



The Blue Sky Centre

Sexual Assault Referral Centre

Coventry & Warwickshire

Annual Report

April 2018 – March 2019

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Welcome to The Blue Sky Centre's Annual Report, which highlights the activity of the SARC in our sixth year of operation.

The aim of this report is to provide insight into the work of the Blue Sky Centre by outlining the services we offer and how it has been accessed over the past year, providing a breakdown of data for sexual assaults relating to demographics, health and wellbeing, criminal justice and self-referrals.

Mission Statement

The Blue Sky Centre is committed to delivering excellence of service to all patients; providing sustained improvement in the care of sexually abused and assaulted adults and young people. We strive to meet medical and therapeutic needs in a timely manner. We will at all times deliver a client-centred acute sexual abuse examination service to all individuals within a friendly and clinically appropriate environment. Previously, The Blue Sky Centre supported all ages, but since October 2016 the service to children has been provided by the West Midlands Paediatric Sexual Assault Service (WMPSAS). That service, and all data relating to it, is provided by Birmingham Community Healthcare Trust (BCHT).

Our staff will take into account the needs and views of clients and their families, ensuring they are treated with dignity and respect whilst being supported at all times.

Our focus is on ensuring that all individuals in our temporary care, and their families, are safeguarded from harm. This is achieved by providing appropriately skilled clinicians and practitioners to undertake quality assessment, treatment, and follow-up referrals to other professionals through integrated pathways. The aim is to ensure continuity of care and improved outcomes for this vulnerable section of the population. We will involve clients and their families in shaping the development of the service.

In addition to this, we aim to raise awareness of the nature of sexual violence, particularly challenging the embedded myths which can deter reporting and adversely affect outcomes. Our intention is to increase awareness of the services SARCs can offer, in order to encourage a higher rate of reporting. We will do this by working with local agencies, members of the community and Warwickshire and West Midlands Police.

Summary

The Blue Sky Centre (SARC) is a specialist facility which offers forensic and therapeutic intervention to men and women who have been raped or sexually assaulted within Warwickshire and Coventry. This may be acute or historic in nature, and referrals to the service can be made by the police, a third party agency or the client themselves. Whilst the focus is on Coventry & Warwickshire we will support clients from farther afield whenever they contact us, usually by signposting them to appropriate services in their own area.

The Blue Sky Centre aims to provide all of our clients with information, support and referrals to assist in their recovery, in a safe and welcoming environment.

The Blue Sky Centre is commissioned by NHS England, with a funding partnership comprising of Warwickshire County Council, Coventry City Council, Warwickshire Police and West Midlands police.

The SARC is located on the site of George Eliot Hospital NHS Trust in Nuneaton, and is registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Over the past year The Blue Sky Centre has provided a service to a total of **342** clients, compared to **487** in the previous year. It should be pointed out that this is not an accurate comparison. Since 1st April 2018, WMPSAS has implemented a hub and spoke model whereby all children in acute cases (within two weeks) are seen at Horizon SARC in Walsall. This was not the case in the previous year where on designated days of the month all children from the entire region were seen in acute cases at the Blue Sky Centre and counted as clients. WMPSAS cases are no longer counted as Blue Sky Centre clients.

Children under 16 are regularly interviewed at the Blue Sky Centre by the police and they are counted as clients. Children aged over 16 may, if appropriate be supported by the adult service at Blue Sky Centre, rather than by WMPSAS. Such cases are carefully assessed and discussed. Adults who report historic matters are also commonly interviewed at the SARC. Other adults may contact the SARC and receive advice about support options and/or reporting.

- **1.5%** of our clients were children aged between 16-17 years who opted to be seen through the adult SARC service.
- **61.1%** of cases were referred by the police. **47.4%** from Warwickshire Police, **10.5%** from the Coventry area of West Midlands Police, **1.5%** from other West Midlands Police areas and **1.7%** from other Police forces.
- **36.3%** of cases were Self-referrals. **22.2%** Warwickshire Self-referrals, **8.8%** Coventry Self-referrals, **4.7%** Self-referrals from other areas and **0.6%** self-referrals not disclosing the area they are from.

