



**Birmingham
Community Healthcare**
NHS Foundation Trust

West Midlands Paediatric Sexual Assault Service

**Delivering Best Care,
Preserving Best Evidence**

Information for young people

A separate leaflet is available
for children, and for professionals



Better Care: Healthier Communities

West Midlands Paediatric Sexual Assault service (PSAS) offers a caring, confidential service for young victims of sexual assault, in a safe and comfortable environment. We are focussed on your individual needs, and will talk everything through with you.

Where will I be seen?

You will be seen in one of our welcoming, purpose-made centres.

If you need to be seen very soon, you will be seen at the **Horizon Centre in Walsall**. You can be seen here 24/7.

It might be important to see you quickly for health reasons (e.g. for the 'morning after pill', or to prevent infections), or for look for evidence to help the police, or both.

If it is ok to wait a few days or weeks, we can offer you an appointment closer to you at one of our other centres:

- **New Cross Hospital**, Wolverhampton
- **Blue Sky Centre**, George Eliot Hospital, Nuneaton
- **Oasis Suite**, Birmingham Children's Hospital, Birmingham
- **The Glade**, Bransford, Worcester
- **Grange Park**, Cobridge, Stoke-on-Trent

You can say 'no' to any part of the examination - we will always respect your wishes.

What happens while I am at the centre?

Each visit is different but, on average, it takes around three hours to complete. A crisis worker will be with you throughout. This is someone who is specially trained to support you.

You will be seen by a specialist doctor, who will explain everything they do and answer all your questions. They will offer you a head-to-toe examination. The doctor may take swabs - these are like cotton buds and do not hurt. They may offer you a blood test, and will assess whether you have any other health needs.

Why should I be examined?

The most important reason is for your health. Most young people tell us they found getting a 'check-up' was reassuring and they felt better afterwards.

It is also important to look for evidence to help the investigation. This can mean forensic samples (like DNA swabs, hair or fibres), and documenting any injuries to your body or genitals. We want you to know however, that after a sexual assault most young people will not have injuries.

What if the assault was a long time ago?

We would still like to see you. Having a health check-up is important, and sometimes old injuries can be seen, even years later.

Can my Mum/friend/carer stay with me?

Yes! You can choose who you want to stay in with you when you are talking to us, and when you are being examined. You can also choose NOT to have them in, if you prefer.

What if I don't want to involve police or children's services?

We need to make sure you, and others, are safe. Sometimes we need help from police or social services to do this. We will talk this through with you and try to agree the best way forward. It is sometimes possible for forensic samples to be taken and kept securely at the centre while you decide whether to report the allegation to the police for criminal investigation.

What if I change my mind?

It's your body and your choice. Nothing will be done without your consent.

We will put you in control of the examination: if at any point you are not sure whether you want to carry on, just ask to stop and we will take a break. The doctor or crisis worker will explain what remains to be done and you can ask questions to decide whether you wish to continue.

Can I be tested for sexually transmitted infections (STIs)?

Yes! The right time to do this will depend on what has happened to you. You may be able to have your STI screening when you visit us, as part of the physical examination.

However it can take a few weeks for infections to show up, so sometimes it is best for us to make you another appointment in a few weeks' time. The doctor will talk this through with you.

What happens after the examination?

We will make sure you are supported. You, or your carer, will get a phone call from one of our crisis workers a day or two after your visit, to see how you are and arrange any follow-up you need.

Counselling support

Counselling can include talking, playing, artwork - it depends what works best for you. The aim is to provide a 'safe space' in which you will be heard, believed and accepted and an opportunity to express your feelings about what has happened to you. You will never be pressurised into talking about something you do not want to discuss.

We work with children and young people aged five to 17, and the parents and carers of children aged below five years old. A number of different locations are available so that we can find a convenient place that is comfortable and feels safe for you.

The care and assessment provided by PSAS include:

- physical examination
- collection of forensic evidence
- screening and treatment for sexually-transmitted infections
- emergency contraception and
- counselling and support package.

PSAS service contact details:

Telephone: **0800 953 4133** (a single point of contact, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year).

Email: **PSASWestMids@uk.g4s.com.cjasm.net**

Web: **www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk/PSAS**

Twitter: **@WM_PSAS**

The service is for all children and young people in the West Midlands who are victims of sexual assault or where there is suspected sexual abuse.

PSAS will treat all information that you share with us as confidential and store it safely and securely. There may be occasions when other agencies such as the police or social services will need to be informed if we think you are at risk of harm.

PSAS is delivered by:



**Birmingham
Community Healthcare**
NHS Foundation Trust



**Coventry and
Warwickshire Partnership**
NHS Trust



The Royal Wolverhampton
NHS Trust



**University Hospitals
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