

Disclosure of Rape/Sexual Assault in the Emergency Department

Initial Steps

Allow the patient to speak openly about what has happened in a confidential space

Avoid judgemental questioning and language

Ascertain how long ago the assault occurred- this has forensic implications (see below)

Consider patient safety and provide relevant contact numbers- see contact numbers on CEM

Offer contact to police

Police must be contacted where the patient does not have capacity, is <16 or where a weapon has been used

Reported Rape/Sexual Assault <7 days ago

Give emergency treatment if required

Do not perform intimate examination unless emergency indication- may interfere with forensic evidence

Offer referral to Archway at Sandyford for gathering of forensic evidence, emergency contraception, STI screening/treatment and counselling

Consider need for emergency contraception

Consider HIV exposure and offer PEP

Offer to take bloods for storage and BBV screen

Advise patient to preserve clothing from the time of assault, if they wish for a forensic examination

Document disclosure and examination findings thoroughly

Rape is when someone penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person without their consent.

Sexual assault is when someone touches another person in a sexual way, without that person's consent.

Reported Rape/Sexual Assault >7 days ago

After 7 days it is no longer possible to collect forensic evidence

Give emergency treatment if required

Advise urgent presentation at Sandyford for STI screening/treatment, counselling and emergency contraception- they will usually arrange same day appointment

Document disclosure and examination findings thoroughly

Safety Concerns

Patients that do not have capacity

Complete API form, compulsory police/social work contact and senior clinician involvement

Age <16

Complete NOC form, compulsory police/social work contact and senior clinician involvement

What is Archway?

A 24/7 service that offers expert care for patients aged >13 who have been raped or sexually assaulted within the last 7 days

Patients who attend Archway have the option of a forensic examination performed by a trained female medical professional

If a patient requires inpatient care Archway can arrange forensic examination in hospital

Patients do not have to report an incident of assault to the police if they proceed with a forensic examination. Forensic evidence may be stored until a victim decides to report to the police

Archway can be contacted 24/7 by health professionals or patients on 0141 211 8175