

Proposal to relocate and improve the Adult Sexual Assault Referral Centres which serve Birmingham, Solihull and the Black Country.

We would like to inform you about our proposal to bring together the existing two Adult Sexual Assault Referral Centres into a single, upgraded setting at Hodge Hill.

To comment on the proposal, or to arrange to discuss it with a senior member of our team, please contact us via the details below. **Please note:** the closing date for providing feedback for consideration is 5pm on 18 April 2019.

What is a SARC?

The purpose of a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) is to assess the health and well-being needs of survivors following either a recent or historic sexual assault. Referrals are then made to services in the survivor's home area.

The SARC is also equipped for the collection of forensic evidence from a person who has suffered a recent sexual assault. This is stored for seven years and may be used to secure a criminal conviction if the survivor requests a prosecution.

Where are the existing SARCs?

Adult SARC services for Birmingham, Solihull and the Black Country are currently split across two sites: Horizon Castle Vale and Horizon Walsall. The Walsall premises are also shared with the regional Children and Young People's SARC. (Please note: there are no plans to move the Children and Young People's SARC.)

Where are the proposed new premises?

We have considered several possible venues and identified a building with excellent facilities in a very suitable location at: Hodge Hill Primary Care Centre, Roughlea Avenue, Birmingham B36 8GH.

Why is the change necessary?

Needs assessments for the area have indicated that we need to improve SARC services for the local population. The recommendation to bring two Adult SARC services under one roof has been made jointly by West Midlands Police and NHS England, with support from a professional advocate of those who use the service.

How does this benefit survivors?

Moving the Adult SARC from its current split sites will benefit survivors in the following ways:

- We will reduce waiting times for examination. The new site will have two forensic suites, doubling existing provision at each SARC. This will reduce delays caused by the essential deep cleaning process after each examination.
- We will create an age-appropriate environment for adults by separating the Adult SARC from the Children and Young People's SARC at Horizon, Walsall.
- We will have enough space within the building to further develop the Adult SARC at Hodge Hill if demand for the service increases over future years.
- A single facility will make it easier for the different agencies involved in supporting survivors to work more closely together, and provide the capacity for the service to grow and evolve.

Is this a cut in services?

No. If the proposal goes ahead we will be investing additional funding into the area's SARC service.

Why have you chosen the building at Hodge Hill?

- The building is already in use by the NHS and has a suitable, unused space for the current and future needs of the service.
- It is well located for access by car for patients from across the area. It is also well served by bus routes (X12, X70, 28, 70 and 94).
- The location allows for forensic samples to be transported within the necessary time frame to the laboratory at Birmingham Women and Children's Hospital.
- The building will have a discreet, separate entrance, protecting the privacy and dignity of people who attend the SARC. The SARC service will be in a separate section of the building from the areas used by other services, which include a GP surgery and pharmacy

Will people need to travel further?

Relocating the service at Hodge Hill means some people must travel several miles further, but for others the distance will be shorter.

A slightly increased travel time will have little impact on those who use the service. This is because most people only attend the SARC once and are referred for follow-up support in their home area.

Are there benefits for staff?

- Yes. Staff can work together more effectively and invest the time they currently spend travelling between sites in enhancing patient services.
- We will remove the duplication of tasks caused by managing facilities and supplies in two buildings.

Have SARC users been engaged?

Yes. We are inviting the views of people who have previously used the service. We will respond to any concerns raised as we design the service for the future.

Will there be an impact on residents?

We do not predict any impact on local residents. Additional traffic to the site will be very limited as on average 10 people use the service each week. There is ample parking on the site so vehicles are unlikely to be parked on surrounding streets.

What are the next steps?

Before proceeding with detailed design work, we are asking for feedback from local authority leaders, HOSC and OSC chairs, ward councillors and other stakeholders.

How do I give feedback or find out more?

Please email your comments or questions to: england.northmidcomms@nhs.net or call Donna Follows on: 01138 249025 who will arrange for a senior member of our team to return your call.

The deadline for providing feedback for consideration is 5pm on 18 April 2019.

Views of the Hodge Hill premises



The spacious, attractive building which could host the Adult SARC.

