

Sheffield Adult Sexual Violence Pathway:

This pathway should be familiar to all professionals in Sheffield who may receive a disclosure of sexual violence from a victim/survivor aged 18 and over. It outlines key questions to consider and the steps to follow at each point.

Remember this might be the first time that the victim/survivor has disclosed this so make sure that you approach these conversations sensitively and, in a trauma-informed manner.

A visual overview of the pathway, suitable for printing, is on page 3.

Key question 1: Is the person aged 18 or over?

If no, go to the [Children's and Young Persons Pathway](#).

If yes, then go to key action 1.

Key action 1: Listen to the victim, reassure them that they are not to blame, and respect their decisions.

If non-fatal strangulation is disclosed (i.e. choking/suffocation) please refer to the local NFS pathway.

Go to key question 2.

Key question 2: Do they wish to report to the police at this time?

If no, then go to question 3. It is important that you respect this decision.

If yes, then let them know that they are entitled to support from Independent Sexual Violence Advocates (ISVAs) through the South Yorkshire Sexual Violence Partnership to help navigate this process and have support in deciding whether to engage with the criminal justice system. If you refer you must ask for permission, referral information can be found on their website. They can also self-refer into this service. If they have a Sheffield postcode this service will be delivered by Sheffield Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre (SRASAC).

For more information go to: [South Yorkshire Independent Sexual Violence Service](#)

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Key question 3: Have they experienced sexual violence within the last 7 days?

If no, then go to question 4.

If yes, let them know that in this window Hackenthorpe Lodge Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) can provide forensic examination and store any evidence for a later decision. Outside this window they can still provide medical and practical support. If they wish to attend support them with booking an appointment. More information is available on their website, or you can contact them on 0330 223 0099.

Key question 4: Are there safeguarding concerns? (e.g. around exploitation or vulnerability)

If yes, consider your responsibility to refer to Adult Safeguarding. More information on what constitutes an adult safeguarding concern can be viewed on the [Sheffield Adult Safeguarding Partnership website](#). If you are worried about self-neglect please see the [Multi-Agency Self Neglect Policy](#).

If no, then go to question 5.

Key question 5: Have they disclosed that this happened/is happening in the context of a relationship?

If yes, please follow the domestic abuse pathway as well.

If no, then make sure you inform the victim/survivor of local provision available for victim/survivors of sexual violence, see page 4, and be proactive in identifying additional support needs.

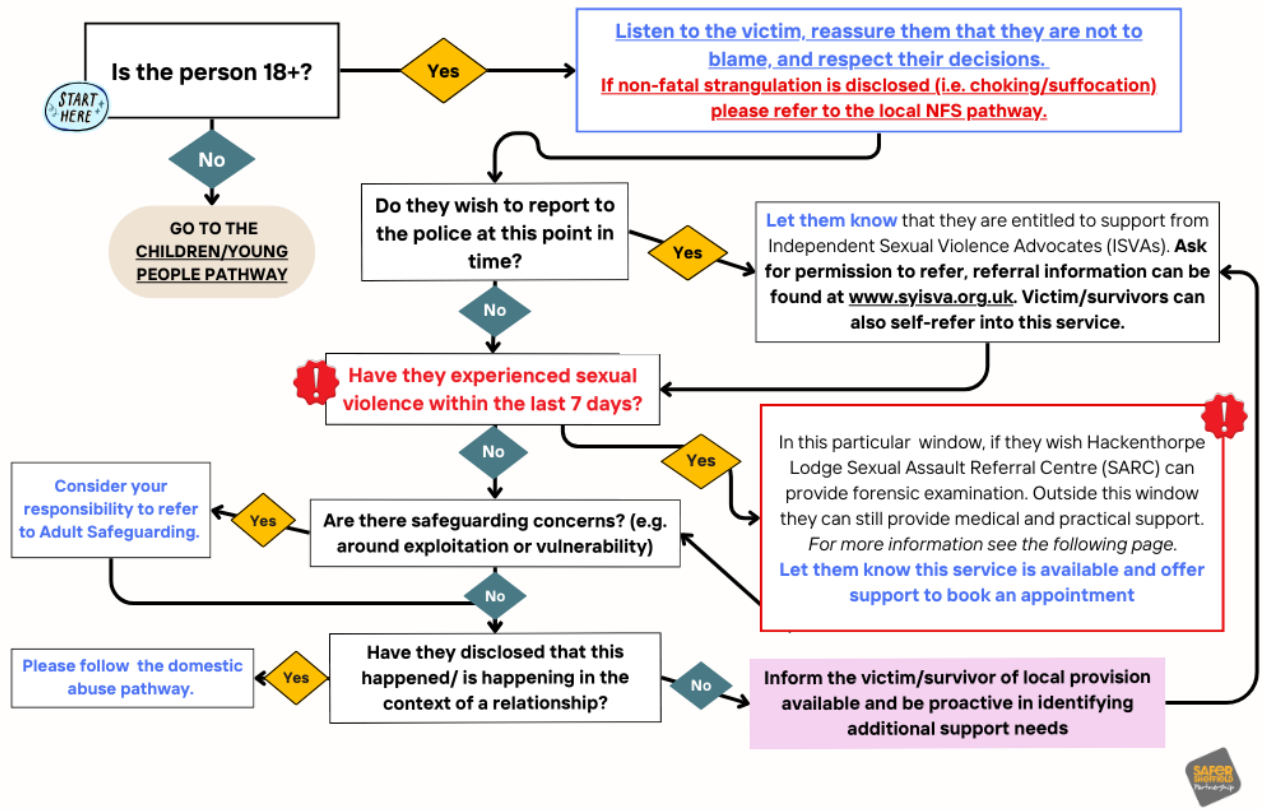
To note, this could include explaining ISVA support, supporting with finances, housing, employment, caring responsibilities, poor mental health and substance misuse.