- **2.6%** of cases were referred by other professionals including; GP, Hospital and Children services.
- Clients were referred on to a multitude of agencies for on-going care and support following a needs assessment. These include; Sexual Health Services (SHS), counselling from external providers, Alcohol and Drug Misuse agencies, Local Authority, GP, Domestic Abuse agencies and Mental Health Services.
- The most common relationship with the perpetrator was an acquaintance.

Delivering Quality of Care for Clients

Demographics

In the period April 2018 – March 2019, The Blue Sky Centre has provided a service to **342** people, **21.9%** of which were children (0-17 year old).

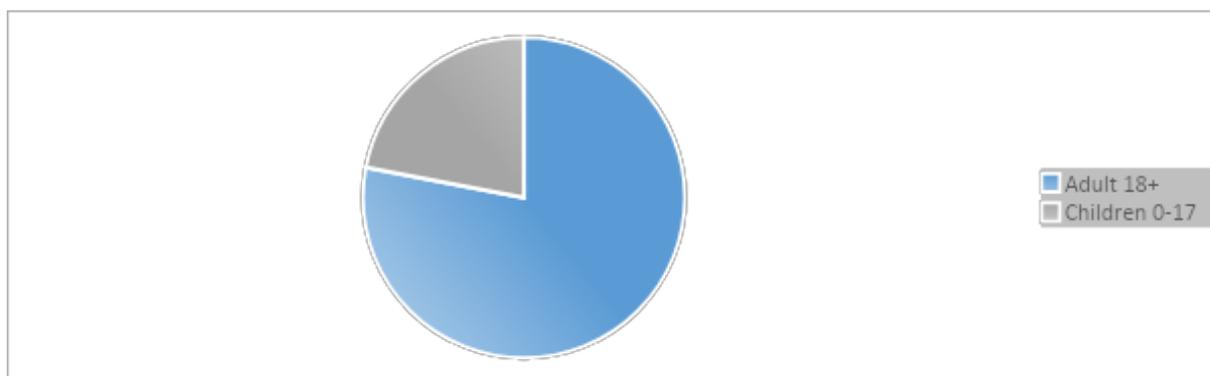


Figure 1. Age breakdown of clients

In the same period, **46.5%** of SARC referrals underwent a forensic examination. **2.5%** of which were children (16-17 year old)

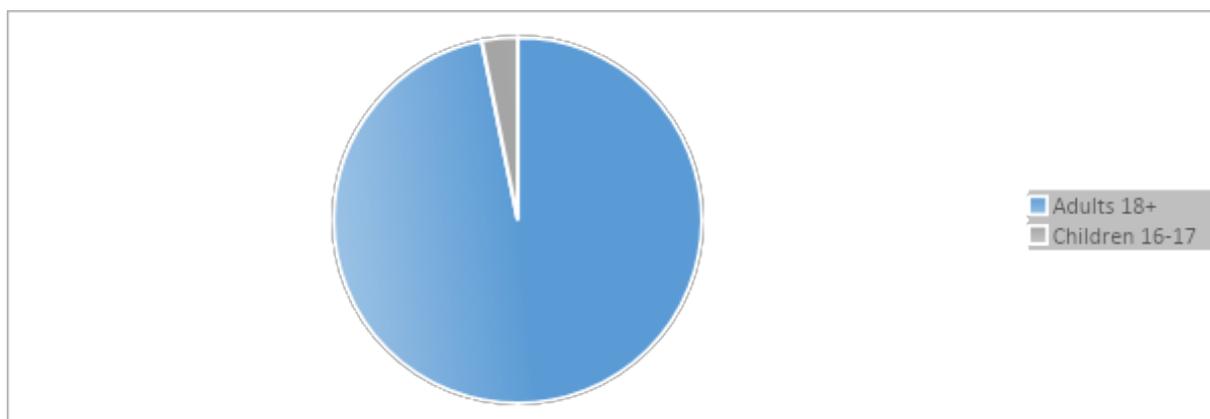


Figure 2. Age breakdown of medical clients

Total Number of Paediatric opt-in medical examinations	
Self-referral Paediatric opt in forensic medicals	3
Police paediatric opt in forensic medicals	2

