

# EVENT WELFARE

## REPORT OF CRIME OR SEXUAL ASSAULT

### Crime

If someone reports a crime or suspicious behaviour to us, we should encourage and enable them to report it to the police or stewards as soon as possible. This is important to prevent the situation happening again. We should take down details of what happened. If the person does not want to report the crime themselves, we can ask if we can do it on their behalf. Even if this is refused, we should inform the stewards/police after the person has left us, giving anonymous facts as we know them.

The person may be very scared and distressed and we should offer support and comfort and possibly try to make arrangements for them to stay somewhere else. They may want our assistance to try to contact their friends on site or someone at home. They may want to leave the event and we can try to arrange help to make this as smooth as possible for them, including packing up their things.

### Sexual assault

A report of a sexual assault at an event, like anywhere, is an extremely sensitive, frightening and distressing situation that must be treated very seriously and sympathetically. While details what exactly happened may never be known to us, the priority for the welfare service must be to respond supportively and offer comfort to someone seeking assistance.

At the same time, it is important to be aware of the need to prevent further incidents at the event.

We may be given further guidance by the event organiser on how to respond, otherwise the procedure to follow is:

- If someone comes to the welfare service reporting that they have been sexually assaulted at the event, inform the supervisor immediately. The supervisor must inform the welfare manager.
- The welfare manager should inform an appropriate person in the event organiser's team as soon as practicable, depending on the circumstances (see below).
- A team member of the same sex should stay with the person (unless it is a same-sex assault allegation)
- The person's clothing should not be disturbed, removed or cleaned.
- The person should not wash or clean themselves
- The site of the incident should be identified and not disturbed.

- The welfare team can give the person a blanket and comfort them. Unfortunately giving someone a drink may destroy evidence, although this may be necessary, if it is in the person's best interest.

We should outline options to the person. For example, with the person's consent, a senior medic and/or a senior steward could be informed of the situation by the supervisor as soon as possible. Any information should be passed on face-to-face, factually and sensitively.

If the person wishes, we can enable them to try to contact their friends at the event or someone off-site. We can try to do this on their behalf, if they prefer.

If the person wants to talk, listen to what they describe as having happened. Later you can make a confidential note of what they have said.

Do not discuss the matter with anyone outside the team, except to give factual information to the medics, steward supervisor or police, if they are involved.

If the person does not want to speak to anyone outside the welfare team, this wish should be respected (see note on confidentiality\*\*). We can (gently and without any pressure) point out that by speaking to the police/security etc., it may help to identify an offender or prevent others from suffering the same experience.

In some circumstances when the person does not want to speak to anyone, it may be more appropriate for us to inform the event organiser after the person has left. We should describe what was reported to us and where and when the incident happened, but no personal details.

**\*\* Note on confidentiality:**

The only exceptions to this are if we learn that someone is currently in serious danger of harm – for example, an identifiable child who is being abused now – or in the case of intelligence about drug dealing, terrorism or money laundering. In those circumstances alone, there is an obligation to act upon the information and inform the police or other authorities.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT THE WELFARE MANAGER

## Further information and contacts

The following advice is taken from NHS Website (04/04/2017)

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Sexualhealth/Pages/Sexualassault.aspx>

### ***For partners, friends and relatives - supporting a victim of sexual assault***

For partners, relatives and friends of someone who has been sexually assaulted, The Havens website(1) has advice on what you can do to help. The advice includes:

- Listen to the person, but don't ask for details of the assault.
- Allow them to be in control: ask how you can help – you might have ideas about what they should or shouldn't be doing, but it's important to allow them to come to their own decisions without feeling pressurised. You could help them find useful information, but don't insist on them doing anything or speaking to anyone they don't want to.
- Respect their decisions, for example whether or not they want to report the assault to the police.
- Don't take over: respect their decisions and never plan their recovery for them. Only they know how they feel, so it's important they're allowed to recover at their own pace. Trust is important, so never break your promise of confidentiality.
- Offer practical support, such as going with them to appointments.
- A person who's been assaulted may find physical contact difficult and may not want to be touched, so you should respect their wishes. Even a hug might upset them, so ask first. If you're in a sexual relationship with them, be aware that sex might be frightening and don't put pressure on them to have sex.
- Listen and be patient: as well as listening, you need to remain patient. Try not to ask them about details of the assault, because they might not feel ready to talk about it. If they don't feel ready to talk about their experience, you may suggest that they write it down to help them "let it out" and begin to make sense of what has happened to them.
- Give them space: knowing when to give someone space is essential. An important part of their healing process will be to take back a sense of control over their life, so allow them to do this.
- Be supportive: they may need your support for a long time.

(1)The Havens are specialist centres in London for people who have been raped or sexually assaulted. <http://www.thehavens.org.uk/>

**Urgent advice = 0203 299 6900**

## **UK Victim Supportline 0808 1689 111 (free)**

(Weekdays 08.00-20.00; weekends 09.00-19.00)

Victim Support is here to help anyone in England and Wales affected by crime, not only victims and witnesses, but their friends, family and any other people involved. Because we're an independent charity, you can talk to us whether or not you reported the crime to the police. If you want, we can support you without the involvement of the criminal justice system, and we won't contact them about you unless we feel someone is at risk. We are here just to support you.

We offer immediate emotional support as well as helpful information and practical advice over the phone. Our Supportline teams can put you in touch with our local services near to where you live, so that you can get ongoing support. They can also give you helpful information about other organisations that may be able to offer you specialist support.

## **Victims' Information Service 0808 168 9293 (free)**

If you can't get through to our Supportline during opening times, the Victims' Information Service is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week (except bank holidays), and fully trained staff can offer you information about Victim Support services and useful information about the criminal justice system.

## **Survivors UK 020 3598 3898 office hours**

SurvivorsUK helps men who have been sexually violated and raises awareness of their needs. Anyone affected by male sexual violation is appropriately supported.

Note: Sexual violation includes both childhood sexual abuse and adult sexual assault/rape.

SurvivorsUK: challenges perceptions - those of survivors, those of the public and those of decision makers; helps men who have been sexually violated at any point in their lives and also provides support for their families

## **Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre - National Freephone Helpline: 0808 802 9999**

Daily 12:00 – 14:30 and 19:00 – 21:30. Mon – Fri = 15:00 -17:30.

Rape Crisis South London run the Rape Crisis National Helpline for female survivors of sexual violence. The Helpline is accessible 365 days a year to women who have survived any form of sexual violence, no matter how long ago. We offer specialised, confidential support, information and referral details completely free of charge. The helpline is also available to provide an immediate source of support to friends and family of survivors, as well as other professionals, to help them understand how best to support female survivors of sexual violence.

**National Association for People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC)**

Call free on **0808 801 0331** from landlines and mobiles.

Lines open 10am till 9pm Monday to Thursday and 10am till 6pm on Friday.

Offers support to adult survivors of all types of childhood abuse, including physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect.

**National Domestic Violence Freephone Helpline: 0808 2000 247**

The Freephone 24 Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline, run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge, is a national service for women experiencing domestic violence, their family, friends, colleagues and others calling on their behalf.

**Terrence Higgins Trust 0808 802 1221 (free).**

For confidential advice about HIV.

Opening hours: 9.30am to 5.30pm, Monday to Friday

**Switchboard – the LGBT+ Helpline 0300 330 0630 (free)**

10:00 to 22:00 daily.

Switchboard provides a one-stop listening service for LGBT+ people.

**Sexual Healthline 0300 123 7123**

**NHS 111 Service**

If you're worried about HIV or emergency contraception phone the 24 hour NHS 111 service on 111 to speak to a qualified medical professional.