

A Guide to Our SARC for Adults and Young People

Why do people visit our centre?



The Topaz Centre is a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC). This is a place where you can meet with a Doctor or Nurse if you have been made to do something sexual that you didn't want to do.



If someone does something sexual to you (like touching your private areas or putting a penis in your mouth, vagina or bum) when you do not want them to, you should let someone else know.



It is wrong for someone to do these things if you don't want them to.



It is not your fault. At our centre, we can help you if someone has done these things to you.



Doctors, Nurses and Support Workers work at The Topaz Centre. They are here to look after you, and make sure you are healthy and safe.

What do we do at our centre?



Our friendly team will look after you. They will make you feel safe and try to help you feel happy too.



The Doctor or Nurse can do a medical check, to make sure you are healthy.



The Doctor or Nurse can also do an "examination" to see if you have been hurt.



The examination is like a health check, but the Doctor or Nurse can also look for things that can help the Police find the person who might have done something to you.

What will happen when you come to our centre?



When you come to our centre, you only have to do what you are comfortable with. There are lots of ways we can help you, but the choice is yours.



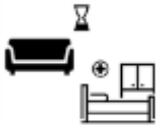
You can bring someone with you to our centre. This might be your parent, a friend or a carer. Sometimes a Police Officer or Social Worker will come along with you too.



When you arrive at The Topaz Centre, a friendly Doctor or Nurse and a Support Worker will meet you.



The Support Worker will show you to a waiting room. They will make sure you feel safe and comfortable.



At The Topaz Centre there is also an office, a medical room, toilets and a kitchen.



The Support Worker will ask you and the person who comes with you some questions.



The Doctor or Nurse will speak to you and the person you have brought with you. If there is a Police Officer or a Social Worker with you, they will talk to them too. The Support Worker will stay with you and keep you company.

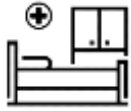


You might be at The Topaz Centre for a while (up to 6 hours) so you can bring some things to do if you would like.



The Doctor or Nurse might ask you to go to their medical room for an examination. The Support Worker can go with you too. Sometimes the person who you have brought with you will be able to go with you too.

What happens in the medical room?



In the medical room there is a bed, sink, cupboards, a stool and curtain. There is also a special camera called a 'colposcope'. This has a light on which helps the doctor to see clearly.



If the Doctor or Nurse asks you to do something you don't want to do, you can say "No" or "Stop". Or you can tell them if you need a break.



The Doctor or Nurse will do the examination. The Support Worker will be there as well to talk to you and help you to feel ok.



The Doctor or Nurse will measure your weight using scales and also your height.



The Doctor or Nurse will ask to look at your arms, legs and body to see if you have any scratches or bruises. You might have to take some of your clothes off to help the Doctor or Nurse see better.



If the Doctor or Nurse finds any bruises, they will draw them on a 'body map' to show where they are on your body. A body map is a plain drawing of a person.



The Doctor or Nurse will look for 'evidence' left on your body by the person who might have touched you, like spit, blood or semen. These are bodily fluids.



The Doctor or Nurse will ask to have a look at your genitals ('private' parts) to see if there are any cuts or scratches. This won't hurt, but if you feel scared, the Support Worker is there to help you feel better. If you do not want the Doctor or Nurse to do this, you can say "No".



The Doctor or Nurse will wipe a long cotton bud on parts of your skin to get evidence, like hairs and other DNA, from the person who might have hurt you. The Doctor or Nurse might use a cotton bud to take a sample from your genitals ('private' parts).



Sometimes we use medical equipment during the examination, but we will talk to you about this when you are with us. We can show you what they look like and what they do.



The Doctor or Nurse might ask to take a sample of your wee. You can do this yourself or with the help of the person you have brought with you in the toilets. If you agree, we can also take a blood sample. These are tested for alcohol or drugs. You can say “No” if you don’t want to. We are not worried if you have taken drugs or drunk a lot.



Once we have finished in the medical room, you can go to the toilet, have a shower if you would like to, and maybe have something to drink or eat if you are thirsty or hungry.

What happens after?



You will go back to the waiting room (with the person you brought with you). You can talk, read a book or look at a magazine. The Support Worker will come with you too.



If you have any questions you can ask the Support Worker.



The Doctor or Nurse will speak to the Police Officer or Social Worker if they have come with you.



The Police might take the clothes you were wearing when the incident happened. You will get your clothes back when the Police have finished with them. If this happens, we will give you some new clothes to wear.



The Doctor or Nurse will then come and talk to you about the examination and tell you if you need to see any other medical people to help keep you healthy and safe. We want to make sure you have support when you leave our centre.



The Doctor or Nurse will ask if you have any questions. You can then go home. We will give you some helpful information to take with you.

Remember – Everything is your choice and we will explain everything to you when you are here.