

## **PATHWAY FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF ANOGENITAL SYMPTOMS IN CHILDREN WITH NO DISCLOSURE OF SEXUAL ABUSE/ASSAULT**

Notes for management of anogenital symptoms/abnormalities:

- 1.** If there is a clear disclosure or allegation of sexual abuse, complete a MARF for multi-agency involvement, a strategy meeting (involving the SARC) and for a CSA medical to be organised. For all children under 13 the abuse should be reported to the police, and a report should be considered for all children under 18.
- 2.** For sexualised behaviour or language but no disclosure, complete a MARF explaining your concerns about it being an indicator of sexual abuse so multiagency information can be collated and a strategy meeting organised if required.
- 3.** For concerns about the appearance of genitalia or the presence of genital symptoms with no allegation, disclosure or associated sexualised behaviour or language, a medical cause should be considered by following the flowchart.
- 4.** Any medical causes should be treated appropriately.
- 5.** If concerns about sexual abuse persist, or if there are clinical findings that do not have a medical explanation and concern about possible CSA increases, a MASH/IFD referral should be completed for multi-agency information sharing and a strategy meeting if indicated.
- 6.** It is best practice to obtain consent prior to completing a MARF, however, if you believe the child/young person is at risk of significant harm, a MARF can be completed without consent.
- 7.** Before examining a child/young person, their consent should be obtained if competent. However, children should be engaged in decisions about their health and care even if not competent.
- 8.** Teenagers may be able to self-swab for STI screening if they refuse examination.
- 9.** A chaperone must be present when any examination is undertaken.
- 10.** Remember, a normal examination does not mean nothing has happened.
- 11.** Advice is available from the Paediatric Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) medical staff 24/7 or the designated doctors/nurses in working hours.

**Contact details:** Emerald SARC services operate between 9am – 9pm (Monday – Sunday). Telephone advice can be sought 24/7. During this time, you can call 0330 223 0099 to speak with a sexual offence examiner for support, to discuss their services, for referrals, and to make an appointment. You can also email [admin.emeraldcentre@nhs.net](mailto:admin.emeraldcentre@nhs.net) (monitored 9 am – 9 pm, Monday – Sunday). [click here for more information on making an appointment](#)

### **Resources:**

Centre for Expertise in Child Sexual Abuse: [www.csacentre.org.uk](http://www.csacentre.org.uk)

NSPCC: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/resources>

Barnardos: [www.barnardos.org.uk/what-we-do/protecting-children/sexual-abuse](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what-we-do/protecting-children/sexual-abuse).

