

FACULTY OF FORENSIC & LEGAL MEDICINE

of the Royal College of Physicians of London



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Faculty of Forensic & Legal Medicine warns Student Unions against self-swab 'rape kits'

The Faculty of Forensic & Legal Medicine (FFLM) has written to Student Union Presidents at universities across England and Wales to express concern about the promotion and distribution of self-swab 'rape kits' to students by external companies such as Enough. These products are being marketed without the involvement, endorsement, or approval of the FFLM or any recognised forensic or healthcare authority.

These kits are unsafe and risk contaminating evidence, while not providing victims access to proper medical, psychosocial, and safeguarding care. They may not produce admissible samples, offer no protection for vulnerable individuals, and there is no evidence that their availability deters sexual violence. The FFLM, alongside other professional and regulatory bodies, remains firmly opposed to their use.

Dr Alex Gorton, President of the FFLM, said:

"Whilst no-one is pretending that the current system is working as well as it should to reduce sexual violence, these kits are not the answer. The overwhelming opposition from those representing survivors, clinicians, police and legal experts should have prompted a rethink of their rollout. Sadly, that does not appear to be happening. It is vital that students who have experienced sexual assault are guided towards the specialist support offered by Sexual Assault Referral Centres, where they can receive the right care with holistic wraparound support."

The FFLM urges Student Unions to take the following steps to protect students:

- Ensure students receive accurate information, including that expert organisations in the field, such as the FFLM, do not endorse or support these kits.
- Direct students who have experienced sexual assault to Sexual Assault Referral Centres, where they can receive appropriate, expert care and forensic examination in line with national standards and the Forensic Science Regulator's Statutory Code of Practice.
- Be cautious of commercial or university messaging that promotes self-swab kits as an alternative to professional care or suggests they act as a deterrent to sexual violence.

Read the full letter: <https://tinyurl.com/mr2smdk2>

Read our joint position statement: <https://tinyurl.com/4jf5xbca>

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About FFLM

The Faculty of Forensic & Legal Medicine (FFLM) was founded in 2005 by the Royal College of Physicians. It is the UK charity that sets and maintains standards in forensic and legal medicine, including clinical forensic medicine, forensic pathology, and medico-legal practice.