

Immediate Needs of Sexual Assault Survivors



ARISE

www.ariselic.org

724-652-9036

Advocates from Arise, are available 24/7 to provide in-person crisis intervention services and emotional support to those who have experienced sexual assault and abuse. Advocates can provide crisis counseling, comfort and support, information about legal rights and options, assist in communications with hospital staff and police (if patient requests police involvement), and assist with resources and referrals for immediate needs such as shelter, clothing, safety planning, and victims' compensation.

Services from Arise must be offered to every sexual assault patient that presents to the Emergency Department whether or not they accept a medical forensic exam.

Triage/ED Recommendations

- 1 Consider sexual assault patients a priority regardless of whether physical injuries are present.
- 2 Assess for acute injury and the need for immediate medical or mental health intervention.
- 3 Assess for immediate safety concerns such as threats to the patient or staff.
- 4 While the patient may not have visible signs of physical injury, they will experience emotional trauma and must be cared for in a compassionate, confidential, and timely manner.
- 5 **Contact a victim advocate from Arise by calling 724-652-9036, at the same time the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner is contacted. The patient should have access to the advocate while waiting for a forensic exam.**
- 6 If the patient has limited English proficiency, ensure that an interpreter is available (follow hospital policy).
- 7 Patients under the age of 18 must be informed that if they provide identifying information, a report to Childline (**800-932-0313**) must be made regardless of whether the patient chooses to have an exam completed.
- 8 Offer services from Arise in a caring and trauma-informed manner.

For example: "Someone from Arise, the local rape crisis center, can be with you to provide emotional support and information. Their services are free and confidential. Would you like to speak with an advocate?" **OR** If the rape crisis center is to be called immediately, once they arrive, "Someone from Arise, the local rape crisis center, is here. They provide free and confidential support and information. Would you like to talk with them?"
- 9 Adult patients have the right to decide **whether or not** they want to report the assault to law enforcement. The triage nurse should **only** contact law enforcement if requested by the patient. Otherwise, the patient can discuss their reporting options with the Arise advocate, SANE, or other provider/practitioner. An anonymous reporting option is available to patients 18 years or older. *Please note, there may be some restrictions on anonymous reporting for adults with disabilities. After evaluating the patient, the advocate or SANE will discuss with ED staff on a case-by-case basis.*
- 10 After triage, the patient should immediately be taken to a patient exam room or private waiting area to ensure privacy. The patient should be provided an opportunity to identify which, if any, support person(s) they would like to accompany them to the exam room.