



Operational procedures and equipment for clinical facilities in Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs)

Nov 2019 Review date Nov 2022 – check www.fflm.ac.uk for latest update

The medico-legal guidelines and recommendations published by the Faculty are for general information only. Appropriate specific advice should be sought from your medical defence organisation or professional association. The Faculty has one or more senior representatives of the MDOs on its Board, but for the avoidance of doubt, endorsement of the medico-legal guidelines or recommendations published by the Faculty has not been sought from any of the medical defence organisations.

The following information refers to the set of rooms used within a SARC for the forensic clinical examinations. The following is generic advice and local practice may vary depending upon particular circumstances.

Clinical rooms

Suggested dimensions 5.5m x 3.6m

Operational procedures for SARCs

1. The suite should be locked when not in use.
2. The suite should only be used for clinical purposes.
3. A log book should be kept indicating all persons who enter the suite and a note made of the date and time and reason for entering (e.g. cleaning, examination, statement). There should be a book containing relevant information; for example, how to call out a cleaner, useful telephone numbers – genitourinary (GU) clinics, social services, etc.
4. The suite needs to be cleaned after each use to prevent DNA (this include waiting room examination room and bathroom) contamination. Within the medical examination room: the floor, couch (even if covered with a protector at the time of the medical), worktop, writing desk, sink and taps need to be cleaned each time the room is used.
5. Use an alcohol-based wipe with organic content for wiping down vinyl chairs in waiting room area and for the medical examination couch.
6. Use a disinfectant as a general cleaning reagent for all hard work surfaces such as counter tops and sinks. Certain disinfectants are meant to be in contact for at least 10 minutes to be effective. Concentrated solution should be diluted down to a 10% solution. However, once diluted, it has a limited shelf life. A 10% solution is suitable for floors and other surfaces where it is 'left on'. Rubber gloves should be used when handling these products.
7. Use disposable white paper towels for cleaning surfaces with the disinfectant (the coloured varieties can cause fluorescence problems in the DNA process). Surfaces that could potentially collect dust etc. e.g. exposed storage shelves should be cleaned at least once a week.
8. After disinfectant has been used to clean the sinks, they should be wiped with cleaning cloths. The cloths should be used once and restrict their use to one room.
9. The clinical examiners and chaperones should wear disposable powder free gloves.
10. The clinical room in the suite should have a lockable drug cupboard.
11. A named person should have responsibility for checking and restocking the suite on a regular basis (at least once a week). In their absence a problem should be reported to the police liaison officer.
12. The modular kits should be stored in appropriately labelled shelves/containers. All unused items from opened kits must be appropriately disposed of.
13. There should be a wall mounted clinical waste bin with foot lever to open. This must be emptied at least once a week, regardless of how full it is.
14. The sharps disposal bin should be replaced when three quarters full.
15. Used towels, gowns etc. will be placed in a linen basket, which will be emptied at least once a week.
16. There should be access to a refrigerator and freezer for storage of samples with a separate fridge for the storage of vaccines.
17. Room thermometer to record ambient temperature for medicines stored a room temperature.

Guidance on fridge/freezer monitoring

Monitoring the temperature of the fridge and/or freezer with a daily check recorded is essential for a complete record of temperature at which the sample has been stored including any temperature deviations. The actual acceptable temperature range appears to be governed by what is specified by the equipment manufacturer e.g. fridges operate at 2° to 8° C and freezers operate at approximately -20°C (must be below -10°C to maintain freezing). Best practice is to check the freezer temperatures daily and record the reading. Action is required if the temperature deviates up or down by 5°C (see local standing operating procedures). Freezers should be alarmed and there should be a backup generator. It is good practice for the equipment used for the temperature monitoring to be calibrated and its accuracy known. It is possible where freezers have broke down or have been accidentally switched off for up to 48 hours that there may still be positive body fluid findings and DNA results. The storage of toxicology samples is non critical i.e. it just needs to be at 'refrigerated' or 'frozen' temperatures but does not need to be at a specific temperature (as it may need to be for certain diagnostic reagents, some medications, certain foods etc).



Waiting room

- Easily cleaned surfaces
- Good heating and ventilation
- Comfortable chairs in washable vinyl fabric
- Coffee tables
- T.V./music centre with remote controls
- Pictures (non-reflective glass)

Clinical room

In addition to the stock items each room should have:

- Desk with laminated surface and drawers underneath
- 4 plastic chairs
- Examination couch (with steps or raising/ lowering facilities) and pillow (disposable covers)
- Screen or suspended curtains (washable/ disposable) around couch
- Store cupboards labelled to identify what they contain
- Drawers in the desk or a suitable file for stationery
- Washbasin with elbow operated taps (preferably mixer). Tiling above wash basin
- Paper towel and liquid soap dispenser
- Mobile examination light with magnifying lens
- Medical stock trolley
- Colposcope with attachments for photo-documentation
- Wipeable clock
- Notice board
- Telephone (access to language line)
- Waste bin
- Clinical waste bin (wall mounted)
- Sharps disposal bin (secure, wall-mounted)
- Good heating, lighting and ventilation
- Scales for weighing patient
- Height measure
- Disposable tape measure
- Ophthalmoscope
- Auroscope
- Stethoscope
- Sphygmomanometer
- Disposable thermometer