Reasons given for Paediatric Opt in:

Self-Referral – Client wanted to access local SARC site	3
Police Referral – Client wanted to access local SARC site – No specific reason given	2
Police Referral – Case discussion with PSAS Paediatrician (via telephone) – Client given the option to go via adult SARC or PSAS. Client decided Adult SARC	0

In all cases involving clients aged between 16 and 18 the on-call Forensic Medical Practitioner considers whether it is appropriate in all the circumstances for the child to be seen by the adult service. If necessary a discussion would follow with the on-call paediatrician from WMPSAS.

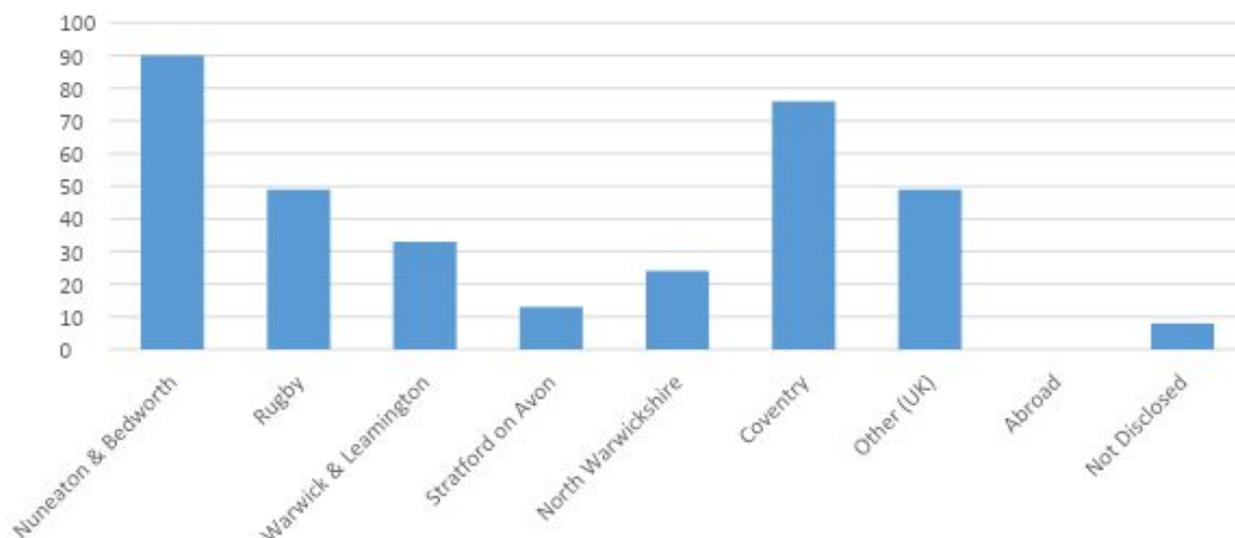
The Centre offers a broad range of services to clients, including forensic medical examination. Self-referral clients can elect to have the forensic evidence stored at the SARC in case they later decide to report to police. Where appropriate (ie identity of offender is unknown) the client can consent to the SARC working with the police to submit such samples for anonymous. A further choice open to self-referral clients is to pass anonymous intelligence to the police about the offender with a view to linking serial crimes.

Clients are offered information and support whilst at the SARC, and we ensure that all clients are offered appropriate follow up referrals to ISVA (Independent Sexual Violence Advisors), Sexual Health, GP and external counselling, as appropriate.

