

Module 8

Procedures in Common Advocacy Situations



OVCTTAC
OFFICE FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME Training and Technical Assistance Center

Learning Objectives

- Respond appropriately to a caller on a crisis line who is reporting a recent sexual assault.
- Identify correct procedures during a medical-forensic exam.
- Create a list of “do’s and don’ts” for law enforcement statement accompaniment and courtroom accompaniment.
- Differentiate the roles of advocates, SANEs, and other SART members.
- Identify special procedures and “red flags” for dealing with drug-facilitated sexual assault.

Responding to a Crisis Call

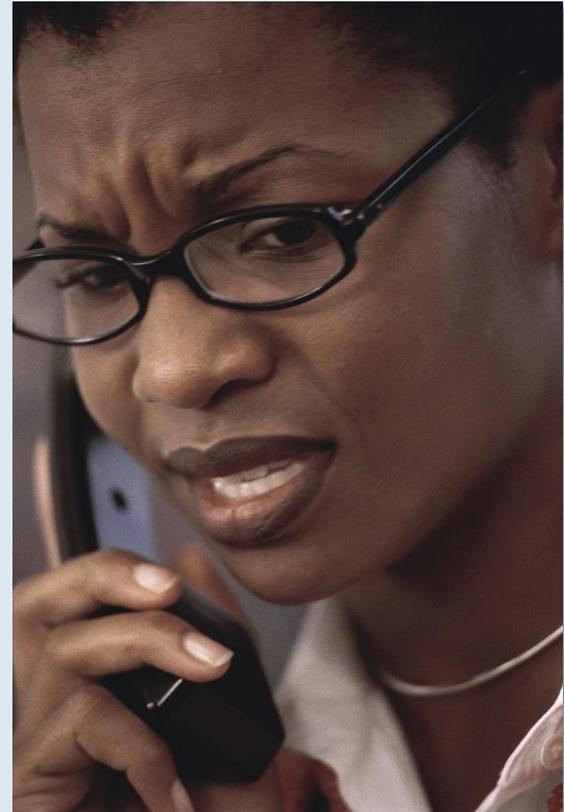
- Identify immediate concerns.
- Establish safety.
- Explain services.
- Arrange transportation.



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Responding to a Crisis Call, continued

- Discuss evidence.
- Address practical issues.
- Arrange a time to meet.
- Activate other first responders.



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Medical-Forensic Exam Timeframe

Within 72/96/120 hours (or longer; advocates must know local policy).

Exceptions:

- Hostage situations.
- Force resulting in injury.
- Ejaculation without cleanup.



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Medical Forensic Exam: Yes or No?

- Sharon reported an assault that occurred 12 hours ago; there was no penetration or apparent injury.
- Jane reported an oral sexual assault that occurred 24 hours ago.



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Medical Forensic Exam: Yes or No?

- Thomas reported a rape and robbery that occurred 5 hours ago.
- Maria reported a rape by two strangers that occurred 2 weeks ago.



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Activity



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Medical-Forensic Exam Case Study Worksheet 8.1

- Working in groups, read and discuss the worksheet, then answer the questions.
- Report out to the large group.

Accessing Support

The advocate and, if available, the SANE should be called to the exam facility automatically, not at the victim's request.



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Advocates and SANEs

- May do some of the same things during crisis intervention, but the roles are distinct.
- Reinforce each other; the victim hears the same things from two people, helping to normalize the victim's reaction.
- Advocates should never be involved in a medical exam or evidence collection.



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Dealing With Emergency Department Delays

- Delays of up to 1 hour are common, even when there is a SANE program.
- If the victim is waiting for the SANE to arrive, it may be helpful to explain the SANE's role.
- Report consistent, unexplained delays to your supervisor, who can speak to the emergency room supervisor or SANE supervisor.



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Dealing With Conflicts or Problems

Never try to “fix” any issues with the SART yourself.
Report any problems to your supervisor.



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Law Enforcement Statement Accompaniment

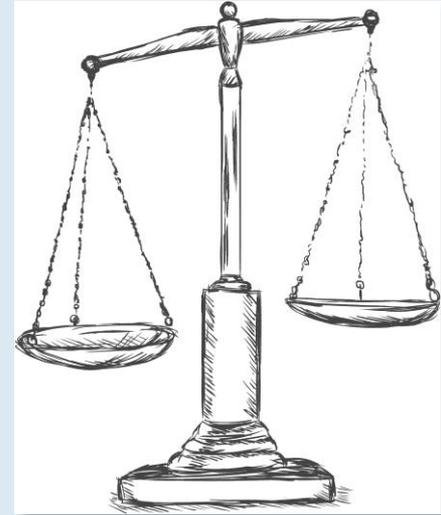
- You are there to support the victim.
- Do not interrupt any part of the interview; you can address any concerns when the interview is completed.
- Law enforcement is part of your team.
- It is important that victims tell the complete truth.



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Law Enforcement Statement Accompaniment

- The investigator will ask questions for clarification.
- Recording varies from area to area.
- Statements will usually be transcribed.
- The victim reviews and signs; this becomes their official account of the sexual assault.



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If You Have Concerns During the Statement

- Never interfere with the interview.
- Hold all comments or questions until after the statement is complete.
- Ask about any concerns with the officer alone.
- Talk with the victim, allowing the victim to voice their feelings about the statement.



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Courtroom Accompaniment

- You may accompany the victim to attorney appointments as well as the courtroom.
- The goal is to familiarize the victim with the process and the courtroom.
- Many prosecutors will discuss options with victims.
- If the case is plea bargained, work with the victim so that they can express their opinion.

Support During a Case

If the prosecutor decides not to charge the case:

- Go with the victim to the prosecutor's office to discuss the reasons why.

If the assailant is found guilty by trial:

- The victim may want you to go with them to the sentencing and provide support.
- The victim impact statement is taken into consideration by the judge when determining the sentence.

Activity



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Dos and Don'ts

- In groups, design a 1-minute presentation on “dos and don'ts” for a law enforcement statement or courtroom accompaniment.
- Present to the large group.

Activity



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Information Search and “Red Flags” Worksheet 8.2

- In small groups, use your manual to complete the worksheet.
- Write on your “red flags” possible indications of drug-facilitated sexual assault.
- Review in the large group.

Review of Learning Objectives

- Respond appropriately to a caller on a crisis line who is reporting a recent sexual assault.
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End of Module 8

Questions? Comments?



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