

REFERRAL GUIDELINE FOR PAEDIATRIC FORENSIC MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS AFTER DISCLOSURE OF SEXUAL ABUSE/CONCERN SEXUAL ABUSE

- **ACUTE REFERRALS for Forensic Sampling (pre pubertal within 3 days and peri/pubertal within 7day)**
- **URGENT REFERRALS (incident pre pubertal greater than 3days and peri/pubertal greater than 7days but presenting within 34 days of last potential sexual contact)**
- **NON ACUTE REFERRALS (greater than 34 days since last potential sexual contact)**

ALL children who have made a disclosure of sexual abuse or for whom sexual abuse is strongly suspected should be referred to TUSLA.

If child is aged 14yrs or over the referral should be made to SATU which is based in the South Infirmary. Phone number is 021 4926297. OUT OF HOURS 0214926100. SATU provides 24hr/ 7days a week service.

For children under 14yrs of age the family centre provide paediatric medical examinations 9am -5pm, Monday to Friday (Excluding Bank Holiday or Public Holiday). Phone **0214923302** or **Clinical Nurse Manager Mobile 0872837117**.

URGENT (Between 7-34 days) and child is <14yrs can be referred to family centre that day or next working day if presenting Monday- Friday (consider medical considerations as outlined below). Over Weekends & Bank Holidays consult with on call Paediatric Forensic Examiner, Galway (see below).

If there is a concern out of hours for a child <14yrs.

If child has medical needs consider need to refer to local Emergency Department.

If urgent safety needs contact Gardai / Tusla Emergency Social Work Services

Galway CASATS, @ Barnahus West is the only service providing a paediatric forensic medical service out of hours. They are contactable out of hours via **091 524222**, ask for the on call **Paediatric Forensic Medical Examiner**. Specify that the child is <14 years. Available for advice.

If the child attends the Emergency Department, a Senior Clinician should contact An Garda Siochana and the Paediatric Forensic Medical Services, Galway via 091524222

URGENT HEALTH NEEDS and SAFEGUARDING take priority

FORENSIC CONSIDERATIONS: Forensic sampling timeframes: (these samples will be taken by the forensic examiner)

- **For pre pubertal children 72hrs since last contact with the alleged perpetrator**
- **Pubertal up to 7days since last contact with the alleged perpetrator**
- **Blood for Toxicology (up to 48hrs)**
- **Urine for Toxicology up to 5 days**

Preservation of Forensic Evidence

- **Garda can do early evidence kit for non-intimate samples (mouth swabs, urine)**
- **Retain clothing including nappies, bedsheets etc.**
- **Advise not to wash, to avoid wiping after toileting**

MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Does the child have any injuries/acute medical needs? If yes- direct to the Emergency Department.

Emergency contraception up to **120 hrs** after assault

Hepatitis B exposure. (If required Vaccine is available in CUH pharmacy)

Hep B Immunoglobulin considered up to 1 week post exposure

HIV Post Exposure Prophylaxis can be commenced up to 72 hrs post exposure (HIV PEP stocked in CUH pharmacy, ADON can access out of hours)

Prophylaxis for STI – Not routinely given in children and adolescents

Healing injuries may be present for up to 34 days after a sexual assault dictating urgent examination ideally within one working day even if child presenting outside the immediate timeframe for forensic sampling.

RESOURCES

- National SART guidelines [Sexual Assault Response Team National Guidelines \(hse.ie\)](#)
[the_guidelines.pdf \(hpsc.ie\)](#)
- EMI Toolkit www.hpsc.ie/a-z/EMIToolkit/EMIToolkit.pdf for current HIV/HEP B guidance

Information required for referral:

- Referrer's name, address, occupation and contact number
- Child's name and date of birth
- Details of the report – including timeframe, any immediate medical needs which may need intervention, and immediate child safety concerns;
- Confirmation of consent for examination – i.e. parent or legal guardian available for consent or if child in care of TUSLA (Full Care Order), consent must be obtained from Principle Social Worker.
- Specific needs child/family may have – e.g. does not speak English and will need an interpreter.
- Name, address and telephone number of Garda involved in case
- Name and telephone number for person who will be transporting child to the Forensic Medical Examination