



Advanced Notice of Consultation for Adult & Paediatric Sexual Assault Referral Centre services for the Yorkshire and the Humber region

The purpose of the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (“SARC”) services is to co-ordinate and simplify the pathway for all victims of rape and sexual assault or abuse to access wider healthcare, social care and criminal justice processes to improve individual health and well-being, as well as criminal justice outcomes. The SARC does not just refer to a building but embraces a range of assessment and support services in close partnership with other established agencies. SARC facilities typically provide three main elements following disclosure: healthcare; forensic examinations; and visually recorded interviews, supporting Achieving Best Evidence (“ABE”).

NHS England and the Yorkshire and the Humber (“YatH”) Police & Crime Commissioners and the Mayor of West Yorkshire (“the Commissioners”) currently jointly commission a single Adult SARC Service that is delivered across the YatH region by Mountain Healthcare Ltd; each police force area retains its own SARC premises from which the Adult SARC service is delivered 24/7 including Bank Holidays, however examinations are usually booked for daytime weekday hours (9-5) wherever possible, in agreement with the victim. Victims are able to be seen at any of the four regional YatH SARC premises as appropriate to meet their needs.

The Commissioners also jointly commission four separate Child Sexual Assault Assessment Services (“CSAAS”) for all children and young people aged 0 to 16 years who have disclosed sexual abuse or assault, or where it is suspected that it has happened. Older young people up to their 19th birthday may also be seen by the CSAAS if they have additional needs or it is deemed to be clinically appropriate. CSAAS are available for both Acute (up to 14 days following the alleged incident) and Non-Recent (after 14 days since the alleged incident) cases. CSAAS are delivered as standard in each locality during daytime weekday hours with Out of Hours, weekend and bank holiday cover available on a YatH basis for Acute cases where required.

The Adult SARC and CSAAS contracts are all due to expire within the next 2 years and a procurement exercise for both adult & paediatric SARC services has recently commenced. Initially commissioners are reviewing current need & demand and exploring future service delivery options, including market and service user engagement due to commence in September 2021.

As key stakeholders, the Commissioners would value your input to help inform the new service specifications, and we will be in touch again soon with more detailed proposals for your consideration and feedback. Please feel free to share this information with colleagues or partners who may like to receive updates and/or be included in consultation on this moving forward.