



Current SATU Services – an overview

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ICGP Study Day
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Outline

- Why do we need Sexual Assault Treatment Units?
- Background and Context
- What other agencies are involved?
- What happens in a SATU?
- Challenges and solutions
- Questions



Why do we need Sexual Assault Treatment Units?

- Sexual Violence occurs in all cultures and countries
- There is no 'typical victim' or 'typical scenario'
- 6% of adult women in Ireland are raped as adults, an additional 13% experience some other form of contact sexual abuse
- 1% of adult men in Ireland are raped as adults, an additional 9% experience some other form of contact sexual abuse.
Magee H et al. The SAVI Report. Sexual Abuse and Violence in Ireland. Dublin: The Liffey Press in Association with DRCC 2002
- Prompt care & treatment aims to reduce short and long term sequelae and also to enhance (criminal) investigation

Lovett, J., Regan, L. and Kelly, L. Sexual Assault Referral Centres: developing good practice and maximising potentials. Child and Woman Abuse Studies Unit London Metropolitan University. Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate: Home Office Research Study 285. 2004.



Why should people be supported to disclose sexual violence?

- Enables access to care – physical and psychological needs are priority
- Facilitates access to healthcare including emergency contraception and prophylaxis for infectious disease
- Enables engagement with criminal justice system – allows an investigation to commence
- Allows patient recovery to begin



Legal Definitions

Relevant Legislation

www.irishstatutebook.ie

Act: Criminal Law (Rape) Act, 1981

S 2(1). A man commits rape if :

- (a) he has sexual intercourse with a woman who at the time of the intercourse does not consent to it,
- (b) at that time he knows that she does not consent to the intercourse or he is reckless as to whether she does or does not consent to it.

Maximum Penalty: Imprisonment for life.

Court Venue: Central Criminal Court

Act: Criminal Law (Rape) Amendment Act 1990

S.5. Any rule of law by virtue of which a husband cannot be guilty of the rape of his wife is hereby abolished.

Act: Criminal Law (Rape) (Amendment) Act 1990

S.4. Rape under section 4 means a sexual assault that includes :-

- (a) penetration (however slight) of the anus or mouth by the penis or
- (b) penetration (however slight) of the vagina by any object held or manipulated by another person.

Maximum Penalty: Imprisonment for life

Court Venue: Central Criminal Court.



Sexual Assault

Act: Criminal Law (Rape) (Amendment) Act 1990

S.2 The offence of indecent assault upon any male person and the offence of indecent assault upon any female person shall be known as sexual assault.

Maximum Penalty: Where complainant is a child – imprisonment not exceeding 14 years – any other case period not exceeding 10 years.

Court Venue: District/Circuit Criminal Court

Act: Criminal Law (Rape) (Amendment Act) 1990

S.3. Aggravated sexual assault means a sexual assault that involves serious violence or the threat of serious violence or is such as to cause injury, humiliation or degradation of a grave nature to the person assaulted.

Maximum Penalty: Imprisonment for life

Court Venue: Central Criminal Court.



Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017 (27 March 2017)

- New offences relate to:
 - child sexual grooming including the use of ICT to facilitate such activity
 - the sexual exploitation of persons with disabilities
 - seeking sexual services through prostitution (but sex workers decriminalised)
- The Act also introduces a statutory definition of ‘consent’
- Extended jurisdiction



Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017 (27 March 2017)

- Regarding 'sexual act with child under 17 years of age' it recognises the reality of under age, consensual, peer relationships through the introduction of a 'proximity of age' defence
- Amendments include:
 -in proceedings for an offence under this section against a child aged 15-17 it shall be a defence that the child consented to the sexual act if defendant
 - (a) is younger or less than 2 years older than the child,
 - (b) was not a person in authority
 - (c) was not in an intimidatory or exploitative relationship



Definition of Consent (SOA 2017)

‘A person consents if they freely and voluntarily agree to engage in that act.’

