



SATU ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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INTRODUCTION



i. WELCOME FROM THE CLINICAL LEAD

On behalf of all SATU staff, I am pleased to present the SATU Annual Report for 2022. This is the 14th Annual Report of Key Service Activities from the six HSE funded Sexual Assault Treatment Units (SATUs), 14 years during which the service has continued to grow and develop to respond to people who need to access it.

Over that time the service has enhanced the suite of available care options, now offering a number of pathways of care, according to the person's individual circumstances and preferences. The SATUs are located in Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Mullingar, Galway and Letterkenny and, in 2022, these units provided care for more people than ever before, 1072 people – almost 25% more than in 2021 and more than double the number that were cared for in 2009 (529), the first year we collated national metrics. An additional 14 people were cared for in the out-of-hours service at University Hospital Limerick, which has a different structure and funding stream.



2022 was, in the main, a productive year for the service. All 6 SATUs continued to build on a range of initiatives including research, education and outreach while continuing to be committed to provision of high quality patient care. Two programmes for training forensic medical examiners took place over the year, and another educational programme for training nurses and midwives in Sexual Assault Forensic Examination commenced in September 2022, we look forward to welcoming all these people to the team on completion of training.

We also launched the 5th Edition of the 'National Guidelines on Referral and Forensic Clinical Examination Following Rape and Sexual Assault'. This accessible interagency document provides guidance on all aspects of a responsive and coordinated service and outlines comprehensive, best practice care for any survivor of sexual crime, regardless of their age. So many people were involved in this revision, and we sincerely thank them all but particularly acknowledge the coordination role undertaken by Sarah O'Connor.

We were delighted to welcome psychological support staff back in person to the majority of the SATUs (after a pandemic related hiatus!), this element of care is an essential component of the response to sexual crime with acute and ongoing psychological support being a critical pillar of the collaborative package of care we offer to everyone who attends SATU. We also continued to offer our SATU staff emotional support programmes in 2022. Supporting staff is imperative in all areas of the health service where people work in demanding contexts. It is vital to acknowledge and respond to the emotional impact of this work, to optimize the care we can provide for people who need SATU supports. We acknowledge Dr Nicola O'Sullivan for her commitment to this important project.

As always, I would like to take this opportunity to thank every member of the SATU team. This report of key service activity is only possible because of the commitment to collation and inputting of relevant data into the database to ensure accurate presentation of service activities and key performance indicators. 90% of first SATU visit attendances were entered on the database within 10 working days of the first visit, which demonstrates the commitment of the entire team. Thanks again to Connie McGilloway who has been the Clinical Lead on the database project from its inception and continues to provide a clinical interface between the SATUs and the project team to ensure that IT problems &

challenges are identified and resolved promptly. Thanks also to Dr Dan Kane who collated many of the metrics, including the review of adolescent SATU attendances included in this report.

I would also like to thank a number of key personnel within the Health Service Executive, including Killian McGrane, Dr Cliona Murphy, Davinia O'Donnell, Tracy McAuley and Claire Plunkett (NWIHP). Their commitment to SATU services despite multiple demands on their time and resources is greatly appreciated. I acknowledge the support we receive from Masters, Clinical Directors, Directors of Midwifery/Nursing and hospital & network managers who advocate for us despite frequent, competing and important demands on their valuable resources.

As always, it is important to acknowledge the people who attend SATUs around the country. Nobody ever 'wants' to attend a SATU and we never cease to be amazed by the strength that our service users display, despite the significance of the events they have experienced. We really value the feedback that they provide, in order that we can critically appraise our service through the lens of a service user. 185 people provided anonymous online feedback after their SATU attendance in 2022 with 97% rating their overall SATU care experience as 'good' or 'very good'. This underpins continuous quality improvement, and is really valuable in informing ongoing staffing and infrastructural developments.

We have adjusted the format of this document this year and hope you will find it useful. Please contact me or my colleagues in NWIHP if you have any questions or comments on this executive summary of key service activity.



Prof. Maeve Eogan
National Clinical Lead (SATU) HSE

meogan@rotunda.ie

ii. FOREWORD

The 2018 Policy Review of Sexual Assault Treatment Units (SATUs), identified a need to strengthen the health response to people who have been subjected to sexual violence and concurrently, to provide enhanced support to front-line staff who provide this care on a daily basis.

The Policy Review, launched in March 2019 by the then Minister for Health, Simon Harris, set out an ambitious plan to support improvements in SATUs, centred on 3 areas:

1. **Consistency**
2. **Sustainability**
3. **Coordination**



Following the launch, the National Women's and Infant Health Programme assumed responsibility for the implementation of the SATU policy review. Significant progress has been achieved to date and this is testament to the commitment and drive shown by the SATU Implementation Project Team, comprising of policy-makers, front-line staff, and sectoral experts. The NWIHP will continue to prioritise the implementation of the policy review over the coming year.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the dedication and commitment of the SATU National Clinical Lead, Professor Maeve Eogan and the SATU teams across the country who provide person-centred, professional and compassionate care, on a 24/7 basis, to people who have been raped or sexually assaulted.

During 2022, the SATU service provided care for more people than any previous year. The Central Statistics Office (CSO), Sexual Violence Survey 2022 findings also contained some stark statistics, not least of which the finding that the proportion of adults who experienced sexual violence in their lifetime was 40% and that less than half (47%) of those told someone about it.

Sexual violence is unfortunately not going away and the NWIHP is committed to its role as a strong advocate for SATU services and the people this important service supports. The health consequences of domestic and sexual violence are broad-reaching and are shown to include, gynaecological, and psychiatric co-morbidities. Violence may intensify during pregnancy with, in some instances, associated adverse obstetric and maternal outcomes. The NWIHP portfolio is expansive incorporating Maternity, Gynaecology, Neonatology and Sexual and Reproductive Health. We must continuously strive to build a culture of empathy and to raise awareness regarding the prevalence of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence across all services within which the NWIHP has a role/remit.

Specific areas of focus in 2023 will include:

Knowledge and Awareness: Focus on developing knowledge, awareness and an understanding of the impact of lived experience of trauma, working with a trauma-informed approach to care provision.

Infrastructure: 2022 was the first year in which the National SATU KPI dipped below the target 90% (i.e. the percentage of people seen within 3 hours of a request). The most frequent reason cited for not being able to see people sooner was lack of access to a forensic suite at the time of the request. In order to offer all people timely and responsive care, it may therefore be necessary to consider increasing the number of forensic suites in some of the larger SATUs.

Co-ordination of Care: Continued engagement with paediatric services to optimise care for people under the age of 14 years under the Barnahus model and to integrate care for adolescents 14-17 years in the most appropriate clinical site for their needs. The Barnahus model has been adopted as best practice within this country and the SATU National Management Team will continue to work together with the Barnahus Steering Group and other stakeholders to ensure delivery of a coordinated, interagency response.

At NWIHP we are extremely proud of our association with the SATUs. In 2023, we look forward to continuing to work with the committed staff who provide this specialist, holistic and responsive service to people of all genders and all identities, who have been subject to a sexual crime.



Dr. Cliona Murphy
Clinical Director (NWIHP)

CDNWIHP@HSE.ie

SECTION 1

Key Service Activity



This section will look at the key service activity throughout 2022. The areas looked at include numbers of attendance, details of the incident, the referral source, type of attendance, drug and alcohol use, and pregnancy and STI prophylaxis.

i. ATTENDANCE

The first set of metrics relate to attendances at the 6 SATUs as well as the attendance type.

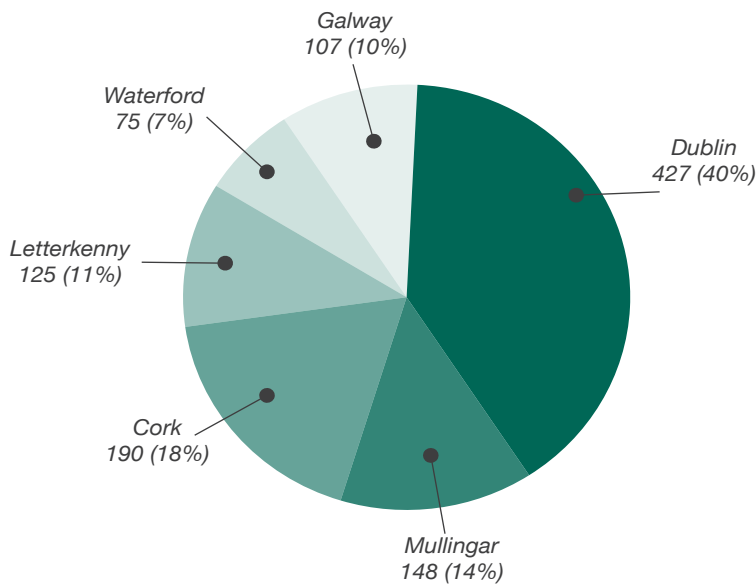
National Attendances:

2022 saw 1072 attendances to the 6 SATUs.

