



Sexual assault services for trans & gender diverse people

Trans and gender diverse (TGD) people experience sexual violence or coercion at a rate four times higher than the general Australian population.*

The TGD community can also experience significant barriers to health care, including fear of discrimination and reduced access to providers with expertise in TGD care.

After a sexual assault, it can be hard to know what to do and where to find help. The Sexual Assault Resource Centre (SARC) can provide you with that help.



What is SARC?

SARC is a free and confidential service for people of any gender aged 13 years and over who have been sexually assaulted or have experienced sexual violence.

The SARC crisis service is a 24-hour, seven day a week service for anyone who has been sexually assaulted in the past two weeks.

The SARC crisis service can offer you:

- Medical examination (to look for injury or infection, and to give medication if needed)
- Forensic examination (to look for evidence that could assist the police/court)
- Psychological support (to look after your mental health and wellbeing)



SARC also offers counselling to people who have been sexually assaulted or abused at any time in their life.

How can I contact SARC after a sexual assault?

Call the SARC crisis line on 6458 1828 to speak with a counsellor who can help you. You can call us even if you are unsure of what happened or what you want to do. If you have involved the police or told a medical professional (such as a GP or Emergency Department doctor), they can call SARC for you if you prefer.

Once contacted, the SARC counsellor will speak to you to determine what your needs are and what SARC can offer you. An appointment to attend SARC may then be arranged. Occasionally we will also see patients somewhere other than SARC, such as at an Emergency Department.

What does an appointment at SARC involve?

When you arrive at SARC, a doctor and counsellor will be there to welcome and look after you. They will discuss confidentiality and what will happen at the appointment. The doctor will then ask you about the sexual assault and your medical background to help guide their examination and treatment. During this process only relevant questions will be asked; if you are concerned about the purpose of a question, feel free to ask the doctor about it or decline to answer. You can also have a support person with you for this part.

*(The Kirby Institute, 2018).

You don't need to cope alone. There is support available.



Depending on the nature of the sexual assault, you may be offered the following to address your medical needs:

- An examination of your body to look for injuries
- Testing for sexually transmitted infections and blood-borne viruses
- Emergency contraception (if needed)
- Medication to prevent you from contracting HIV (post-exposure prophylaxis or PEP)

You may also be offered the following to address your forensic needs:

- Examination of your body to document any injuries
- Photography of injuries (we do not take photographs of genital injuries)
- Collection of forensic swabs from your body and/or genitals
- Collection of blood and urine specimens
- Collection of clothing

You can say **yes** or **no** to any part of the examination or treatment you like, and you are able to change your mind at any time. You are in control.

We will ask you to provide your name and pronouns so that we use them correctly throughout your time with SARC. We will also use your preferred names for body parts if you have any. If there is any reason that we need to use your legal name (for example, when labelling forensic specimens or writing reports for court), we will let you know about this beforehand.

Do I have to involve the police?

No, involving the police is always your choice.

At SARC we work alongside the police but not for the police. If you want to involve the police, we will support you to do so. If you do not want to involve the police, we will respect your choice.

If you do not want to involve police, or are unsure, you can still have a forensic and medical examination at SARC. Any forensic specimens will be stored at SARC for six months, giving you time to decide what you would like to do.

Where else can I access support following a sexual assault?

If you do not want to attend SARC following a sexual assault, you can access medical and/or psychological help at the following places:

- GP or sexual health clinic
- Hospital Emergency Department
- Community psychologist or counsellor

At an Emergency Department there is also the option of having an 'Early Evidence Kit' collected. This allows you to collect your own forensic specimens for DNA so that evidence is not lost.



More information

- **SARC website:** www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au/Other-Services/SARC
- **Here & Now website:** www.transhub.org.au/sexual-assault (this is a NSW resource but it contains excellent information about care after a sexual assault)

*At SARC,
we respect the
choices you make.*

The Sexual Assault Resource Centre (SARC) is a free 24-hour emergency service providing medical and counselling services for people who have experienced a recent (within 14 days) sexual assault. Counselling for any sexual assault/abuse experienced recently or in the past is also available to people of all genders aged 13 years and above. Call SARC on (08) 6458 1828 or Freecall 1800 199 888.

WA Police Sex Assault Squad. To report a sexual assault call the Sex Assault Squad on (08) 9428 1600, visit your local police station or call police on 131 444.