

# Referral Process for the Suffolk Paediatric SARC service (0 -17 years old)

**Clinical and forensic advice can be sought from Mountain Healthcare Doctors and Nurses 24/7  
Tel: 0330 223 0099**

Concerns that a child 0-17 years old has been sexually abused (acute or non-recent )  
**Any acute medical needs should be prioritised over SARC examination**

Refer to Suffolk Multiagency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) via <https://cypportal.suffolk.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home>  
Immediate concerns phone Customer First 0808 8004005

Strategy discussion depending on concerns raised in referral to be conducted **as soon as possible** upon notification being received

- To include Social Care, Police, Health and Mountain Healthcare Doctor or Nurse and other relevant professionals
- Outside of office hours: on-call DI and Emergency Duty Social Worker to hold discussion with Mountain Healthcare Doctor or Nurse
  - Mountain Healthcare telephone number 0330 223 0099**
- The discussion will identify whether forensic evidence or medical examination is required and is in the best interests of the child.

**Children aged 13 to 17 years can self-refer to the SARC, but a discussion should still take place between children’s social care and Mountain Healthcare Doctor or Nurse**

SARC Examination Recommended

**Professional disagreement**  
Individual and Safeguarding Partnership escalation policies to be followed

SARC Examination not recommended

**Arranging a SARC appointment**

- Social Worker/Police to liaise with Mountain Healthcare to make appointment
- Social Worker/Police will need to attend examination to support process
- A young person aged over 13 years can self-refer to the SARC by calling The Ferns on: **0300 123 5058**

If additional information or concerns about sexual abuse, then a further strategy discussion should be arranged

Support needed for child/family  
Consider best agency to offer support

If there is no referral to SARC or the child or person with parental responsibility does not consent, then professionals should ensure that access to medical care and relevant support services is facilitated.

**Holistic examination**

- Examination may include forensic samples, documentation of injuries, pregnancy testing, emergency contraception, HIV prophylaxis treatment and testing or referral for sexually transmitted infections.
- Medical summary report to be shared with police and/or social care
- Health safeguarding alert to be sent to designated safeguarding team
  - GP notification
- Referral to child Independent Sexual Violence Advocate and other support services where appropriate

**Current Paediatric SARC Service provision**  
Two clinics/week children < 13 years  
13-17 years can be seen 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week if in the best interests of the young person