This is a **24.7%** increase in numbers from 2021.

The table outlines the attendance numbers over the last 5 years.

| Year | Attendance Numbers | Difference in numbers from previous years |
|------|--------------------|---|
| 2022 | 1072 | +213 |
| 2021 | 859 | +125 |
| 2020 | 734 | -209 |
| 2019 | 943 | +4 |
| 2018 | 939 | +75 |

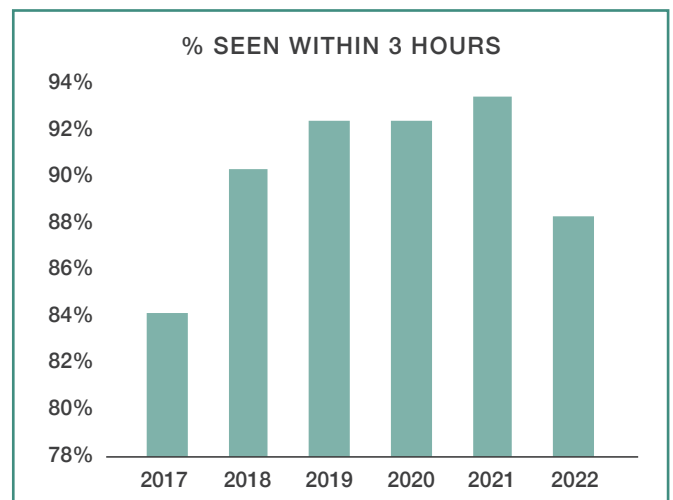


Local Attendances:

These 1072 attendances were seen across the 6 SATUs, with the graph chart (left) demonstrating the number proportion of attendances per site.

Seen Within 3 Hours:

88% (546/620) of people were seen within 3 hours of a request for a Forensic Clinical Examination. This is the first time since 2017 that this KPI has not met the targeted 90%. The majority of the cases which fell outside of the 3 hour time frame metric cited 'no clinic room available' as the reason for not being able to meet the recommended time frame. In these cases the room was already in use (for another patient) at the time of the request. This highlights the infrastructural needs of some SATU site as the numbers presenting to the service continues to rise.



Attendance Type:

The SATU service currently offers **3 core options of care**:

Option 1: When a patient is over 14 years of age, discloses sexual violence and wants to make a complaint to An Garda Síochána. A forensic clinical examination will be carried out by SATU if the incident happened within 7 days of the disclosure.

Option 2: When a patient is over 18 years of age, has experienced unwanted sexual activity either within the last 7 days, in recent weeks, months or years but does not want to report to An Garda Síochána and is requesting a health check. Depending on the duration of time since the incident a sexual health screen is offered. No forensic samples are taken.

Option 3: When a patient is over 18 years of age, has experienced sexual violence in the last 7 days and is undecided if they want to report to An Garda Síochána (Storage of Evidence). Patients can attend for a forensic clinical examination and the forensic samples are securely stored for a period of up to one year in SATU.

In all options, patients are offered medications (e.g. emergency contraception, preventative treatment for infectious diseases), follow up appointments to return to SATU for a sexual health screen and psychological support from the RCC, where applicable.

A breakdown of the attendances type to the SATUs can be seen below:

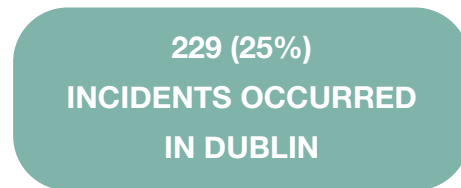
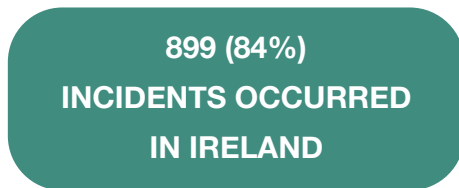
| | Option 1: Garda Forensic Exam Kit | Option 2: Health Check | Option 3: Garda Forensic Exam & Stored Evidence | Garda No. Kit | Other | Advice | Not Recorded | Total |
|------------|--|------------------------------|--|------------------|-------|--------|-----------------|-------|
| Number | 594 | 226 | 146 | 75 | 16 | 14 | 1 | 1072 |
| Percentage | 55% | 21% | 14% | 7% | 1% | 1% | 0% | 100% |

Rape Crisis Centre (RCC) Input:

72% of attendees were offered support of the Rape Crisis Centre (RCC) or Sexual Violence Centre (SVC) services, either in person or remotely (phone or video call). This offers survivors/victims practical and emotional support, including counselling and court accompaniment service (if required). The psychological support worker gives information on other services available and how they can be accessed. The accompaniment service provided by the RCC is free and confidential. 15% of those offered this support declined it, it is important that the SATUs and partner agencies continue to provide ongoing information about all allied supports in order that they can be accessed subsequently if required.

ii. DETAILS OF INCIDENT

The next set of metrics look at the details of the incident, including the location, time, assailant and injury to the patient.



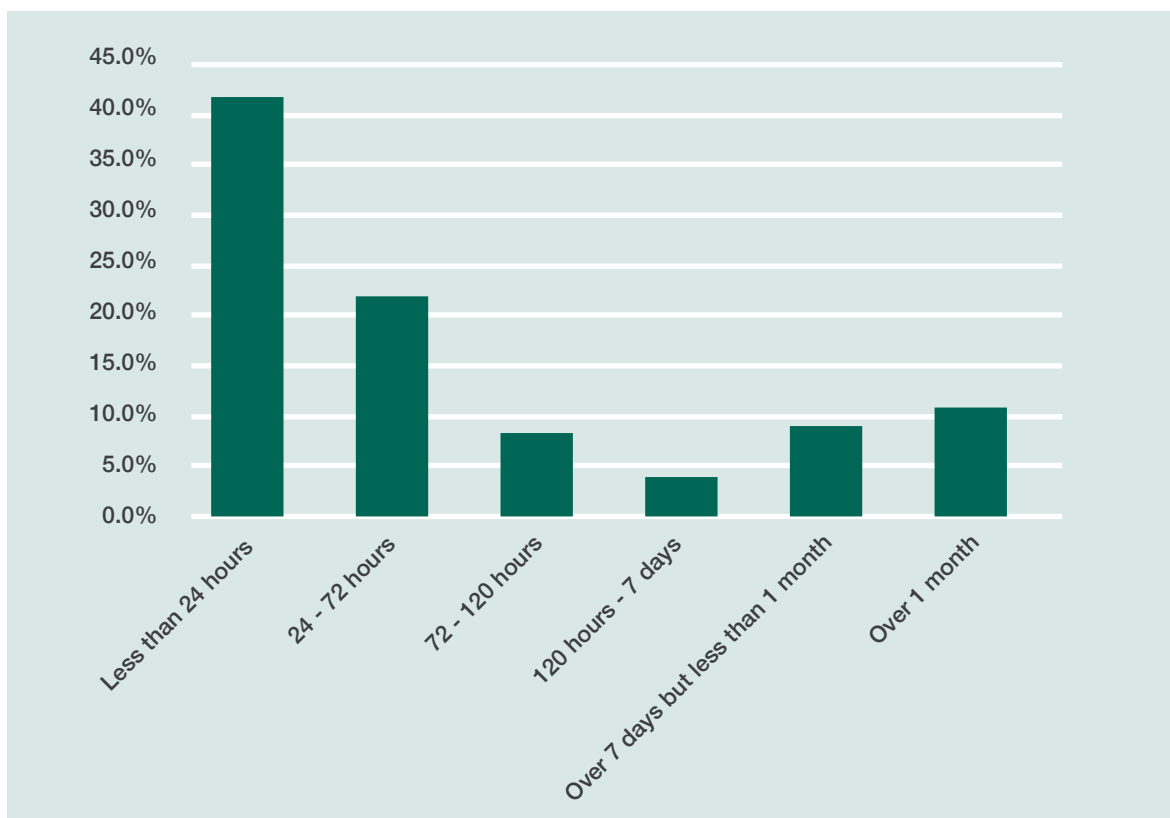
Timing of Incident:

The timing of incidents were evenly distributed throughout the months with **July** being the busiest with **9.4%** of all presentations taken place in this month. The weekend accounted for the largest portion of incidents with **Friday, Saturday and Sunday** incidents making up **56.2%**. The majority of incidents (78%) occurred between **8pm and 8am**.