Bathroom facilities

- Easily cleaned surfaces
- Good heating and ventilation
- Shower (non-slip mat/surfaces), toilet, wash basin
- Clean towels, soap (single use), shampoo, combs, sanitary towels and tampons, etc.
- Toothbrushes and toothpaste
- Seat
- Lock on doors which can be opened from outside in an emergency
- Suitable mirror
- Supply of nappies for different ages and pull ups
- Mobile changing trolley and baby changing mat and baby wipes

Sitting room

- Good heating and ventilation
- Comfortable easy chairs
- Coffee table
- Telephone (outside line)
- T.V./music centre
- Pictures, dried flower arrangements, plants, magazines etc.
- Toys for complainants/accompanying children

Refreshment facilities

- Kettle
- Cordial, tea bags and instant coffee
- Long-life milk in individual cartons and sugar
- Snacks (biscuits, crisps)
- Crockery and cutlery
- Washing up liquid and disposable paper towel for drying

Miscellaneous

- Air freshener
- Supply of dressing gowns
- Spare clothing and shoes
- Blankets and pillow cases
- Laundry basket
- Hair dryer
- Toys etc. for children



SARCS SUPPLIES LIST

Resuscitation equipment

Custody staff and HCPs should ensure that they are familiar with any equipment that is available and fully trained to use such equipment.

- Bag-valve-mask with various size facemasks
- Oropharyngeal airways (range of sizes)
- Naso pharyngeal air ways size 6/7
- I gel size 3/4/5
- Magill Forceps
- Suction equipment (electrical or hand operated)
- Pocket masks various sizes
- AED
- Oxygen cylinder with delivery head, tubing and masks
- Oximeter
- Sphygmomanometer
- Stethoscope
- Auroscope (with disposable covers)
- Thermometer (with covers if required)
- Glucometer with test strips (and control solution for calibration)
- Patella hammer

Dressing bandages & plasters

- Steristrip closures 6mm Pack 36
- 2 fabric dressing strip 6cm x 1m
- 2 fabric dressing strip 8cm x 1m
- 50 non adherent dressings 9.5cm
- 5 microporous tapes 2.5cm x 5m
- 30 cotton wool 25g
- 5 boxes of assorted adhesive dressings
- Dressing packs x 20 (these contain cotton wool, gauze etc and are not the same as ambulance dressing packs)

Disinfectant & antiseptics

- 30 antiseptic wipes
- 30 antiseptic sachet 25ml
- 2 liquid soap
- 2 alcohol handrub

Protective items

- 2 sharps disposal bin 7L (one in use)
- 100 clinical waste bag 200 x 320mm
- 20 clinical waste bag 400 x 800mm
- 50 clinical waste bag 700 x 1000mm
- 3 boxes of each size non-sterile powder free vinyl gloves (small, medium, large)
- 5 pairs of each size of sterile surgical powder free gloves
- Facemasks

Miscellaneous

- 2 paper towel rolls 250mm (one in use)
- 2 plastic bowls (1 pint)
- 1 scissors dressing 150mm
- Single use lubricating jelly
- 2 boxes tissues
- Low adhesive tape
- Pregnancy test minimum 2
- Disposable vaginal speculum – various sizes
- Disposable proctoscopes small and large minimum 20 of each size
- Saline eye wash x 3
- Urine bottles, gel swabs and chlamydia swabs with appropriate request forms as agreed with local hospital bacteriology department
- Foley catheters
- Disposable tape measure

Forensic kits

For more information see [Recommended equipment for obtaining forensic samples from complainants and suspects](#)

- Modular swab collections kits for the investigation of sexual assault/assault
- Elimination DNA kit
- Blood for toxicology (alcohol/drugs) kit
- Urine collection kit
- Mouth collection kit
- Condom collection kit
- Fibre collection kits
- Nail collection kits



Packing

- Paper bin sacs with clear panel (small and large) minimum 50
- Criminal Justice Act labels minimum 50
- Roll of tape for sealing bags
- Biohazard tape

Access to online documents

- Letterhead, plain paper and envelopes
- Body diagrams
- Clinical Questionnaires, e.g. CIWA/COWS/SADQ/MMSE
- Forensic sampling forms for laboratory e.g. FFLM FME form or equivalent
- Hospital referral forms
- Patient advice sheets.
- Prescription proforma
- Other proformas as required

Medication at the SARC

Medication should be provided as per an agreed formulary and stored in a suitable locked medicine cabinet in the suite. The management of the stock should be agreed locally by the HCPs involved and checked regularly with respect to expiry date of contents. The drugs covered by PGD should be included. It is suggested the formulary may include:

1. Paracetamol 500mg
2. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory e.g. ibuprofen 200mg
3. Co-codamol or similar analgesic
4. Salbutamol inhaler
5. Levonorgestrel 1.5 mg and Ulipristal acetate 30mg
6. Anti-emetic tab
7. Antibiotics for prophylaxis for STDs
8. Post exposure prophylaxis for HIV
9. Hepatitis B vaccine for adults and children
10. Consideration to be given to other medication such as that available in a custody suite as complainants can also be suffering from similar conditions.

If immunisation for hepatitis B is to be given, provision must be made for the treatment of anaphylactic shock should it occur.

All HCPs should be familiar with FFLM *Safe and Secure Handling and Supply of Medicines in Sexual Assault Services for Adults and children.*