

Rape and Sexual Assault Military Pathway: Assessment and Action following Sexual Assault and Onward Referral to SARC

Person discloses sexual assault (recent or historic) - Refer to initial disclosure checklist & complete alongside this pathway

Assessment of immediate safety issues e.g. domestic abuse, child protection, life-threatening injury:
refer to Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub as necessary (Welfare Team can support this)

The next two areas must both be discussed in any order; the priority is to ensure the individual's opinions are respected and that they are given choices e.g. they may want the CoC to take them to the SARC or they may wish to wait for the police or to go with a friend.

Police

Under s113 AFA 06, Commanders are obliged to report all incidents of rape and sexual offences to Service Police as soon as is reasonably practical, in practical terms this means immediately. This is to protect individuals from delayed or inadequate investigations and to protect commanders from accusations of inadequately managing allegations.

Irrespective of this report being made the individual still has the choice about whether they wish to engage with the Service police or civilian police (irrespective of whether both the alleged perpetrator and the victim are in Service) or to have no immediate police investigation. If the incident takes place overseas Service police may investigate, or local police.

Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)

The SARC offers confidential medical and practical support to those who have been raped or sexually assaulted; accessed by self-referral, via the police or via CoC. Attendance is open to all and does not require police involvement or any form of physical examination. Even if an individual does not want a police investigation evidence can still be collected, with consent, and stored for up to 7 years to be used in an investigation at a later date if the individual chooses, this is called anonymous intelligence.

The SARC can also offer treatment for injuries, contraception, STI testing as well as signposting to local pathways for emotional support.

Report the allegations to the local Service Police unit or Service Police Crime Bureau (02392 285 170 / 180).

Does the individual want civilian police involvement? If yes also report to the police on 101.

If the individual declines all police involvement at this time advise them that the Service Police have to be informed, for the reasons listed above, and that they will attempt to make contact with them.

The police will not investigate the case without the consent of the individual (victim) but with their consent would seek to take an initial statement so this can be used in the future. The individual always has the choice to seek an investigation at a later date; this can be more challenging if a long time has elapsed and statements or physical evidence were not collected at the time.

No

Give SARC leaflet, remind them they can self-refer at any time.

Do they wish to be referred or self-refer to the SARC?

Yes

Commander, Police or individual to refer to SARC via national number 365 days/24hrs on:

0330 223 009

If incident occurred less than 10 days ago advise individual not to wash self or clothes to protect any potential DNA evidence, until seen at the SARC. This window is a guideline only, as collection of samples will depend on the nature of the assault.

Therapeutic need always comes before forensic samples. If in doubt or for further advice a forensic nurse can offer support via the national number 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Physical Health - Offer to arrange a medical centre appointment for all cases; if agreed ask permission to inform the doctor of the reason for the appointment in advance. Where possible the medical review should be booked within 3 days of the assault to allow for consideration of emergency contraception and Blood Borne Virus Post Exposure Prophylaxis. Sexual health assessments should be arranged at the Sexual Health Clinic 2 weeks or more after the assault. The SARC can also support with advice and signposting for this.

Wellbeing - Offer all SP immediate compassionate leave, with a planned review and meeting a maximum of 7 days later. Further time off after this may be advised by a doctor to ensure appropriate mental health support is in place. Some people may decline any time off. Ensure they have the means to attend all appointments or follow up and re-offer within 48 hours of disclosure if interventions or time off were initially declined. Offer to attend appointments with them, or to release another member of the Unit (their choice) to attend. The police or SARC should refer to an Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) to offer emotional support to the individual through any criminal investigation process. The SARC will follow up at 6 weeks, and the police will arrange regular follow up with consent. Commanders must provide regular supportive follow up throughout any legal or investigative process, and afterwards as required by the SP and they must offer this support even if the individual does not choose to pursue a legal investigation.

OFFICIAL SENSITIVE PERSONAL (ONCE COMPLETE)

**Rape and Sexual Assault Initial Disclosure Checklist**

As the first official person to whom an assault is being disclosed it is vitally important that you treat the individual with respect and offer support whilst also ensuring the correct actions are taken to report the matter within the MOD. This form should be used in conjunction with the Initial Management Pathway.

You must not question the individual on the event for two main reasons; these events can be very distressing for individuals and there are medically qualified professionals who are better placed to ask appropriate questions and then provide the correct support and secondly; discrepancies in statements given by the individual to the police, and by witnesses (such as yourself receiving the first disclosure) can be used against the individual in court; even if these discrepancies are only due to the way the information was recorded.

On first hearing the disclosure let the individual know that you do not need to hear any more detail, but that you take the report seriously. Complete the form below, and use the Initial Management Pathway to help explain what their options are and what might happen next. After this focus your questions on their welfare and safety; confirm where they intend to spend the rest of today/tonight and whether they have a safe place to go to; offer an appropriate person to accompany them to their police and SARC appointments if they wish, offer to arrange immediate compassionate leave and MO appointment.

Date:		Time:		Location:	
Service No, Name and Rank of person completing form:					
Usual job role of person completing form:			Current Unit:		
Service No, Name and Rank (if relevant) of individual making disclosure:					
Service Nos, Name and Rank of any other persons present during the disclosure interview:					
Do you believe you or anyone else (including children) are in immediate danger?			Were any children present during the incident? (No details needed)		
If yes call the Police on 999 and the local Service Police			If yes contact Welfare Team immediately for appropriate safeguarding measures.		
Details of the alleged incident					
Place:		Date:		Time:	
What has been disclosed? <i>Eg; "Reports an assault yesterday evening on camp."</i>	Do not ask questions to get any more detail; use this box to record what was said to you, as close as possible to the actual words used.				
Circle all that apply:					
Informed about notification to Service Police (mandatory)	Offered option to inform civilian police	Would like SARC referral	Will self-refer to SARC	SARC input declined	

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