Timing of SATU Attendance from Incident:

With regard to timing of SATU attendance, **Tuesday** was the **busiest day** of the week accounting for **17.7%** of all attendances, **August** was the **busiest month** of the year for SATU presentations at **10.1%**. The majority of the patients were seen between 8am and 8pm at **69%**. However **31%** of patients presented out of hours which re-emphasizes the importance of 24 hour SATU access.

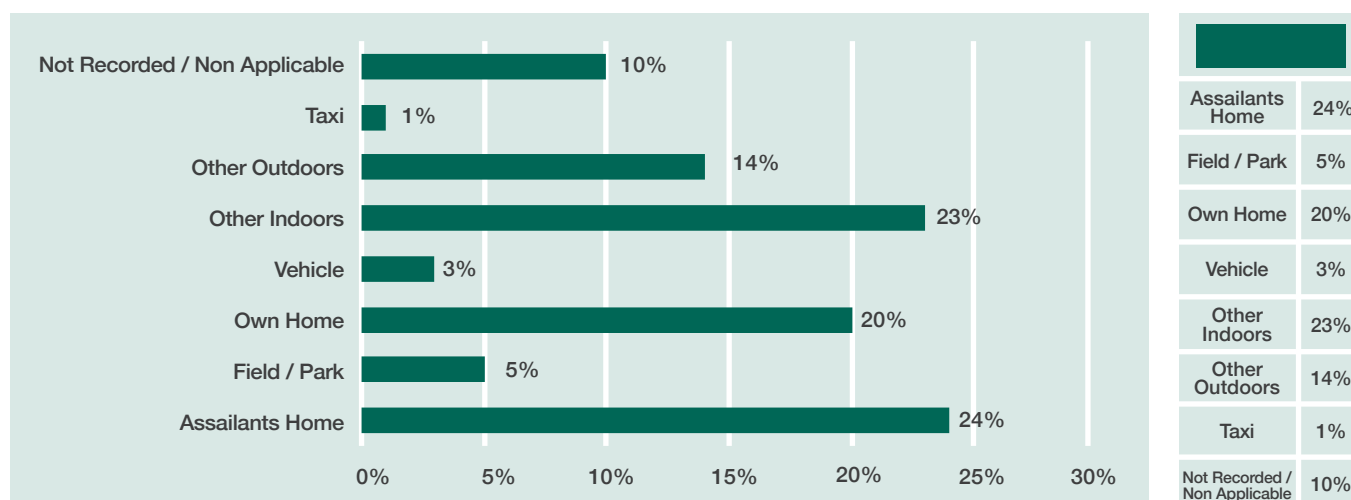
Duration of time between incident and attendance at SATU (all cases):



The graph above shows the breakdown of the duration of time between incident and attendance to SATU. For people reporting to An Garda Síochána, almost 90% attended within 7 days of the incident. Early attendance facilitates prompt access to forensic sampling, but also to the health aspects of care including emergency contraception and infectious disease prophylaxis.

Location of Incident:

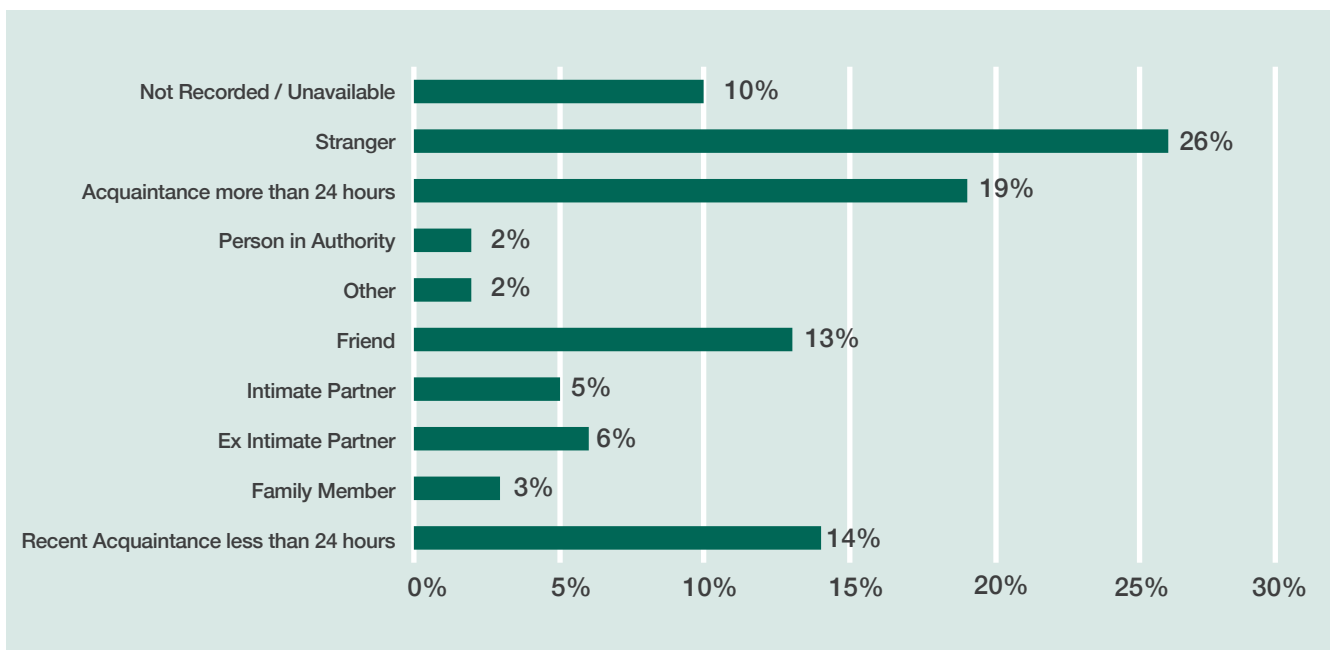
Out of the 1072 reported incidents **67%** of incidents occurred in an **indoor setting**, with **44% being in the patient or the assailant's own home**. **19%** occurred in various outdoor settings.



Description of Assailant:

92% of assaults were perpetrated by a **single assailant** (a reduction of 2% from 2021), while **7%** were perpetrated by multiple assailants, which is an increase of **2%** from 2021.

In 2022 60% of assailants were known to the person – either a family member, current or former intimate partner, friend or acquaintance. This a reduction of 7% compared with 2021 where 67% of assailants were known to the person. Incidents where the perpetrator was described as a stranger were recorded at 26%, which is an increase of 7% from the previous year.



Physical Restraint Use:

Physical restraints were used in **32%** of incidents in 2022. Weapons were used in **7.5%** of incidents.

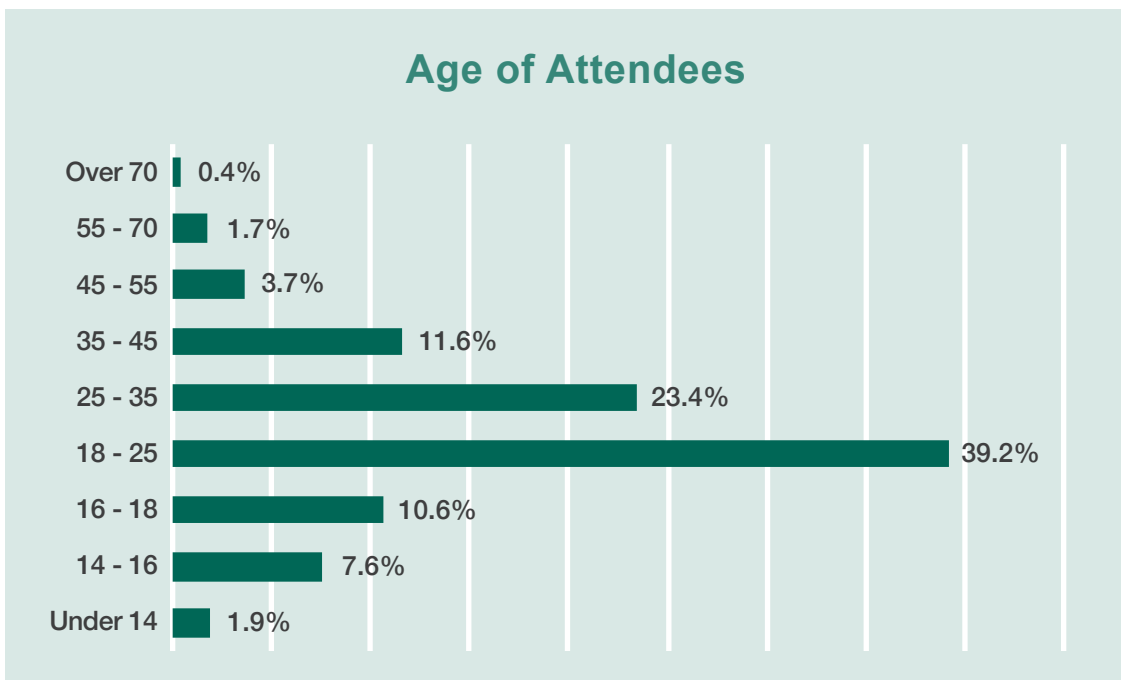
Injury at time of Examination:

At the time of examination, **36.3%** of patients had suffered either genital or non-genital injury. **1%** were hospitalised either due to injury or mental health and **2%** needed a referral for injury follow up.

