Patterson received the 2010 Patron Award from the International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN) and the 2010 Turning Point Forensic Nurse Examiner Program Award for Outstanding Commitment to Improving the Care for Sexual Assault Survivors. She also was named a distinguished chapter fellow of the Michigan Chapter of IAFN in 2017. She has been working in the violence against women field since 1996 and is the former director of a rape crisis center in Southeast Michigan.