- Does not consent if they submit to it because of force or if asleep/ unconscious / incapable of consenting (alcohol or drugs) or is suffering from a physical disability which prevents communication
- Does not consent if mistaken as to the identity of any other person, if detained at the time or if someone else consents. Consent to a sexual act may be withdrawn at any time
- Any failure or omission on the part of a person to offer resistance to an act does not of itself constitute consent to that act.

Possible Sequelae

Medical

- Injuries sustained during the assault – but remember presence or absence of injuries does not generally confirm or refute allegation made
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Pregnancy and gynaecological complications

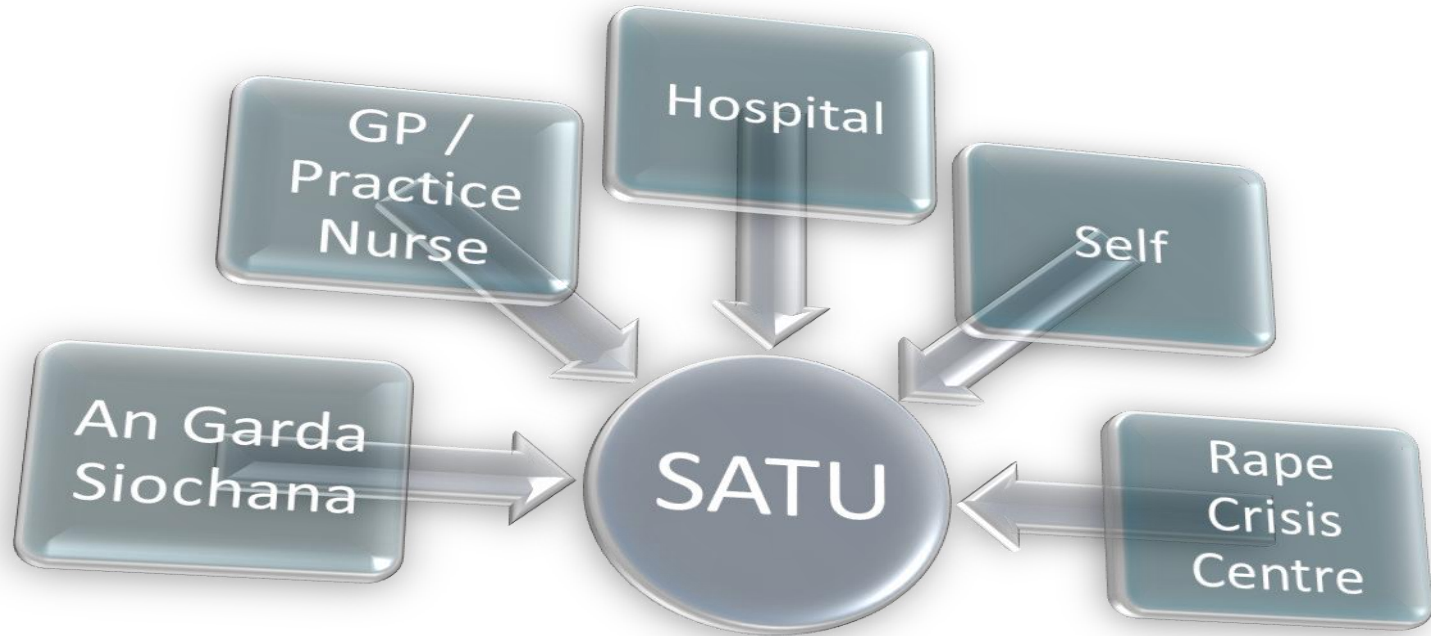
Psychosocial

- Higher prevalence of mental health issues incl PTSD
- Socially ostracised as come to terms with events
- Impact on family, partner and friends
- Effects on children of witnessing sexual violence
- Long term health effects

Ryan G, Mengeling M et al. Hysterectomy risk in premenopausal-aged military veterans: associations with sexual assault and gynaecologic symptoms. *AJOG* 2016, 214 (3):352.