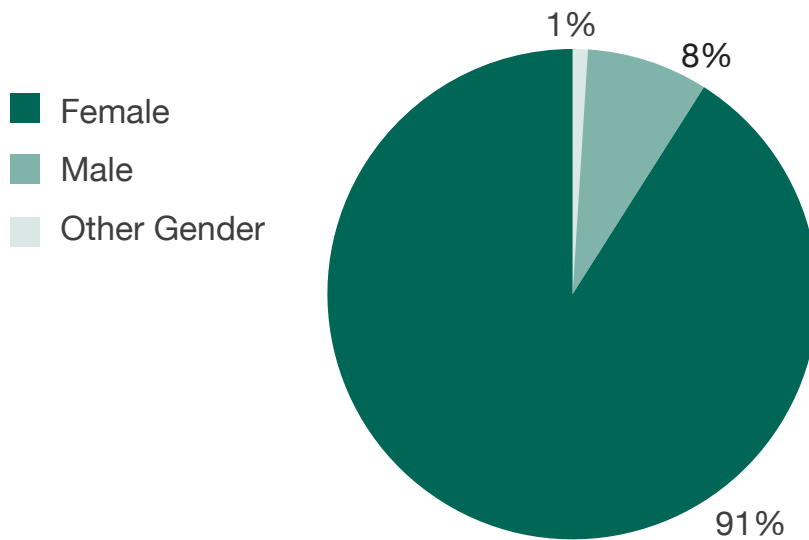
| Physical Injury Outcome | Number | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------|--------|------------|
| No Injuries | 570 | 53% |
| Injury - No follow up | 321 | 30% |
| Referral - Injury follow up required | 17 | 2% |
| Other | 9 | 1% |
| Hospitalised Due to Injury | 5 | 0% |
| Hospitalised Due to Mental Health | 4 | 0% |
| Pre-existing Injury | 4 | 0% |
| Not Recorded | 112 | 10% |
| Not Applicable | 30 | 3% |

iii. GENDER / AGE / NATIONALITY / OCCUPATION

The next set of metrics look at the Gender/Age/Nationality and Occupation of the patient. The majority of attendees were **under 25 years** of age (**59.3%**), with **39.2%** between **18-25 years** of age.



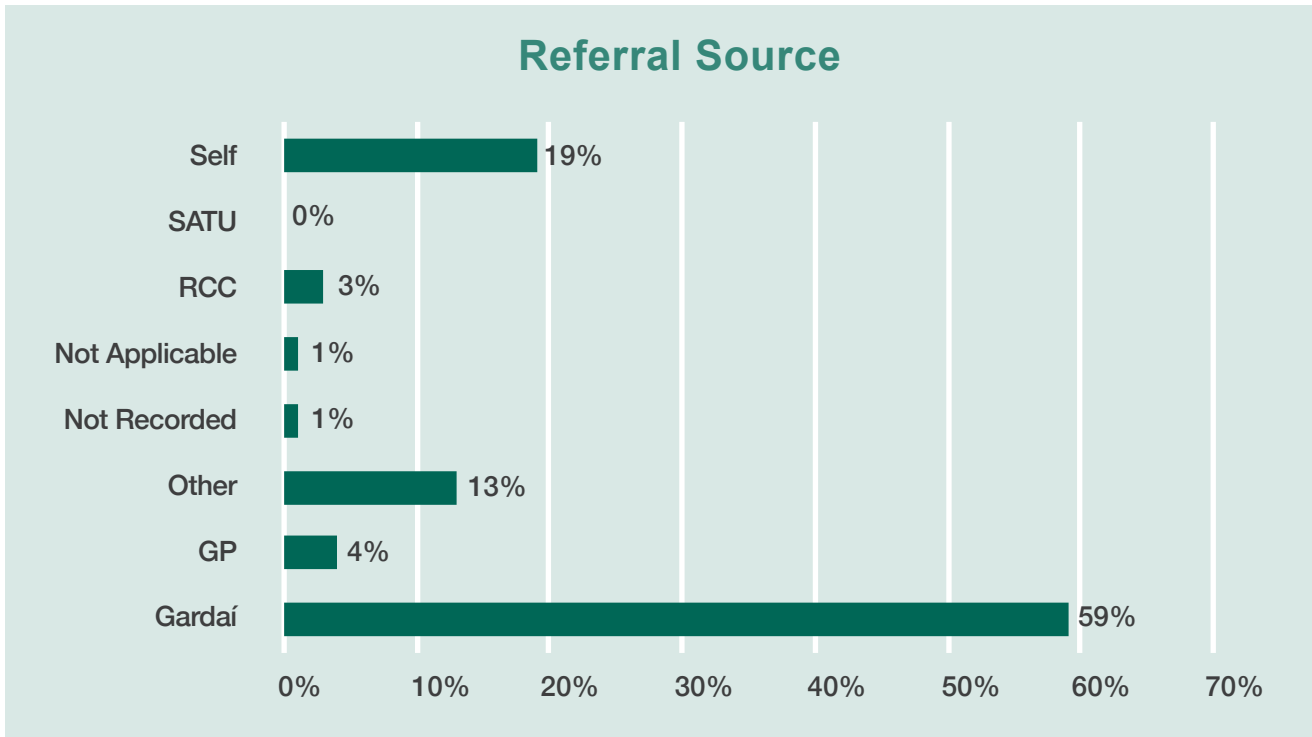
- **91%** of attendees were **female**, **8%** were male and **1%** identified as another gender or none. These figures follow an almost identical trend to the previous two years.



- **80%** of people who attended SATU identified as Irish, with the remainder including 52 other nationalities. Interpreters for 8 different languages were used for 3%.
- School or third level students made up the largest group totalling **38%**. This was **35%** in 2021 and **41%** in 2020 which remains the most frequent cohort seen for 3 consecutive years. Persons in employment numbered **35%** and unemployed persons accounted for **18%**.

iv. REFERRAL SOURCE AND OPTIONS OF CARE

The next set of metrics look at the referral source into the SATU and which option of care they chose. The majority of cases – **59%** were referred into the SATU by An Garda Síochána, with self-referrals the next most common presentation at **19%**.



| | Gardaí | GP | Other | Not Recorded | Not Applicable | RCC | SATU | Self |
|------------|--------|----|-------|--------------|----------------|-----|------|------|
| Percentage | 59% | 4% | 13% | 1% | 1% | 3% | 0% | 19% |

Of the 1072 attendees to the SATU, 678 (63%) of those reported to An Garda Síochána, while 394 (37%) chose not to. There is however no statute of limitations on sexual crime, so a person can still choose to make a complaint to An Garda Síochána at some time remote from the incident and their SATU attendance.

The tables below demonstrates the types of SATU attendance in each group.

**DISCLOSURES TO
AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA: 678**

OPTION 1: Garda with kit - 597 (88%)
 Garda with no kit: 74 (11%)
 OPTION 3 (who then reported): 7 (1%)

**DID NOT REPORT TO
AN GARDA SÍOCHÁNA: 394**

OPTION 2: Health Check - 225 (57%)
 OPTION 3: 139 (35%)
 ADVICE: 14 (4%)

v. ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE

The next set of metrics look at whether there was drug or alcohol use at the time of the incident.

30% of attendees did not have any alcohol intake in the 2 hours prior to the incident

1.6% were unsure if they had consumed any alcohol

19.9% had consumed less than six standard drinks

48.5% had consumed more than six standard drinks

In relation to drugs, 78% reported **not taken any drugs**, 13% had taken recreational drugs and 2% having taken recreational and prescription drugs, in the 24 hours prior to the incident.

21% were concerned that drugs (including alcohol) had been used to facilitate sexual assault.

vi. PREGNANCY AND STI PROPHYLAXIS


SATUs offer a health check to all people presenting to the service. The final set of metrics look at whether there were pregnancy or STI related preventative measures taken following the incident.

