

# Sexual Safety on Inpatient Wards

## Key Points

1. All allegations of a sexual nature to be treated with sensitivity and with the knowledge that victims may well be distressed and in shock. All allegations to be taken seriously and victims concerns validated.
2. Not all sexual assaults can result in visible injury or physical harm, but sexual assault can cause severe emotional harm and distress to the individual.
3. The severity of allegations can range from rape and serious sexually assault to non-contact sexual assault, such as unwanted sexualised comments.
4. Any unwanted physical contact that could be experienced as sexual, is a sexual assault and should be considered as such.

For any incidents of a sexualised nature contact the NSFT Safeguarding Team



01603 421311



safeguarding@nsft.nhs.uk

**If staff receive a disclosure of an allegation of a sexual nature the following actions must be followed:**

## Staff are Subject to a Disclosure of Sexual Abuse or Harassment

This can be contact or non-contact sexual abuse to include any unwanted sexual touch, invasion of space (including staring), sexualised conversations or showing or taking of images.

### Supporting the Victim

Seek privacy for the victim and discuss with them who is the most appropriate staff member to provide emotional support. When discussing this with the patient, consider the gender of the member of staff and if a sexual safety champion is available.

Dependant on severity of incident, ask what the patient wants to do about their disclosure

Offer a referral to a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) and a Sexual Health Clinic

Offer the patient information on other sexual assault support organisations. Details of these organisations are available on the intranet.

Consider what observation levels are most appropriate in supporting the patient

### Communication

Inform NSFT Safeguarding Team for Management Advice

Support the patient to contact the Police on 101

Next of kin:

If the patient is aged 18+ and/or has capacity then discuss if they would like their next of kin to be informed.

If the patient is under 18 and/or is not capacitous then the next of kin must be informed

Notify allocated Social Worker and/or the Care Co-ordinator where applicable

Consider a Local Authority Safeguarding referral

Complete a DATIX

Ensure that the incident and any updates are handed over thoroughly in the staff handover meeting

If new information is discovered or disclosed then all appropriate parties are to be informed

### Managing the Ward

Seek to secure the immediate safety of the victim and others present on the ward in respect of the perpetrator.

Review if other patients present on the ward require additional support

### Recording of Information

Capture all information that is available at that time, including the following:

Time and date, words of the victim, any visible injuries using a body map form, names of any other patients in the vicinity, the staff on duty and any potential witnesses

**If new information is discovered or disclosed then this information is to be captured and recorded.**

Update clinical records and risk assessments on Lorenzo

Preserve any CCTV available