McFarlane AC, DeGirolamo G. The nature of traumatic stressors and the epidemiology of posttraumatic reactions. IN; van der Kolk BA, McFarlane AC, Weisaeth I, editors. *Traumatic Stress: The Effects of Overwhelming Experience on Mind, Body and Society*. New York: Guilford Press; 1996.p.241-56

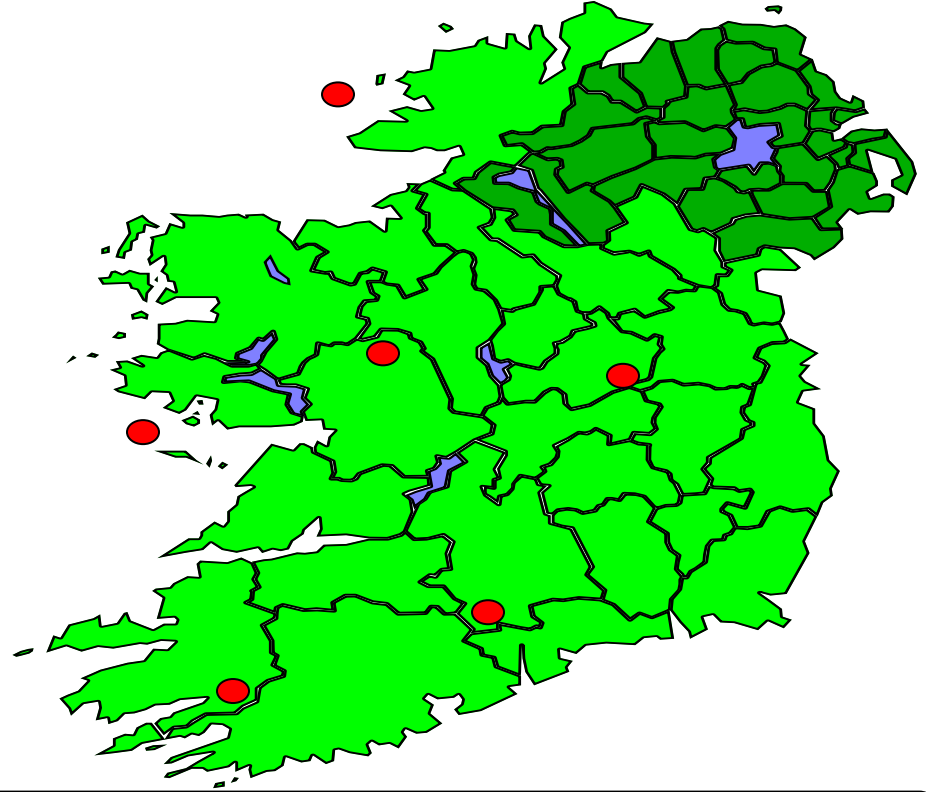
Aim: 24 hour service – for men and women >14 years





Sexual Assault
Treatment Units

'Adult' SATUs (since 2009)



Rotas for forensic examiners and assisting nurses, Full time CNS (+/- 2), Admin support and links with support services (RCC)



'Adult' SATUs (since 2009)

Within a maximum of 3 hours drive of a unit

O'Shea, A. Sexual Assault Treatment Services: A National Review. National Steering Committee on Violence Against Women, Sexual Assault Review Committee. 2006.

Within 80 kilometres of any given location

Hanly, C. Healy D. and Scriver, S. Rape & Justice in Ireland: A National Study of Survivor, Prosecutor and Court Responses to Rape. Rape Crisis Network Ireland (RCNI) 2009. Dublin: Liffey Press