In 2022, 351 women attending a SATU appropriately received emergency contraception. This constitutes 100% of the eligible population.

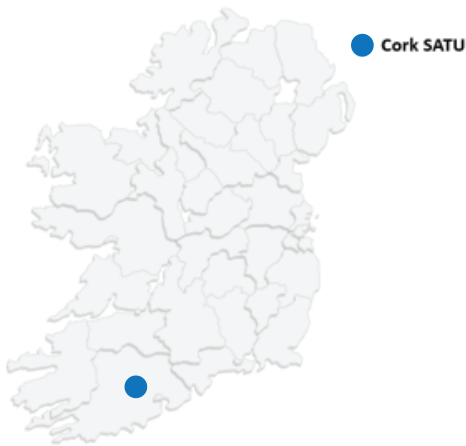
In 2022, **56%** of those who attended a SATU received chlamydia prophylaxis, **45%** commenced a Hepatitis B Vaccination programme and **8%** received HIV post exposure prophylaxis (PEPSE).

SECTION 2

Updates from the SATU Services



i. CORK SATU

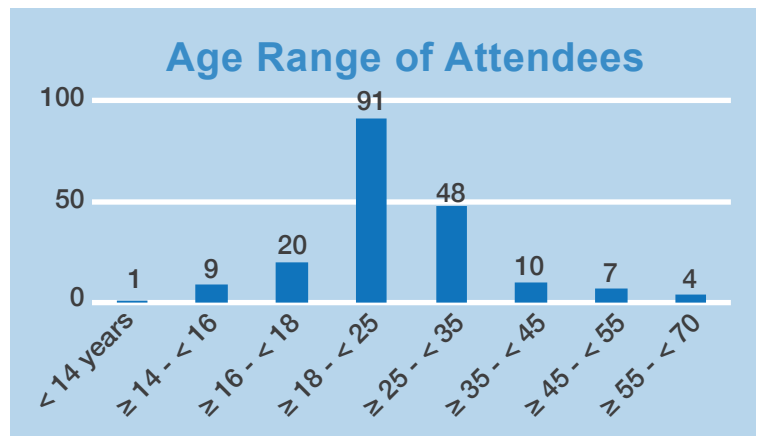


| Year | Attendances (n) | Difference on previous years (n) | % Increase / Decrease |
|------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2022 | 190 | +42 | +29% |
| 2021 | 148 | +37 | +33% |
| 2020 | 111 | -33 | -23% |
| 2019 | 144 | -21 | -13% |
| 2018 | 165 | +25 | +18% |

Local Statistics

Age Profile:

There was an increase in attendance of patients between 25-34 years of age, and a decrease of patients aged 35 years and above between 2021 and 2022.



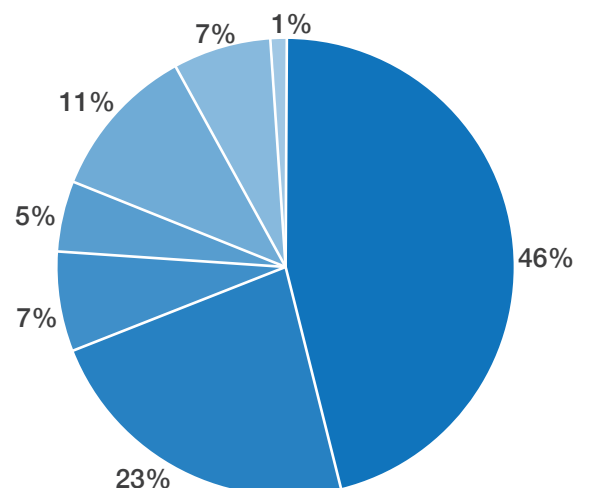
Patients seen within 3 hours of a request for a Forensic Clinical Examination:

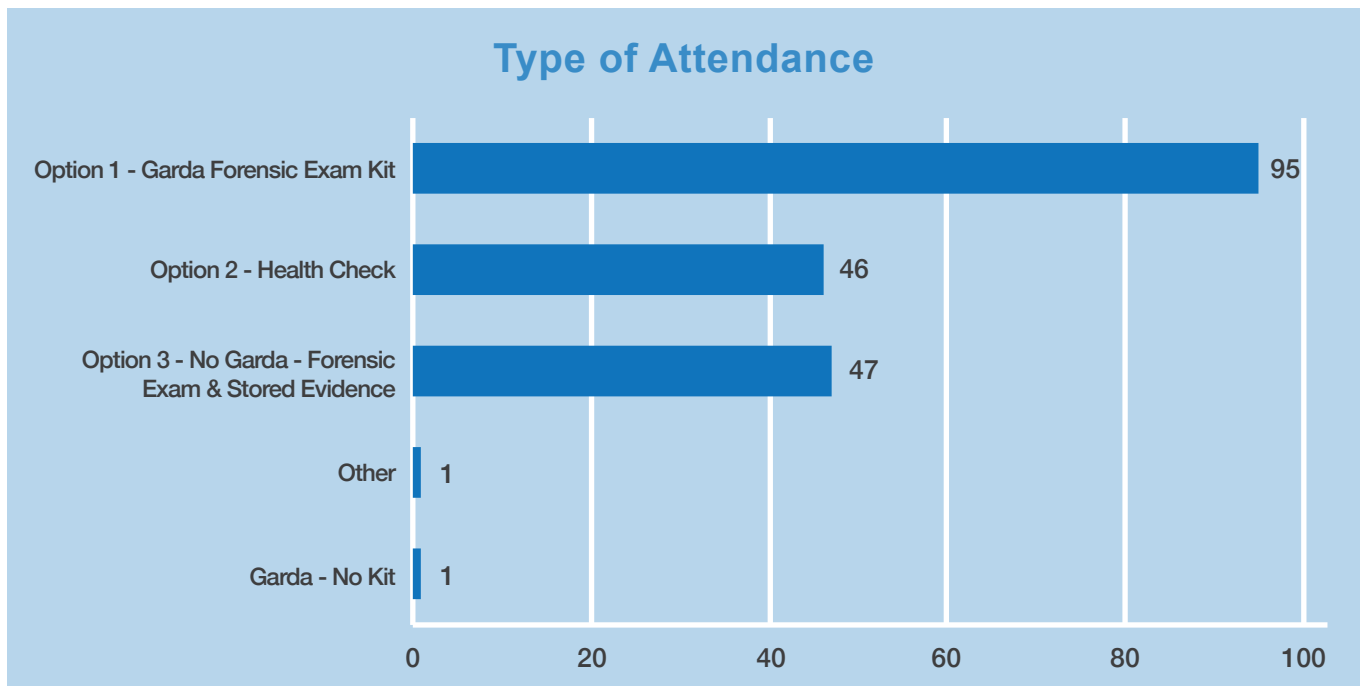
Examination:

Cork SATU saw **91% (98)** patients who contacted their service **within 3 hours** of a request for Forensic Clinical Examination.

Duration of time since incident:

- < 24 hrs - 46%
- 24 hrs - 72 hrs - 23%
- 72 hrs - 120 hrs - 7%
- 120 hrs - 7 days - 5%
- 7 days - 1 month - 11%
- > 1 month - 7%
- Unrecorded - 1%





KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2022

Staffing:

In 2022, we welcomed one new Forensic Examiner (FE), Dr Emily Rutherford. We also welcomed two support nurses Déirdre Fitzgerald and Gillian Daunt to our on call rota and two Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner (SAFE) students, Niamh Whooley and Catherine O’Brien. We said our goodbyes to colleagues Dr Barbara Burke and Dr Rebecca Hunter and Mary Frances Ryan (support nurse), who had given so much of themselves to our patients and service.

Staff Training:

Margo Noonan and Sinead Maher participated in the Child and Youth Participation Training. It is a bespoke training programme in Child and Youth Participation based on the Lundy Model for members of the Barnahaus Steering and Working Groups. The overall aim of Child and Youth Participating Training is to support an organisational culture change to facilitate greater child and youth participatory practice in Tusla and partner agencies. Margo Noonan now sits on the Child and Youth Participation Sub Group.

Supported by the HSE and South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital (SIVUH), in 2022 CNS Sinead Maher commenced a certificate of continuous professional development in sexual health advising skills in Staffordshire University, we wish her every success in the completion of this program.

Awards:

In 2022, Margo Noonan, (ANP) in Sexual Assault Forensic Examination, won 4th prize at the Annual National Women and Infant Health Programme Quality & Safety Poster Competition 2022. Margo secured the prize with a poster for her research on ‘The Impact of an Educational Program on

Challenging Rape Myths and Consent Misconceptions in Adolescent Males - the ASSUME Program’.