In the period 1.4.18 to 31.3.19 **46.5 %** of SARC referrals underwent a forensic examination.

A total of **91%** of clients who had contact with The Blue Sky Centre identified as female and **8.5%** as male. **0.25%** of clients identified themselves as Transman and **0.25%** of clients identified themselves as Transwoman.

Clients attended from across the whole of the catchment area, with the largest numbers from Nuneaton and Bedworth, followed by Coventry (Specific locations given only where the victims reside in Warwickshire and Coventry).



It is worthy of comment that not all police complainants regarding more historic matters attend the SARC for interview. Many of those who reside in Nuneaton and Bedworth utilise the SARC facility but complainants from other areas tend to attend facilities more local to where they reside.

Figure 3. Postcode breakdown of clients contacting The Blue Sky Centre April 2018- March 2019

The majority of clients (**78%**) who attended declared White British ethnicity. **18%** were non-White British and **4%** did not disclose their ethnic status, (probably contact other than face to face, ie email).

White British	267
Other White	16
British Asian	4
British Mixed	13
Black British	8
Black African	8
Black Other	3
Other Mixed	3
Not Disclosed	15
Asian Other	5

Table 1. Ethnicity of Clients seen April 2018 – March 2019

The Forensic Examination

All clients that attend the SARC for an examination are seen by either a Forensic Medical Examiner (FME) or a Forensic Nurse Examiner (FNE). Some clients may be seen by more than one examiner. The Blue Sky Centre model is for two FNEs to be on duty at the SARC during office hours. Out of hours cover is provided by a rota of FMEs and FNEs both male and female. Wherever practicable the client is offered the choice of gender of examiner.

Female Forensic Practitioner	122
Male Forensic Practitioner	25

Table 2. Gender of Forensic Practitioner who attended The Blue Sky Centre SARC.

Cancelled Cases: 12 Cases were cancelled over the course of the year prior to the client arriving at the SARC.

Reasons for Cancellation	Number
Cancelled, FME not available	1
Cancelled, client not co-operating with police investigation	2

Cancelled, exam not required / needed (self-referral)	2
Cancelled, client unsure of continuing with complaint	7
Cancelled, client wanted female examiner, none available	0
Cancelled, examination not in best interest of client	2
Cancelled, client intoxicated	0
Cancelled, examination undertaken without Crisis Worker being informed	0

Table 3. Cancelled cases by reason

Client Vulnerabilities

Vulnerability is often associated with sexual assault and rape. **43%** of Clients had identified pre-existing vulnerabilities, with some having a combination of vulnerabilities. With the clients consent, appropriate referrals for ongoing support were made.

