

Adult Sexual Assault - 7 Day Window Considerations

(For children under 16—you must follow Child Protection Protocols)

Guidance for all cases

Providing an accessible, non-stigmatising response will potentially have a stabilising influence on the subsequent, longer-term impact of rape or sexual assault.

If someone presents to your service after a recent rape or sexual assault, you should:

- Treat any immediate physical or medical conditions requiring attention or make necessary arrangements for this.
- Never 'interrogate' the person about the incident. If they seem distressed, ask if they would prefer you to ask questions to which they only need to give a 'yes' or 'no' answer. Allow the person to talk as little or as much as they wish, noting down carefully what they say, keeping what you note down as exact as possible.
- Check whether they want to report the assault to the police even if it is historical.
- Always provide sign posting to specialist support organisations for support and assistance. Contacts are below
- Refer the person to sexual health and/or mental health services as appropriate.
- Consider raising an adult protection concern in circumstances where the person is unable to keep themselves safe, is more vulnerable because of disability or illness and is at risk of harm or self-harm.
- Discuss safety concerns especially if the perpetrator is known to them. If you know/suspect a child is at risk use the appropriate Child Protection procedures.

The Willows

The Willows is a bespoke facility in Ayrshire for Forensic Medical Examination (FME). It is part of the West of Scotland Regional Sexual Assault Response Coordination Service. People who live in Ayrshire can choose to have a FME locally, in the Willows, or travel to another facility in the West of Scotland. For those who wish to self-refer for FME, this can be arranged by calling the Archway service (Nb this is not currently available at the Willows). Police referrals are initiated by contacting the police on 101.

More than 7 days since the assault and the adult chooses not to initiate a police report

Follow 'Guidance for all cases'

Any disclosure of sexual violence should be recorded. It may help in any future legal proceedings, if they decide to report the incident to the police at a later date. This includes:

- What the person says occurred,
- The nature of the consultation and significance of the experience of sexual assault with regard to this.

7 days or less since the assault and the adult chooses not to involve the police

Follow 'Guidance for all cases'

- Address any immediate clinical concerns.
- Inform the person of the self-referral service available at Archway. This means the person, if clinically indicated, can access a Forensic Examination and have biological evidence retained without first reporting the incident to the police. The evidence is stored and made available should they decide to report the incident to police in the future.
- If the adult wants to know more about self-referral FME provide contact details or support them to make contact with Archway for advice on next steps. Contact details are below.
- Evaluate the risk of pregnancy
- Sexual Health considerations
 - Consider need for STI and BBV screening
 - Consider hepatitis B
 - Consider HIV prophylaxis (within 72 hours of assault)

7 days or less since the assault and police involvement is agreed

Follow **Guidance for all cases**

Treat any immediate physical conditions requiring attention.

- Call the police (or support the person to) on 101.
- Do not examine the person if not required for other clinical reasons.
- A Forensic Medical Examination may be arranged if appropriate.
- Try to make the person as comfortable as possible while waiting for the police.
- It may be helpful for the person to be supported by a friend or family member. If this is not available support can usually be arranged urgently from specialist agencies. Contact details are listed below.
- If the assault may have been 'drug assisted' the forensic examination will be arranged as soon as possible as traces of the drugs can leave the system very quickly, along with other forensic evidence. This varies depending on the drug. The police may want to take early evidence.
- If there is any delay in the police attending, immediate health/care advice can be sought from Archway. Telephone number is below.

Forensic swabs should only be taken by a trained Sexual Offences Examiner

Online contacts and further guidance

[Rape Crisis Star Centre](#)

[Women's Aid](#)

[Moving On Ayrshire](#) (South Ayrshire)

[Break the Silence](#) (East and North Ayrshire)

[Gatehouse Sexual Health Service](#), Ayrshire Tel: 01294 323 226 Archway, Glasgow [website](#) Phone **0141 211 8175**

[What Health Workers Need to Know about rape and sexual assault](#) guidance

Police Scotland - Dial 101 or 999 in an Emergency.