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Sheffield Sexual Violence Pathway (2024)

RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE . . .

Are you not sure what happened to you? You can read advice from Rape Crisis on their website.



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Supporting information:

Hackenthorpe Lodge Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) support overview:

A Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) is a free, confidential, specialist medical and forensic centre for victim/survivors of sexual assault. In South Yorkshire for those aged 16+ this is Hackenthorpe Lodge, located in the S12 postcode of Sheffield. You do not need to report to the police to attend.

In the immediate period following an assault they can collect forensic evidence, which can be stored for a later date should the victim/survivor wish to report later. They also offer medical and practical support to victim/survivors and referrals to specialist services. Appointments are needed to attend and can be made by calling 03302230099 (which is open 24/7 all year). The victim/survivor will need to speak to staff to confirm they consent to this.

Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA) support overview:

Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA) support is available through South Yorkshire Sexual Violence Partnership, which includes specialist services in each district. This is accessible by professional or self-referral online: www.syisva.org.uk. If the postcode of the victim/survivor is a Sheffield postcode the ISVA service will be provided by [Sheffield Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre](#). The service is open regardless of how recent the sexual violence and/or sexual abuse took place and are open to all genders.

What does an ISVA do?

An Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA) is a specialist professional that can support a victim/survivor practically and emotionally. For example, they can:

- Help the victim/survivors to understand their options for reporting sexual violence
- Help the victim/survivor to engage with the criminal justice system and attend court with the victim/survivor
- Help the victim/survivor navigate other sources of support for other identified needs (i.e. finance/ housing)
- Help the victim/survivor create a support system and coping strategies

Commented [S01]: South Yorkshire Sexual Violence Partnership - provides ISVA support.
SRASAC provides specialist counselling

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Sheffield Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre (SRASAC) counselling support overview:

In addition to the ISVA service for Sheffield residents, SRASAC provide specialist therapeutic counselling to victim/survivors of sexual violence. This can be delivered online or face to face and includes the option of pre-trial therapy for victim/survivors who have reported to the police.

Local support services:

- [Sheffield Working Women's Opportunity Project \(SWWOP\)](#): Provides intensive and practical support those involved in sex work in Sheffield via their base and outreach van.
- [Ashiana Sheffield](#): A by-and-for service for black and minority ethnic women affected by abuse and exploitation.
- [Young Women's Housing Project](#): Provide specialist gender-specific supported accommodation and therapeutic support for young women, girls and their children, affected by sexual abuse, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse.
- [Saffron](#): Provide free, long-term specialised trauma therapy to women with multiple and complex needs. They are accessible by professional and self-referral.
- [Likewise](#): Provide alcohol and drug support in Sheffield.
- [Sheffield Carer's Centre](#): Provide a range of support for unpaid carers and offer carers needs assessments.
- [Shelter](#): Provide housing advocacy and advice.
- [Citizens Advice Sheffield](#): Provide a range of advice and advocacy.
- [Family Hubs](#): Provide support to parents and families, including support groups and free activities.

Specialist support and information:

- [Rape Crisis](#): National charity for victim/survivors of sexual violence. They operate a free 24/7 Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Line: **0808 500 2222**.
- [Revenge Porn Helpline](#): Provide support to adults who are experiencing intimate image abuse, also known as, revenge porn.
- [Changing Lives/Netreach](#): Provide support for those selling sex online and those impacted by tech abuse (e.g. revenge porn).
- [Galop](#): Provide support to LGBT+ victim/survivors of abuse and violence. They offer a free helpline: **0800 999 5428**.

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Professional development and training:

Sheffield Rape And Sexual Abuse Centre (SRASAC) have [guidance](#) on their website on how to support someone who has been impacted by sexual violence. They also run free 'Believe, Listen, Respect' webinars throughout the year, upcoming dates can be viewed on [their eventbrite](#). You can find out more about types of sexual violence and persistent rape myths on the [Rape Crisis website](#). You can find out more about sexual exploitation on the [Adult Sexual Exploitation Partnership website](#).