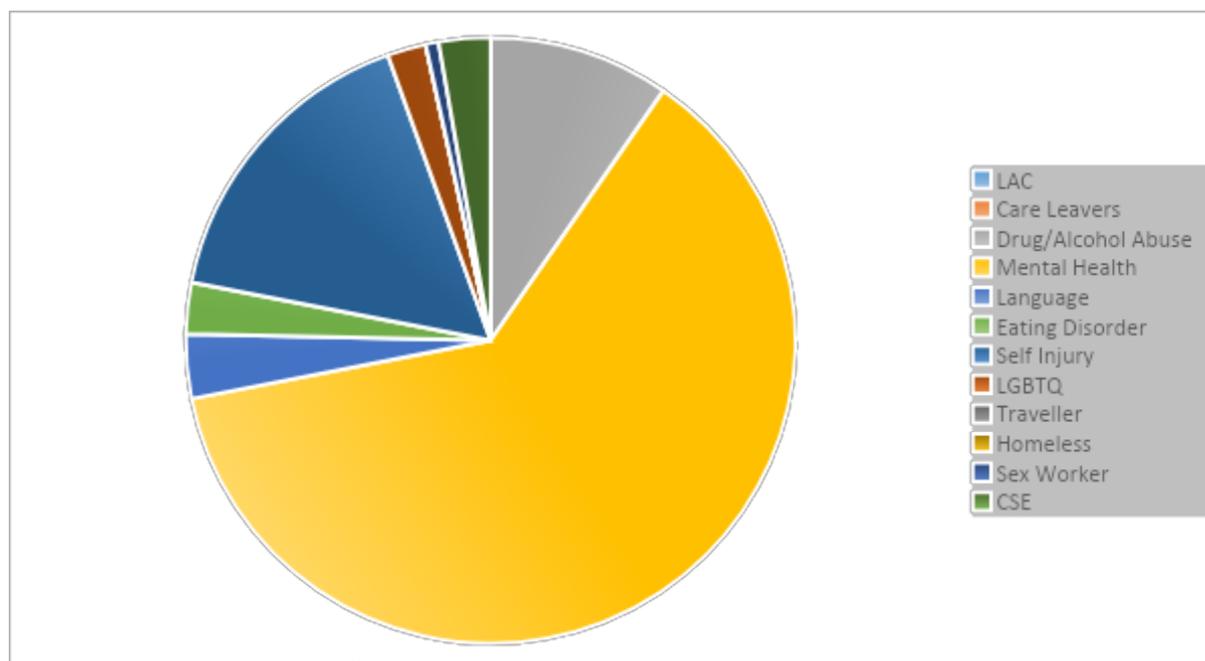


Figure 3. Client Vulnerabilities

Health and Well-being

Many victims of sexual abuse report a history of depression, anxiety of self-harm. All clients are asked to consent to their attendance being shared with their GP and, as appropriate clients are referred to IAPT (Improve Access to Psychological or Mental Health Crisis Teams).

At the time of examination, where appropriate, clients will be risk assessed and offered medication for HIV PEP (Post Exposure Prophylaxis), Hepatitis B and Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC).

	2018-19
Number of clients who were eligible and offered HIV PEP at the SARC	39
Number of clients who started HIV PEP at the SARC	37
Number of clients who declined to start HIV PEP at the SARC	2
Number of clients who were eligible for Emergency Contraception	62
Number of clients who were eligible and commenced Hepatitis B vaccination schedule	53

Table 4. Medication provided to clients

PEP must be given within the first 72 hours after the assault, therefore anyone attending after this time would be ineligible for treatment. In all other cases the FME or FNE conducts a risk assessment and offers PEP where indicated. **2** Clients who were offered PEP declined it.

STI screening should be offered to all clients two weeks post assault. All clients receive a follow-up courtesy call from SARC staff the next working day. This will cover their general demeanour and ensure that appointments are made with the Genito-Urinary Medicine Clinic (GUM) of their choice.

The Blue Sky Centre clients are also offered a referral to support and counselling services in Coventry and Warwickshire.