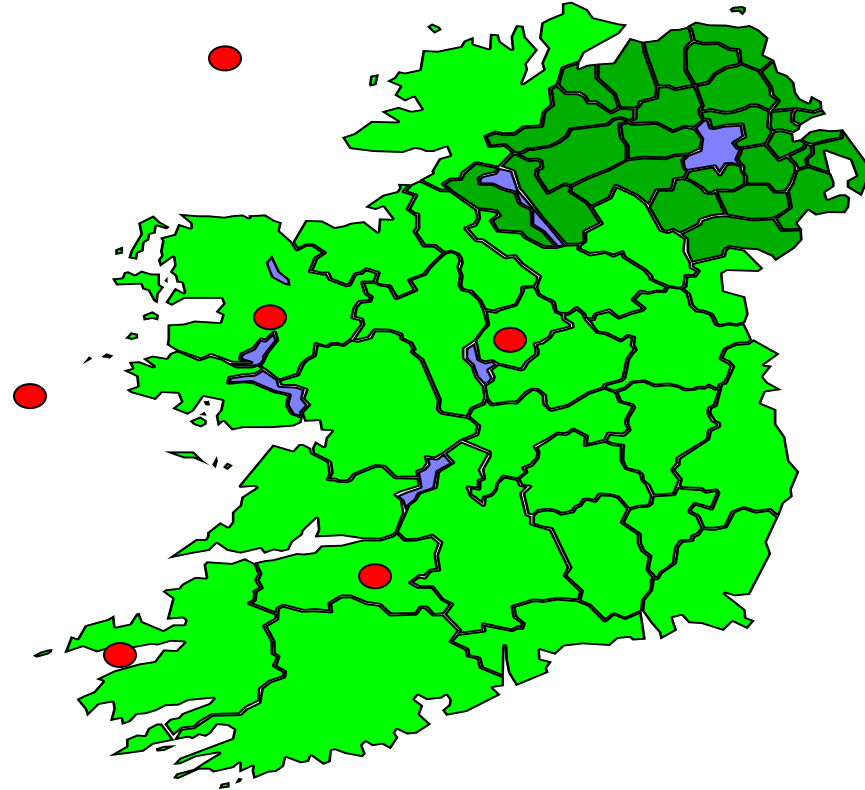
Maximum travelling time for a complainant would be 120 minutes

Department of Health, United Kingdom (DOH UK). Recommendations for Regional Sexual Assault Referral Centres. Report of a DOH Working Group.

August 2008. Minimum level would be one SAC per 400,000 women (5.9)

Council of Europe; Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs. Combating violence against women: minimum standards for support services. Kelly, L. Roddick Chair on Violence Against Women, London

Metropolitan University and Dubois, L. 2008.





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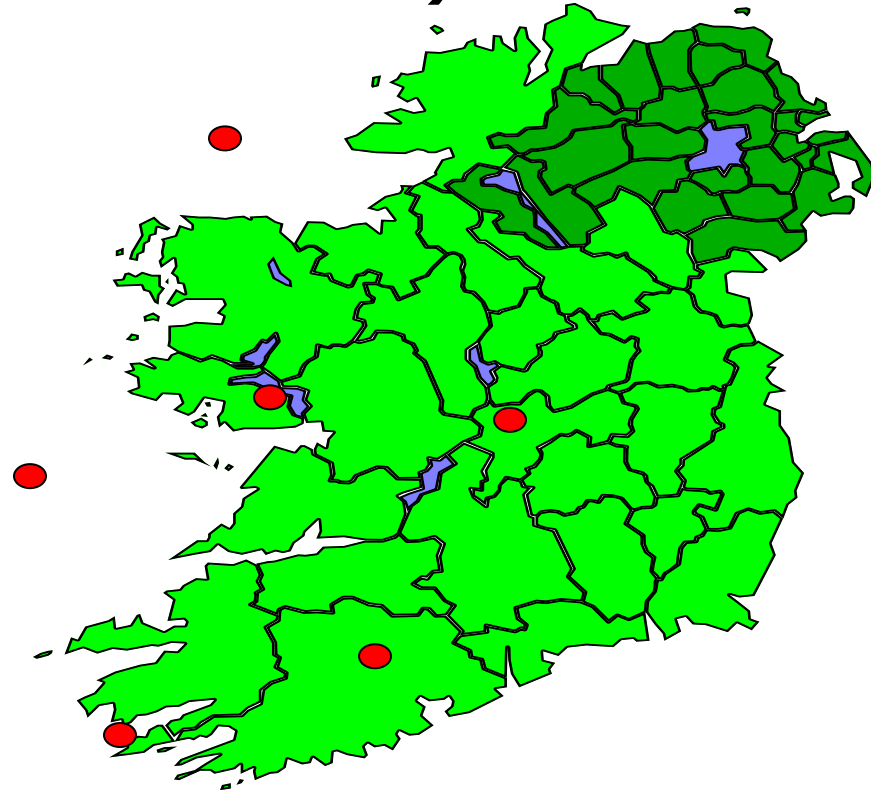
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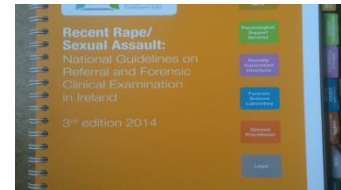
Council of Europe; Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs. Combating violence against women: minimum standards for support services. Kelly, L. Roddick Chair on Violence Against Women, London Metropolitan University and Dubois, L. 2008.



