



Faculty of Forensic & Legal Medicine

Sexual offences: POST-PUBERTAL complainants

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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 flow chart overleaf must only be used after consideration of the following:

If the complainant is a child, i.e. under 18 years of age, this flowchart is for the use of relevant forensic clinicians and paediatricians. It is also important to consider who holds parental responsibility.

If the complainant is an adult, i.e. over 18 years of age, this flowchart is for the use of forensic clinicians.

It is intended to help the decision making process when deciding if a forensic medical examination is warranted between the hours of midnight and 7am, or can wait and be done by the day team.

It is intended that it is only a guide. Decisions must be made on a case-by-case basis as to whether an earlier examination is required, with consideration given to external factors as necessary. Record clearly details of any discussions and decisions made, including their rationale.

Wherever there is doubt, a discussion should take place between the referring party (usually the investigating officer), the forensic clinician on call and/or paediatrician, as appropriate.

The needs of the child should always be paramount as is also the case for an adult complainant.