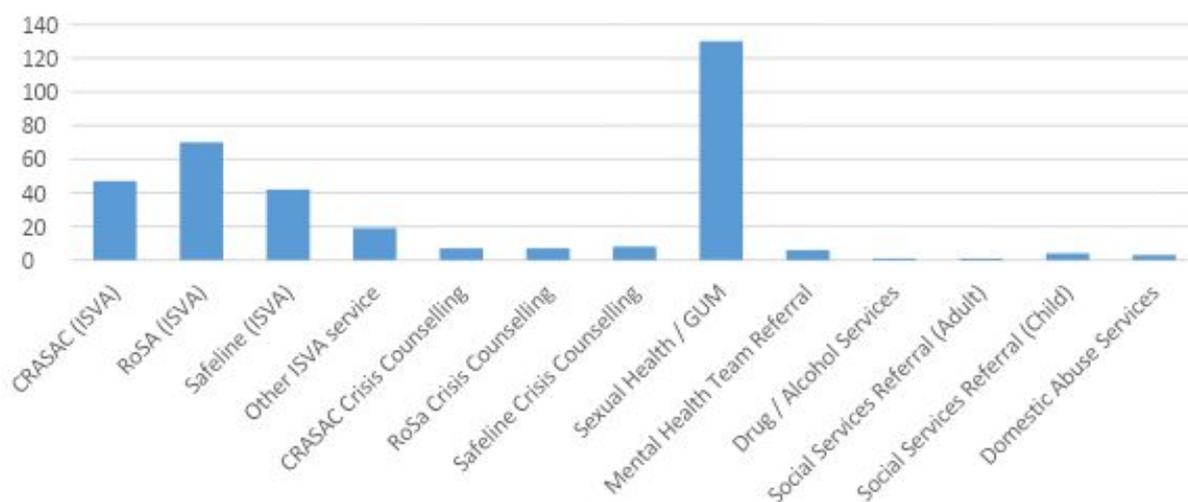


Figure 4. Referrals to agencies for support

Urgent Psychological Intervention

Since 1st April 2018 the Blue Sky Centre has referred clients who appear to be in need of it to the local support services (CRASAC, RoSA and Safeline) for urgent appointments with counsellors to provide initial coping strategies. This is distinct from the longer-term therapeutic counselling already provided.

To date we have made **27** referrals to our Crisis Counselling service.

Criminal Justice Data

Data has been collected in relation to:

- Assault Location (area)
- Assailant Relationship
- Alleged Offence

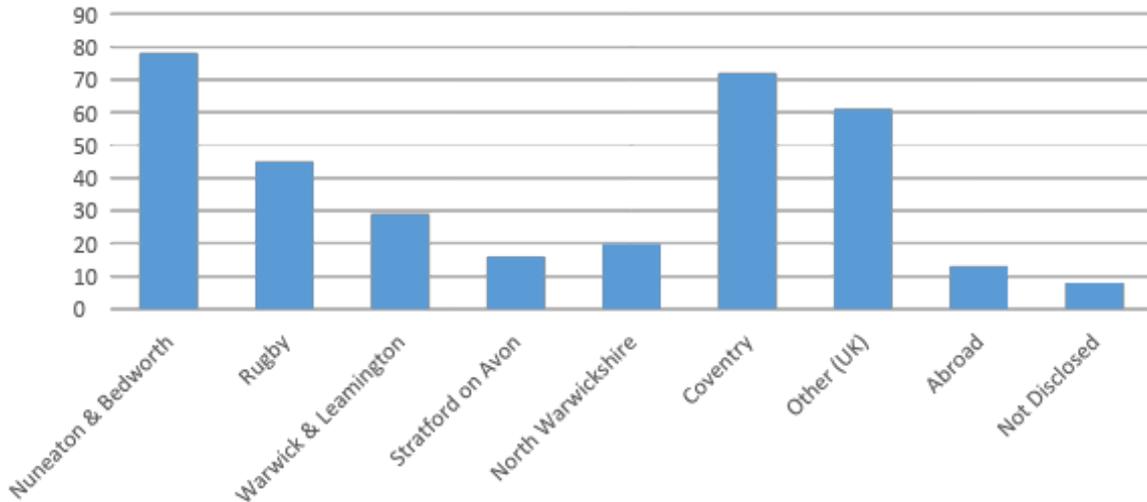


Figure 5. Assault Location (Area)

The Most common relationship with the perpetrator was an acquaintance (**41.5%**)