this care should be provided by professionals who are doing this work sufficiently often to maintain competency and skill

Where are we now?

- 6 SATUs – aiming for equity of access not limited by geography (+ Limerick)
- Clinical nurse/midwife specialists – ‘permanent staff,’ consistent 9-5 presence – integrated with community of forensic medical examiners
- Nurse/Midwife prescribing and Advanced nurse/midwife practitioners
- Interagency collaboration underpinning all developments, liaison groups etc
- ‘National Guidelines Development Group’



SATU Response

Physical & Psychological needs of the patient are the priority

Following discussion and explanation the patient may choose from the following options:

Option 1: Forensic Clinical Examination and care (Section 2, p. 56)

Option 2: Health check and care (Section 2, p. 87)

Option 3: Collection and Storage of Forensic Evidence without Immediate Reporting to of An Garda Síochána (Section 2:21 p. 100)

Subject to statutory reporting requirements e.g. Children First Guidance¹ or
Withholding Information Act.²

What happens in a SATU?

- Responsive and person focussed
- Psychological support
- Forensic examination
 - Incl relevant samples
- Health care
 - Emergency contraception
 - Infectious disease prevention
- Specialist referral
- Children First
- Follow-up
- Report preparation / court appearance
- Education, advocacy, health promotion, risk reduction



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The role of the sexual assault centre

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Sexual Assault Treatment Unit (SATU), Rotunda Hospital and National SATU Services, Parnell Square, Dublin 1, Ireland

The Forensic Medical Examination of Adults who Report Sexual Violence In Ireland: A Practical Overview for the Legal Practitioner

Kieran M Kennedy*

Anne McHugh** and Maeve Eogan***

The Sexual Assault Treatment Unit

Structure of Services in Ireland
At present, there are 6 SATUs in Ireland. These are geographically c



Forensic Evidence

- Relevant samples taken according to Guidelines
- Processed by FSI
- Presence or absence of injury frequently impacts on decision making

Kennedy KM. The relationship of victim injury to the progression of sexual crimes through the criminal justice system. *J Forensic Leg Med.* 2012 Aug;19(6):309-11.

- Absence of injury does not mean assault did not happen, presence does not imply that consent was lacking
- Need to consider in context, and address in report
- Colposcopy, photo documentation



A few words about today's referendum.....

- Irish people (via Citizens Assembly, opinion polls, and Joint Oireachtas Committee) feel that pregnancy as a consequence of rape/sexual assault is a scenario where women should have the choice to terminate pregnancy.
 - But 'mandatory disclosure' in order to 'persuade' a person or panel that you 'deserve' access to safe and legal termination of pregnancy is not appropriate.
 - AND no physical finding conclusively determines (or refutes) that unwanted sexual contact has occurred.
 - Women pregnant as a result of sexual violence are represented in the numbers who travel each year, and in those who access mifepristone/misoprostil online
 - Access within a defined gestational limit would offer patient opportunity to make right, supported decision for them.



Challenges & Solutions

- Staffing
 - training
 - support
- Infrastructure
- Funding
- Paediatric services
 - Co-location
- Justice
 - Duration of investigation /decision/ access to court
 - GNPSB
- Prevention, myths, media, society