

**STANDARDISED GUIDELINES FOR THE  
MANAGEMENT OF SURVIVORS OF RAPE AND  
SEXUAL ASSAULT**

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH: WESTERN CAPE  
PROVINCE**

1. All survivors (**female or male**) aged 14 years or older, who present to a health facility, with a complaint of rape or sexual assault must be assessed as soon as possible using the attached management guidelines.

*For children younger than 14 years refer to the Child Abuse policy and management guidelines in Circular H102/2000 (dated 21 September 2000).*

2. Under no circumstances should any survivor be turned away to seek help from another facility – if services are not rendered at the specific facility then arrangements should be made to transfer/refer the survivor to the appropriate facility.
3. Clinic staff are required to fast track in a confidential manner any rape survivor to a private room for appropriate counselling and examination.
4. All rape survivors are to be interviewed by the appropriate health worker in a private room. It is advisable that a trusted friend, relative or nurse supports her/him during the interview according to the survivor's wishes.
5. Establish whether the survivor has reported the matter to the police. Explain to her/him the advantages and disadvantages of reporting the incident.
6. If the survivor declines to report the rape to the police or to undergo the forensic examination, this choice should be respected and no undue pressure exerted upon her/him.  
The survivor should however still be medically examined and given the appropriate treatment. Explain to the survivor the advantages of taking forensic specimens even if the case is not reported at the time. Should she/he decide on reporting the matter at a later stage then the relevant specimens would be available. Keep specimens in a lockable cupboard.  
Specimens are to be kept for 30 days (no case has been made) after which it should be disposed of in a safe manner – incinerated/by means of Wastech. Inform survivor that specimens are to be destroyed.
7. If she/he chooses to report the case to the police, phone the police station in the area in which the rape or assault occurred and ask that a police officer comes to the health facility to take a statement from the survivor.
8. It is important to note that in terms of the National Police Instructions on Sexual Offences (N1022/1998) a medical examination must take place as soon as possible. If the matter has been reported to the police, it is not necessary for an in-depth statement to be taken from the survivor before the examination is done. The in-depth statement should only be taken from the survivor as soon as she/he has recuperated sufficiently, ideally within 24 – 36 hours.
9. NOTE: The Sexual Assault Examination Form constitutes the confidential medical record of the survivor. It may however be subpoenaed as a court document if the court deems it necessary. It is essential to record all information and findings accurately, legibly and to remember that the original document could become part of a court record.
10. Remember to label each page of the Sexual Assault Examination Form with the survivor's name and folder number.
11. A J88 form must be completed in all cases – this is a legal requirement. The J88 form will be used for the court record in the first instance and must be given to the SAPS after the examination.

12. A Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kit (SAECK) is used for the collection of forensic specimens. If a SAECK or Crime Kit is not available then use ordinary throat swabs, slides and envelopes. (See Sexual Assault Examination Form pg 6)  
Police stations have been approached to leave a supply of SAECK/Crime Kits in the centres identified to manage survivors of rape and sexual assault. The SAECK/Crime Kits should be handled in the following manner:
- Unused SAECK/Crime Kits are to be kept in a locked cupboard.
  - All kits should be stored according to the FIFO (**First In First Out**) principle.
  - Keep a record of the SAECK/Crime Kits in the facility – record the stock on an appropriate stock card.
  - Request nearest Police Station to replenish depleted stock timeously.
13. All forensic specimens are to be locked away in a designated cupboard, in which a register must be kept. The register must record the name of the survivor and the health worker, and the date and time of collection of the specimens. The Sexual Assault Examination Form attached must be delivered by hand to the health worker-in-charge of the health facility. The form must be placed in a special envelope marked “Private and Confidential”.
- PLEASE NOTE: Detailed notes made on the J88 form, may obviate the need to testify in court at a later date. However, if court testimony is necessary, the detailed notes on the Sexual Assault Examination Form will serve as an aide d’ memoir to compiling an additional affidavit to complement your J88 notes that will provide the court with good medical evidence.***
14. If you are subpoenaed to give medical evidence in a rape case, you are strongly advised to consult with the prosecutor and other medico-legal experts before giving testimony in court.
15. NOTE: Routine clerking notes of the survivor should be kept in the survivor’s folder.
16. Rape survivors should be given the option of going for counselling to as:
- Social worker
  - Trained counsellor (regional specific)
  - Private therapist, e.g. psychologist
  - Rape Crisis or other local services
17. The survivor and family should be given an updated list of local resources.
18. The survivor and family should receive literature on rape to take home and read later.