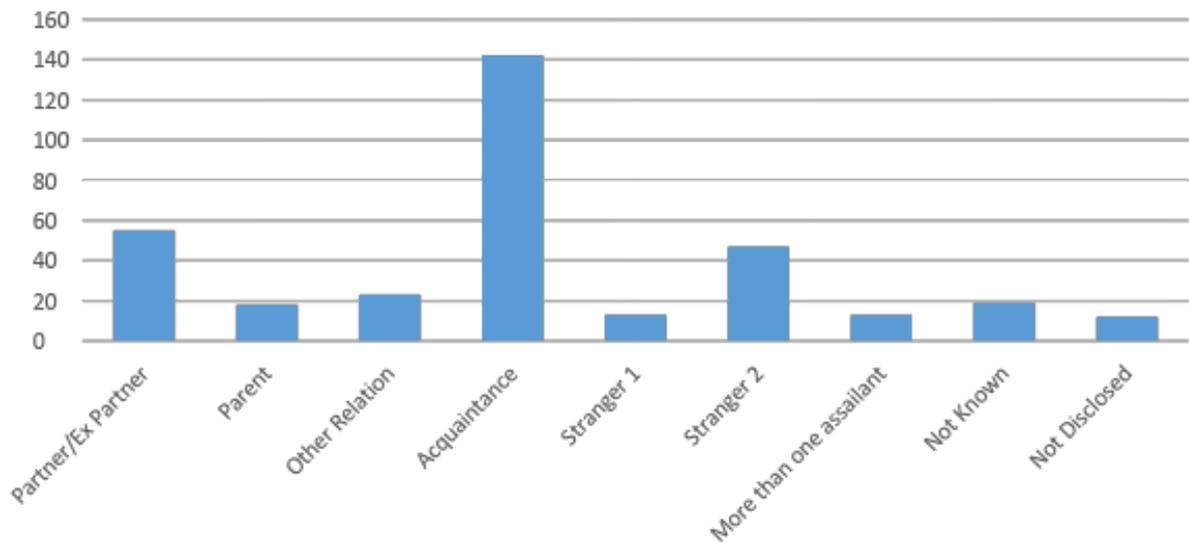


Figure 6. Assailant Relationship to client 2018 – 2019

The most common offence disclosed was rape (some clients were subjected to more than one offence). **60%** of clients disclosed the alleged offence as rape.

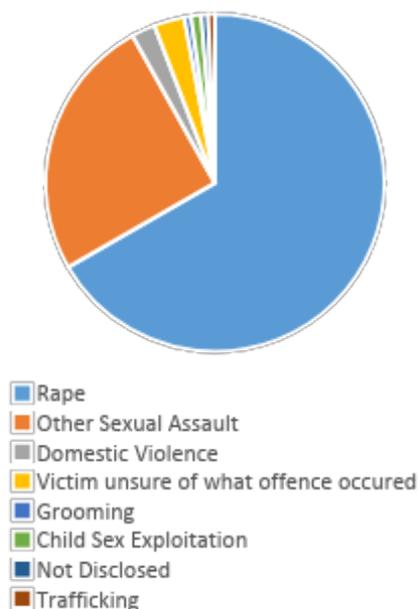


Figure 7. Alleged Offences 2018 – 2019

Self-Referral Clients

In 2018 – 2019 the service has seen **128** self-Referral clients.

The service offers an initial telephone consultation with a Crisis Worker (24 hours a day). If the client requires an examination this can also be arranged on a 24/7 basis. In cases outside the forensic evidence recovery window of 7 days clients will be signposted to the most appropriate support/counselling service for their needs. They can choose whether to contact such organisations themselves or allow SARC staff to make a referral for them.

Clients attending for forensic examination will have an in depth discussion with the Crisis Worker, which will include the recording of a brief first account. Staff are advised to confine this to the essential details needed to facilitate an efficient examination and not to stray into territory that might later compromise any police interview. The Crisis Worker will discuss the options available to the client, which includes:

1. Full police involvement from outset
2. No initial police involvement but forensic samples obtained for potential future use
3. Anonymous reporting / intelligence sharing
4. Anonymous submission of forensic samples
5. Early Evidence Samples only (provision of urine and/or saliva)
6. Details of incident only and access to other services
7. Access to other services only

Self-referral – Referred from / Accessed the Blue Sky Centre by:

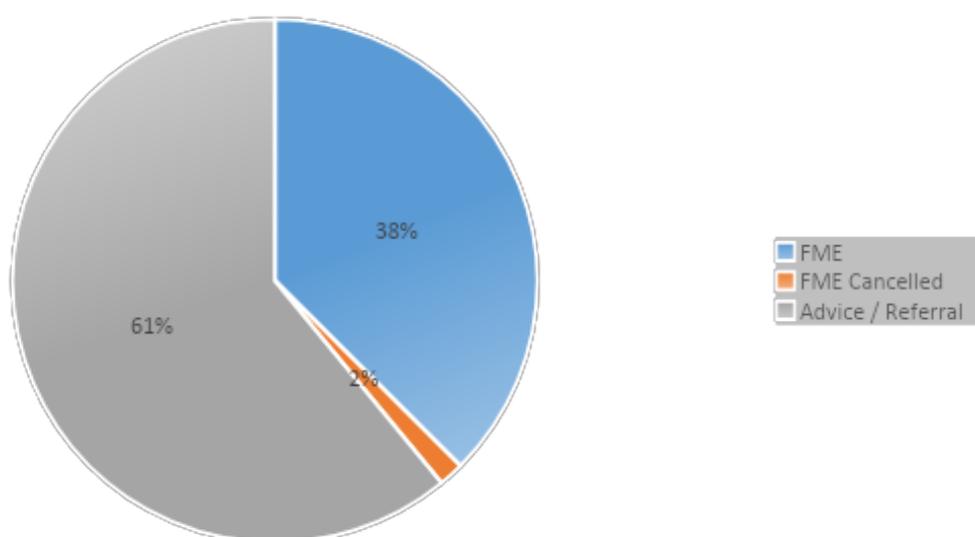
	2018 – 2019
Web Site	25
A&E / Hospital	11
Safeline / CRASAC / RoSA	2

GP	22
Friend / Family Member	7
GUM Service	15
Police	15
Other SARC	4
Previous Client	4
University / College / School	8
Other Professional	4
Not Disclosed	11

Table 5. Self-referral source

Self-referral Service	2018 - 2019
FME	42
FME Cancelled	2
Advice / Referral	78

Table 6. Self-referral service required



	2018 - 2019
Anonymous Intelligence	33
Anonymous submission of samples	7
Non reported - to reported	13

Table 7. Self-referral anonymous referrals

Client Feedback

A selection of comments made by clients or professional colleagues in this period:

- Sex worker client "X (Crisis Worker) and Y (FME) were great and made it far less of an ordeal than I was expecting"
- Detective Constable "X (CW) was very supportive to me, the victim, and the victim's friend"
- Client "I could not thank X (CW) and Y (FNE) enough for their support. You both put me at ease straight away as soon as I walked through the door. I feel so much better after having been there and really wanted to say thank you"

- Client “Very happy with the staff”
- Client “Thank you so much. I really appreciate your help and information. I cannot express my gratitude enough”

Complaints

No complaints have been received in this year.

Marketing

In the year covered by this report the following marketing and awareness raising activities have been completed:

- Delivery of Level 3 Child Safeguarding/SARC Awareness training to George Eliot Hospital Staff quarterly
- Presentation to West Midlands Police Senior Investigating Officers
- Presentation to West Midlands Police Specially Trained Officers (STOs - initial rape report attenders)
- Presentations to Warwickshire Police STOs
- Presentation to Student Social Workers
- Hosting of scheduled visits by a number of Warwick University Medical Students
- Presentation to George Eliot Hospital A&E staff
- Speaker at Conference on police misuse of status for sexual exploitation
- Host visit of warwickshire County Council Health & Wellbeing Group
- Host visit by Victims Commissioner, Baroness Newlove
- Host visit from Bapsca, international child protection professionals organisation
- Host visit from Springboard Charity (young people/unemployed)
- Participate in Warwickshire County Council Domestic Abuse ‘Meet and Eat’ event
- Host visit by IRIS (Domestic Abuse training)
- Presentation to Warwick University Security and Support staff
- Work with Coventry Rugby Club to make promotional video raising awareness of male victimhood