

SEXUAL ASSAULT CRISIS INTERVENTION PROTOCOL FOR N.E. MANITOBA

DOCUMENT PREPARED BY MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS OF
THE SEXUAL ASSAULT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (2003):

SURVIVOR'S HOPE CRISIS CENTRE INC.

NORTH EASTMAN HEALTH ASSOCIATION INC.

RCMP – MANITOBA EAST DISTRICT

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES AND HOUSING, EASTMAN REGION

ROLES OF THE SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE TEAM MEMBERS:

SARAH (Sexual Assault Recovery and Healing) *Survivor's Hope Crisis Centre Inc.*

A SARAH Support Worker's role on the sexual assault response team is to provide emotional support, forensic exam accompaniment, information and referrals for victims and secondary victims of sexual, regardless of police involvement. SARAH Support Workers work closely with other team members to ensure the client receives the best possible support in the critical time following a sexual assault.

Nurse Examiner Program *North Eastman Health Association Inc.*

Sexual assault survivors presenting to Beausejour, Pinawa and Pine Falls acute care hospitals, with or without police, alleging sexual assault, will receive medical care and possible forensic examination at the hospital they attend, according to procedural guidelines outlined in the Acute Care Nursing Sexual Assault Response Protocol.

The purpose of a forensic exam is to ensure the survivor receives necessary medical care and to gather evidence for the police investigation. The Sexual Assault Examination Kit (SAEK) is supplied by the RCMP.

RCMP *Manitoba East District*

The primary roles of police in responding to reports of sexual offences are to ensure the safety of the client and to conduct an investigation so the criminal justice system can administer swift, fair and efficient justice. This role must be carried out in a manner that is sensitive to the client's needs.

Police officers recognize the unique characteristics of sexual assault and how their response to the client will affect the quality of the client's disclosure to the police, which have a direct impact on the investigation.

When a sexual assault complaint is made, the police will try to interview the client as soon as possible and will call the hospital to make any necessary arrangements for a forensic examination.

Department of Family Services and Housing *Eastman Region*

Child and Family Services assist professional and laypersons in carrying out their responsibilities under The Child and Family Services Act of Manitoba (the Act) to protect children through early identification and reporting of child abuse and protection issues.

Child and Family Services will be consulted under the following conditions:

- when a sexual assault client is under the age of 18 years
- when the worker believes, in the course of their work with a client, that a child(children) may be in need of protection

OUR PHILOSOPHY:

- Sexual assault is an act of domination, violence and aggression perpetrated through forced or coerced “sexual contact”. It is a criminal offence and needs to be treated as such.
- The problem of sexual assault is extensive and although it can and does happen to all people regardless of age, sex, relationship status, sexual orientation and ethnic or socio-economic background, women and children are, in the majority of cases, the victims of sexual assault.
- It has immediate and far-reaching emotional, physical and psychological effects upon its primary victims and secondary victims (i.e. any other individual(s) holding a significant position in the life of the primary victim of sexual assault including family members, partner, and friends).
- Sexual assault victims need to be considered and treated as the injured party rather than as the defendant or guilty party throughout the legal, medical, social and political processes. They deserve to be treated in a fair, just, respectful and humane way.
- It is a fundamental right of sexual assault victims to make choices for themselves and have these choices respected.
- To reduce professional isolation and insure that victims/clients are provided with the most effective service possible, organizations involved with sexual assault victims/clients need to be familiar with sexual assault trauma and effective approaches to victims/clients.

PROTOCOL:

Sexual Assault Protocol was developed from a medical perspective with RCMP, SARAH and CFS partnering as required. Protocol can involve one or more partners.

Adult client greater than or equal to 17 years of age:

- Patient presents at hospital alleging sexual assault
- Contact physician
- If 17 years of age, call CFS to consult
- Page SARAH Support Worker
- If the client gives verbal consent for forensic examination contact forensic nurse examiner and police
 - Sexual Assault Examination Kit (SAEK) must be done within 72 hours of the assault
- If the client does not want a forensic examination but wishes police involvement, contact police
- If the client wants the forensic examination but does **not** wish police involvement, contact police to bring a kit and advise them that client does not want to report at this time

Minor client 13-16 years of age:

- Patient presents at hospital alleging sexual assault
- Contact physician
- Contact CFS to consult
- Page SARAH Support Worker
- Physician consults with Children’s Hospital emergency re: forensic examination
- Contact police if police involvement requested/required
- Transfer to Children’s Hospital if doing forensic examination

Client presenting to RCMP:

- Client presents at detachment alleging sexual assault
- With client’s permission, page SARAH Support Worker
- SARAH Worker will attend at detachment or hospital as required
- SARAH Worker will attend at a client’s home with police present
 - Support Worker will provide emotional support, information, options, and possible accompaniment through statement taking
- Client may attend hospital for medical/forensic examination