

Regional Referral Pathway for Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) Forensic Medical Assessment

The aim of a medical assessment is to meet the **medical/sexual health and forensic needs** of the child/young person. If there are concerns about sexual abuse, sending patients to the Emergency Department (A&E dept) or GP is **never** appropriate **unless they are medically unwell**.

Children/young people are seen via the Paediatric Forensic Network (PFN) at the Great North Children's Hospital, RVI for recent (within 7 days) cases and in a local service for non-recent cases (over 7 days- years). **Consideration should be given** for a forensic examination up to **10 days** in penile/vaginal penetration in a pubertal young person. **Advice can always be sought from PFN.**

- **A normal examination** is a neutral finding and doesn't exclude sexual abuse including penetrative abuse.
- **The swab is not the job:** Forensic evidence is injuries (fresh or healed), sexually transmitted infections AND DNA. Non-DNA forensic evidence can be found in both recent and non-recent cases.

YP Information Video
Children's Information Video

Ctrl + click: [PFN Charlie Video](#)
Ctrl + click: [PFN Doctopus Video](#)

In both services the following apply:

- Patients are always seen by a female doctor.
- Pre-pubertal children **never** have an invasive examination.
- The carers & young people are **always** able to stop the assessment at any time & are distracted during the process, which is conducted in an unhurried, sensitive manner.
- Both services see children and young people (C&YP) from 0 to their 16th birthday.
- Young people may be seen up to 18yr if they:
 - Have learning disabilities.
 - Are fostered or in care (Children who are Looked After) and have special needs.
 - YP 16 years or older & not in the categories above, are seen by **Adult SARC** service.

Adult cases ≥ 16 years old 24/7 - Cleveland Police, Durham Police & Northumbria Police: 03302230099

Sexual abuse is likely to have occurred within **the last 7 days**
In pubertal YP if penile/vaginal penetration discussion with PFN should be considered up to 10 days

YES

Paediatric Forensic Service 24/7

- Child/young person should be referred to the local children's services or Police by telephone.
- They will then arrange the assessment.
- Will be seen on the **same day or the following day at the Children & Young People's clinic, GNCH, RVI, Level 3 Victoria Entrance, Victoria Rd, NE1 4LP.**
- Child/young person are accompanied by a social worker and/or Police officer.

NO

Non Recent CSA—local service – Office hours

- Contact local non-recent CSA service
- Will be seen **within a few weeks** at local clinic.

Non Recent Sexual Abuse Service

Durham **0191 387 6371**

Newcastle & Gateshead **0191 282 4753**
tnu-tr.nepaediatricforensicservice@nhs.net

Northumberland & North Tyneside **0344 811 8111**
& ask for the Child Protection consultant on call

Teesside area **01642 854 348**

South Tyneside & Sunderland **0191 569 9012**
stsft.ccsunderlandreferrals@nhs.net

Paediatric Forensic Network

Office hours: **0191 282 4753**

Out of Hours: **0191 233 6161**

Ask for the paediatric consultant on call for child sexual abuse