

Responding to Child Sexual Abuse (CSA): Referral Pathway

Funded by



Recognise

GP Consult

Presentation of mild to acute physical/psychological trauma indicative of CSA

Disclosure or reasonable suspicion of CSA

Respond

Assess Immediate Safety

Immediate Risk of Further Harm

1. If in **immediate danger**, contact emergency services at **000**
2. Provide immediate medical and/or emotional support

Refer patient to CSA Link Worker during follow-up medical appointments

Note: Under the *Children and Young People Act 2008* and the *Crimes Act 1900* in the ACT, GPs, as Mandatory Reporters, are required to report if they believe a child they treat:

- Has experienced CSA or physical abuse
- Is currently experiencing both forms abuse.

No Immediate Risk of Further Harm

If CSA occurred **less than 72 hours** prior..

1. Provide immediate medical/emotional support
2. Refer to Paediatric Forensic Medical Service (PFMS)

PFMS OPERATIONAL HOURS

(08:30 - 16:00 hours)

Call **0403 124 607** for children **under 14 years**

PFMS After Hours Including Weekends

- **Over 14 years:** Refer to the ED at Canberra Hospital
- **Under 14 years:** Contact GP Liaison Unit to arrange referrals to the Child Protection Unit at Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick

Call **(02) 5126 9139** Forensic and Medical Sexual Assault Care (FAMSAC) for **14 years and over**

If CSA occurred **more than 72 hours** prior..

Provide medical/emotional support

Discuss mandated requirements with the child/ young person & non-offending caregiver

Report CSA:

- **Abuse within the family:** Call Child Youth Families (CYF) service @ **1300 556 728**. CYF will notify ACT Police.
- **Abuse outside the family:** Call ACT Policing at **131 444**.
- Consult a CSA Link Worker for guidance on the reporting process

Refer

With informed consent, refer patient to CSA Link Worker to facilitate appropriate warm referrals

Follow up medical support

Reflect

Document all actions taken

Debrief session with Link Worker as necessary

If capacity/time allows, participate in online Communities of Practice (COP) for de-identified case consultations.

Contact CSA Link Worker for more information on this

Recognise

Clinical signs and symptoms:

- Genital injury or infection
- Bedwetting
- Tantrums and oppositional defiant behaviour
- Difficulty with toilet training
- Significant changes in a normal development, behaviour or demeanour
- Sexual behaviour that is developmentally inappropriate or unexpected
- School refusal, truancy or school related problems
- Drug or alcohol use

Mental health issues:

- Anxiety
- Eating disorders
- Self-harming and suicidal behaviour

You may consider asking:

- 'I have noticed you said/did [X], do you mind if I ask some questions about that? Is there anything else you want to talk about, but might not be sure how to say it?'
- 'I want you to know there is nothing so bad we can't talk about it.'
- 'Has someone touched you in a way you didn't want, or hurt you?'
- 'Has someone hurt you, made you feel uncomfortable, or scared?'
- 'Have you had an injury, or has something happened in some areas of your body?'
- 'Has someone made you feel shame or bad? Is there anything you want to tell me or yarn about?'

Respond

using the LIVES Model:

Listen

- 'Thank you for sharing that with me.'
- 'I want you to know I believe you.'
- 'I can't imagine how hard it must have been for you to tell me that.'
- 'You can tell me as much or as little as you would like.'
- 'What's important for me to know is how it is impacting you or how I can support you.'

Inquire about needs and concerns

- 'How have you been managing the impacts of what happened?'
- 'Is there anything we can do together to help manage things right now?'
- 'What would you need to leave here feeling safer and more supported?'

Validate

- 'What happened to you isn't your fault.'
- 'Thank you for taking courage to tell me what has happened.'

Establish Safety

- 'We might need to tell other people as I have a responsibility as a GP to report harm that has occurred toward children and to make sure this does not happen again. One of the things I have to do is make a report.'
- 'Have you thought about what you would like to happen next? Would you like to talk about it?'

Support

- 'Does anyone else know?'
- 'When would you like to see me again?'
- 'How would you like me to contact you if I don't hear from you?'

Refer

- ACT Policing: 131 444
- Child, Youth and Families (24 hours 7 days): 1300 556 728 or childprotection@act.gov.au
- CRCC Child Sexual Abuse Link Worker (Mon-Fri, 09:00 to 17:00 hours): (02) 6185 2842 or crcclinkworker@crcc.org.au
- CRCC Crisis Line (07:00 to 11:00 hours, 7 days): (02) 6247 2525
- DVCS Crisis Line (24 hours 7 days): (02) 62 800 900
- Forensic and Medical Sexual Assault Care (24 hours 7 days): (02) 5126 9139
- Paediatric Forensic Medical Service (Mon-Fri, 08:30 to 16:30 hours): 0403 124 607