The Cork SATU Schools Programme was short listed for an Irish Healthcare Centre Award 2022, Healthcare Initiative - Patient Education and Lifestyle Project of the Year category.

Assistance with provision of child services:

Early in 2022 staff shortages were identified within the Cork Family Centre in St Finbarr’s Hospital, which were having a knock on effect to timely provision of medical care to those in need. This service provides treatments to children under 14 years of age when there is a concern regarding child sexual abuse. In May 2022, Cork SATU nursing staff and the SIVUH, in collaboration with TUSLA signed a service level agreement with SATU staff providing assistance to the Family Centre in the provision of medical services. During this time Cork SATU, along with caring for their own patients, provided the Family Centre with nursing support, enabling them to continue providing appropriate medical and forensic care to the children who needed it. SATU continued to provide assistance for the remainder of 2022 with fifteen children aged between 0-13 years attending the service during this time. While challenging, this has been an extremely beneficial initiative for both services. It allowed staff from different specialities work together and share expertise in relation to caring for children and young teenagers, which can often be a very complex process.

KEY OBJECTIVES FOR 2023

Barnahus:

Cork SATU is working towards co-location with Barnahus in the Southern region. Under Barnahus, children and their families are provided with specialist interviews, medical check-ups, child protection and therapy all in one child friendly space. Cork SATU will continue to work with all the relevant parties in developing the Barnahus model for Cork including TUSLA and An Garda Síochána. Cork SATU will continue to provide professional practical and peer support to medical nursing and interagency staff during the development and provision of this service.

Cork Children and Young People’s Services Committee - CYPSC:

Through her work with Cork CYPSC, Margo Noonan (ANP) will Chair a CYPSC Sub Group for Children and Young people affected by Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence (DSGBV) in collaboration with other agencies. The aim of this sub group is to work collaboratively to develop and promote services as identified in the 2021 West Cork survey of survivors and their supporters.

Develop further the Care Pathway with the Emergency Management Officer with HSE-South-Cork and Kerry:

The Emergency Management Officer with HSE-South-Cork and Kerry has requested SATU input in the development of a care pathway for the immediate management of a sexual assault disclosure to emergency medical personnel at all public events in the region.

Rural Initiatives:

Cork SATU are committed to providing support in the development of the West Cork Women against Violence's - Sexual Violence Community Response and Support Service which aims to develop services for those who disclose sexual violence experiences in rural areas and provide support to current service providers.

Collaborations:

Progress collaboration with local services ensuring those that experience DSGBV are provided with optimal holistic quality care. We aim to continue to represent victims at a local and national level through research and collaboration with other agencies. We will continue to deliver, develop and expand the Education programme.

| CORK SATU TEAM | |
|--|--|
| Dr. John Coulter Clinical Lead | Ms. Margo Noonan ANP Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner |
| Ms. Louise Tiernan CNS Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner | Ms. Sinead Maher CNS Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner |
| Ms. Niamh Whooley Trainee CNS | Ms. Catherine O'Brien Trainee CNS |
| Angela Brosnan - Administrator | |

The core team in Cork are supported by the on call team of Forensic Examiners and Support Nurses. These include the following support Staff; Ms Máire Healy, Ms Eileen Cotter, Ms Sharon Quinn, Ms Siobhan Cahill, Ms Carol Mills, Ms Gillian Daunt, Ms Gobnait McGrath, Ms Claire Hawe, Ms Teresa O'Farrell and Ms Déirdre Fitzgerald. On-call forensic medical examiners currently include Dr Suzanne Cremin, Dr Emer O'Flynn and Dr Emily Rutherford.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all SATU staff, with special mention to our support nurses, Forensic examiners, local management, hospital staff in the South Infirmery Victoria University Hospital, and Dr John Coulter Medical Director of Cork SATU. The continued commitment, support and dedication shown to the unit and our patients does not go unnoticed.

ii. DONEGAL SATU

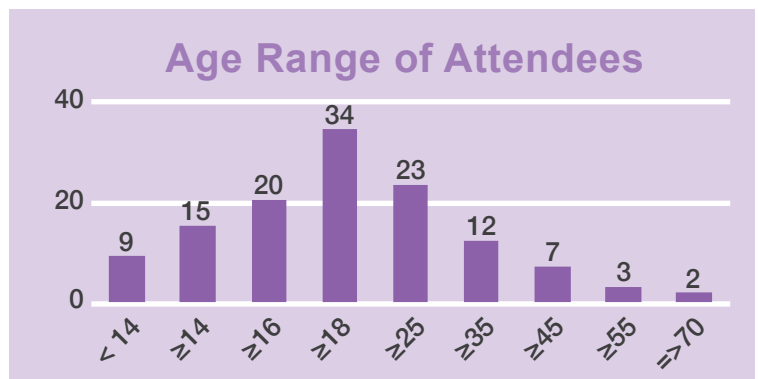


| Year | Attendances (n) | Difference on previous years (n) | % Increase / Decrease |
|------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2022 | 125 | +24 | +24% |
| 2021 | 101 | +23 | +30% |
| 2020 | 78 | -32 | -29% |
| 2019 | 110 | +26 | +31% |
| 2018 | 84 | +11 | +15% |

LOCAL STATISTICS

Age Profile:

There was a decrease of patients aged under 25 years between 2021 and 2022 from 69% to 62%.



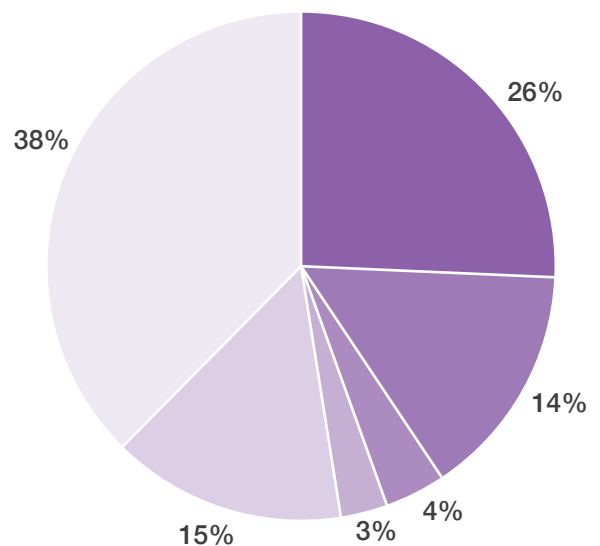
Patients seen within 3 hours of a request for a Forensic Clinical Examination:

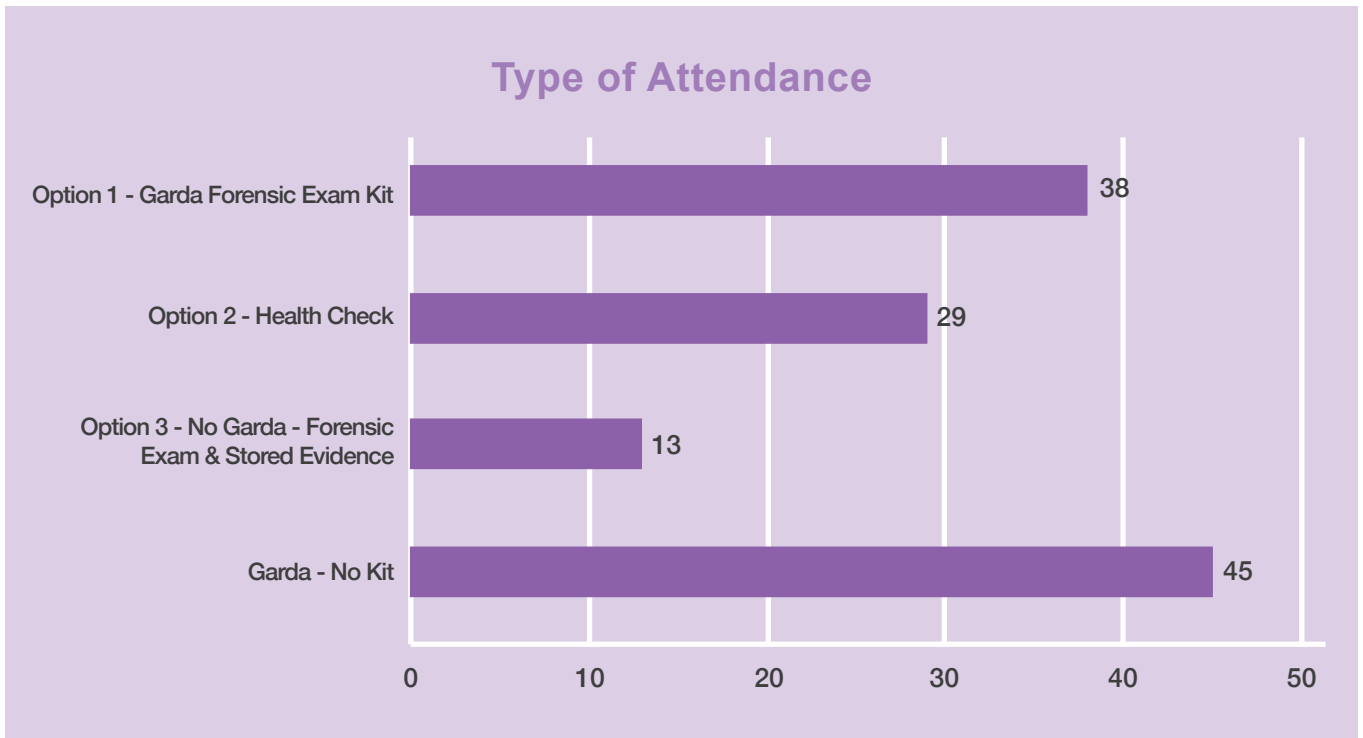
Examination:

Letterkenny SATU saw **91%** (29) patients who contacted their service **within 3 hours** of request to SATU for Forensic Clinical Examination.

Duration of time since incident:

- < 24 hrs - 26%
- 24 hrs - 72 hrs - 14%
- 72 hrs - 120 hrs - 4%
- 120 hrs - 7 days - 3%
- 7 days - 1 month - 15%
- > 1 month - 38%





KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2022

In 2022 the Donegal SATU had its busiest year to date and continued to provide trauma-informed care in a time-sensitive manner to individuals who experienced sexual assault and rape.

Staffing:

In 2022, Letterkenny University Hospital recruited Ms Lisa Crossan, Clinical Nurse Specialist (Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner) to provide much needed operational and on-call support to the service. Furthermore, Dr Matthew Mc Kernan (Consultant Obstetrics & Gynaecology) commenced his position as the Donegal SATU Clinical Lead. Recruiting such experienced and dedicated professionals in this specialised area is a commendable achievement. In addition, Letterkenny University Hospital committed to and sponsored two experienced nurses to undertake the Postgraduate Diploma in Nursing (Sexual Assault Forensic Examination) which commenced in September 2022. On successful completion of this intensive course both nurses will take up their positions as Clinical Nurse Specialists (Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners) in the Donegal SATU.

Dr Christopher King (Consultant Obstetrics & Gynaecology and Donegal SATU Clinical Lead) retired from his position after many dedicated years of service. Dr King provided unrelenting support to the Donegal SATU service since its commencement in 1998. We wish to sincerely thank him for his kindness, approachability, clinical expertise and dedication throughout this time and wish him good health and happiness in the next chapter of his journey. We also want to sincerely thank and congratulate Ms Brídín Bell Clinical Nurse Specialist (Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner) who moved on to pastures new as Candidate Advanced Nurse Practitioner (Ambulatory Gynae) in Sligo University Hospital. Brídín's unyielding hard work, dedication and compassion to patients attending the Donegal SATU since 2016 has been exemplary, we wish her the best in her future endeavours.

Staff Training:

In 2022 a General Practitioner (GP) commenced training to work as part of the on-call SATU team. The GP will attend the Doctors Forensic Course organised through the SATU service. The GPs provide valuable on call support to the SATU services.

SATU Database:

Sharon Curran, Donegal SATU Administrator commenced work on establishing a National SATU Database Working Group aiming to consolidate, progress and further develop key metrics.

KEY OBJECTIVES FOR 2023

Recruitment:

Continue with the recruitment of vacant posts so that the Donegal SATU will have a full complement of Administrative and Specialised staff ensuring the provision of a continuous 24 hour 7-day SATU service in the northwest.

Outreach:

Continued development of Outreach programmes in North and West Donegal will be explored throughout the year and Education and Risk Reduction programmes will be extended.

Training:

In September 2023, two nurses will have completed the PGDip (Sexual Assault Forensic Examination) course and following successful completion will progress to Clinical Nurse Specialist (Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner) working as key members of the Donegal SATU Team. Both nurses will then commence the Nurse Prescribing course for completion in March 2024.

Infrastructure:

Continue discussions regarding the installation of a Back-Up Generator for the SATU.

| DONEGAL SATU TEAM | |
|--|--|
| Dr. Matt McKernan Clinical Lead | Ms. Connie McGilloway ANP/Forensic Clinical Examiner |
| Ms. Sharon Curran Administrator | Ms. Brídín Bell Clinical Nurse Specialist |
| Ms. Kellyann Moore Candidate Forensic Nurse Examiner | Ms. Leah O'Regan Candidate Forensic Nurse Examiner |

The Donegal SATU team were supported by the following nurses Aileen Walsh, Billie Ni Riada, Dee Rooney, Majella Neeson and Michelle Burns. Along with the HCAs Aoife Price, Carol Stewart, Donna Black, Erin Gallagher, Majorie McHugh, Sinead McLean and Victoria Stewart. Ms Lisa Crossan and Dr Mairead Brogan also support the service as Forensic Clinical Examiners. We thank you all for your contribution and commitment to the SATU service.

iii. DUBLIN SATU

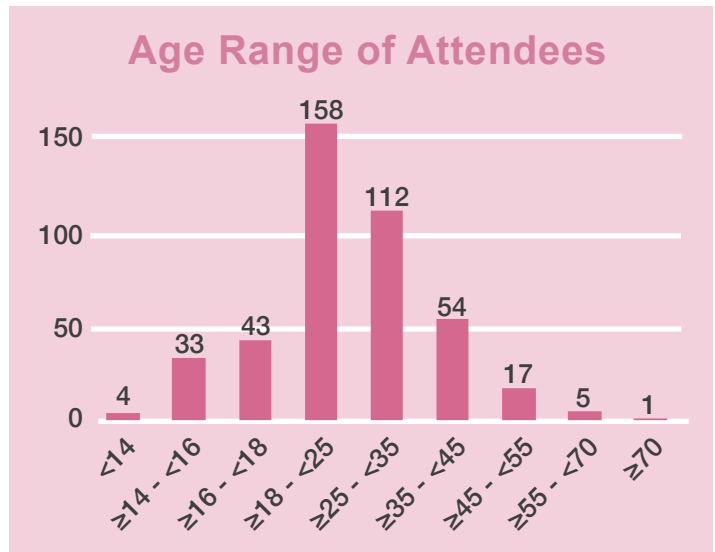


| Year | Attendances (n) | Difference on previous years (n) | % Increase / Decrease |
|------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2022 | 427 | +118 | +38% |
| 2021 | 309 | +32 | +10.5% |
| 2020 | 277 | -116 | -30% |
| 2019 | 393 | +74 | +23% |
| 2018 | 319 | -8 | -2.5% |

LOCAL STATISTICS

Age Profile:

There was an increase of patients between 14-18 years of age from 14% in 2021 to 19% in 2022 but a decrease in the 18-25 year age group from 42% in 2021 to 37% in 2022.



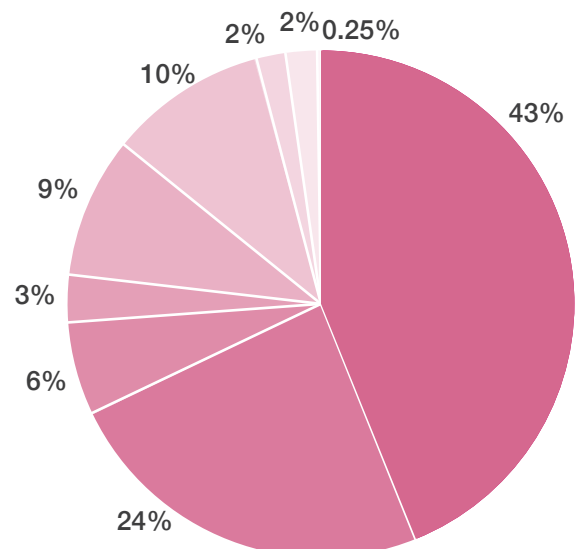
Patients seen within 3 hours of a request for a Forensic Clinical Examination:

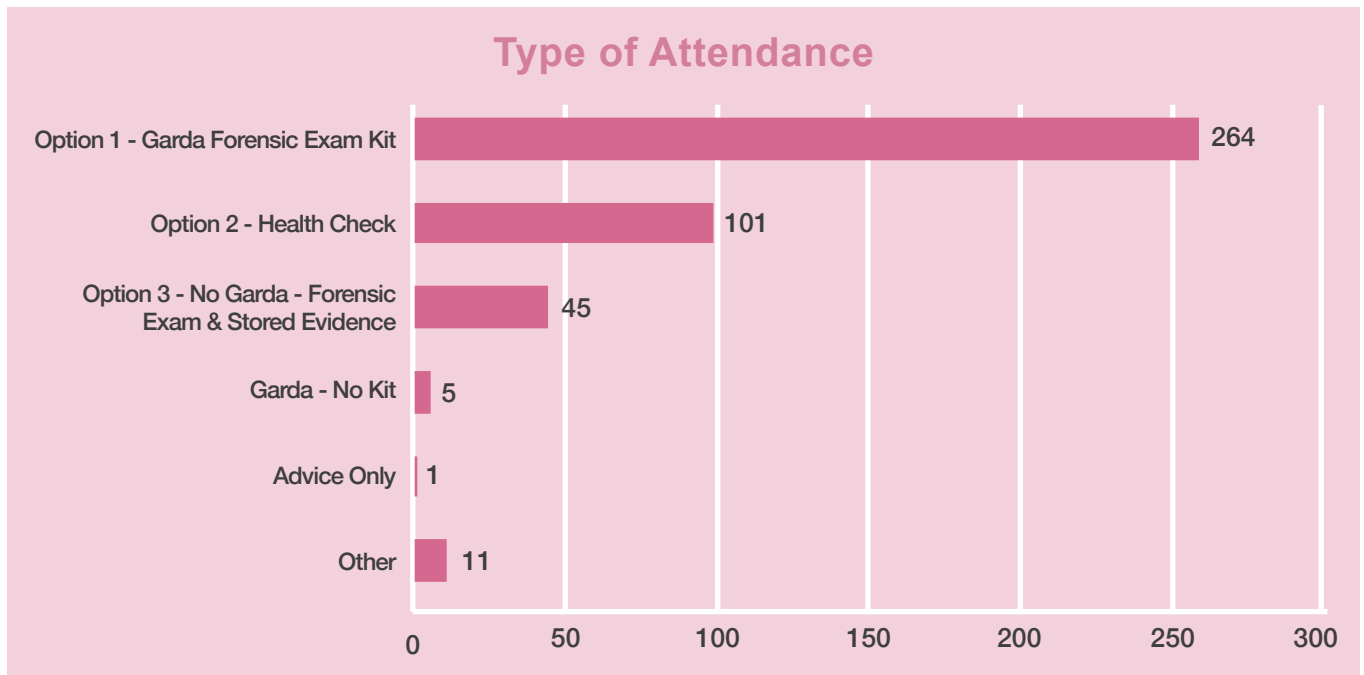
Examination:

The Rotunda SATU saw **82%** of patients who contacted their service **within 3 hours** of request to SATU for Forensic Clinical Examination.

Duration of time since incident:

- < 24 hrs - 43%
- 24 hrs - 72 hrs - 24%
- 72 hrs - 120 hrs - 6%
- 120 hrs - 7 days - 3%
- 7 days - 1 month - 9%
- > 1 month - 10%
- Long Term Abuse - 2%
- Unrecorded - 2%
- Forced Prostitution - 0.25%





KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2022

2022 was our busiest year on record and these numbers challenged our ability to see patients within 3 hours primarily due to infrastructural limitations and also due to temporary staffing issues for the first half of 2022. The vast majority of patients were still seen within 3 hours and had access to timely forensic care. New outreach initiatives were introduced and education programmes were further expanded to include SATU as regular participants in the award winning Debunking the Myths educational initiative and expansion of the school educational visits. Both were received really well with calls from participants to further extend these initiatives.

Attendances:

The increase in attendance at the Rotunda in 2022 may reflect an increase in awareness of SATU services rather than an increase in sexual violence. It is recognised that access to a single forensic suite with such increase in numbers will compromise our ability to provide timely care and some of our attendance in 2022 were delayed access to forensic care due to no forensic suite being available at the time.

There have been many initiatives undertaken in the past year to highlight our service. This includes a significant commitment to outreach education as described elsewhere in this report.

Staffing:

In 2022, a total of 427 patients attended the SATU in the Rotunda Hospital. This has been our busiest year on record and was a challenge due to significant staffing challenges for the first half of the year. Later in the year we welcomed three of our CNS/CMSs back from maternity leave and also welcomed Laura Doherty, a maternity healthcare assistant to the SATU team.

Staff Training:

Two of our CNS/CMSs are currently undertaking the nurse/midwife prescribing course with the RCSI and will be qualified nurse/midwife prescribers later this year which will be a great addition to the service.

We are working closely with all the SAFE students who attend SATU in the Rotunda Hospital as a significant part of their training. We also accommodate forensic medical examiners in training, both for the Rotunda SATU, but also for other SATUs.

Female Genital Mutilation Handbook Launch:

On November 29th, AkiDwA launched the 3rd Edition of the FGM Handbook for Healthcare Professionals at the Rotunda Hospital in collaboration with SATU. This was facilitated by CMS Kate O'Halloran, it was a fantastic day eloquently moderated by Sharon Tobin and included the voice of service users as well as professional groups involved in optimising care for women who have experienced FGM.

Onward referral pathway – Non Fatal Strangulation:

We are currently working on establishing a referral pathway with a local surgical ENT team in a major Dublin hospital. Patients who have experienced nonfatal strangulation (NFS) during the course of a sexual assault may require onward referral to ENT and it is vital that we have an appropriate, safe and accessible pathway.

KEY OBJECTIVES FOR 2023

We anticipate a further increase in numbers in 2023 and recognise the challenges that may bring from both a staffing and infrastructure point of view.

We look forward to successfully recruiting an advanced nurse/midwife practitioner (AN/MP) to the Rotunda during 2023 and further expanding our team with additional MCAs. Sadly we will also be bidding farewell to our long-standing midwifery manager CMM Noelle Farrell and succession planning is underway.

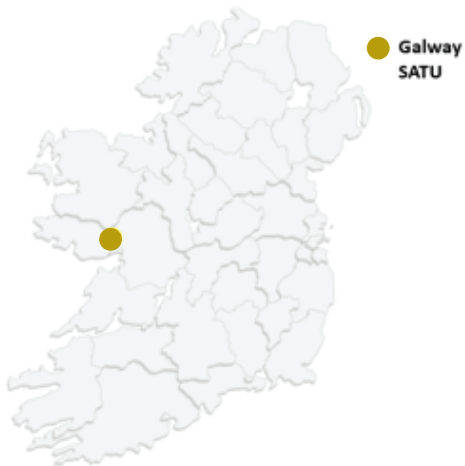
We continue to be committed to training and facilitating all of the SAFE students in our unit. Ongoing recruitment to our rota of assisting nurses is always a challenge but we are grateful to many of the nursing and midwifery staff in the Rotunda hospital who support our team on call.

There is no doubt that a second forensic suite would enable the busiest unit in the country to improve on our key performance of providing timely forensic care to victims of sexual assault. We continue to advocate for this space to enable all of our patients to receive the excellent timely care they deserve.

| DUBLIN SATU TEAM | |
|---|---|
| Dr. Nicola Maher Clinical Director | Ms. Noelle Farrell Clinical Midwife Manager |
| Ms. Deirdre Richardson Clinical Midwife Specialist | Ms. Kate O'Halloran Clinical Midwife Specialist |
| Ms. Naomi Finnegan Clinical Midwife Specialist | Ms. Christine Pucillo Clinical Nurse Specialist |
| Ms. Moira Carberry and Denise Rogers Administrators | |

The core team in Dublin are supported by the on call team of Forensic Examiners and Support Nurses along with our multi- disciplinary colleagues and other members of the Sexual Assault Response Team. These include the following Forensic Examiners: Prof Maeve Eogan (national clinical lead SATU), Dr Daniel Kane, Dr Wendy Ferguson, Dr Elzahra Ibrahim, Dr Haroon Khan, Dr Ciara Luke, Dr Jill Mitchell, Dr Cathy Monteith, Sarah O'Connor, Sue Roe, Aideen Walsh and Dr Amy Worrall. They also include the following support nurses; Sarah Cass, Leanne Costello, Basia Czwierko, Megan Donnelly, Noelle Farrell, Oonagh Farrell, Sarah Farrelly, Carol Guinan, Shiby Joseph, Maureen Kington, Ciara Muddiman, Danielle Parkinson, Eleanor Power, Janice Reyes, Priscilla Shanley and Sylvia O'Reilly. Thank you all for your contribution and commitment to the SATU service.

iv. GALWAY SATU

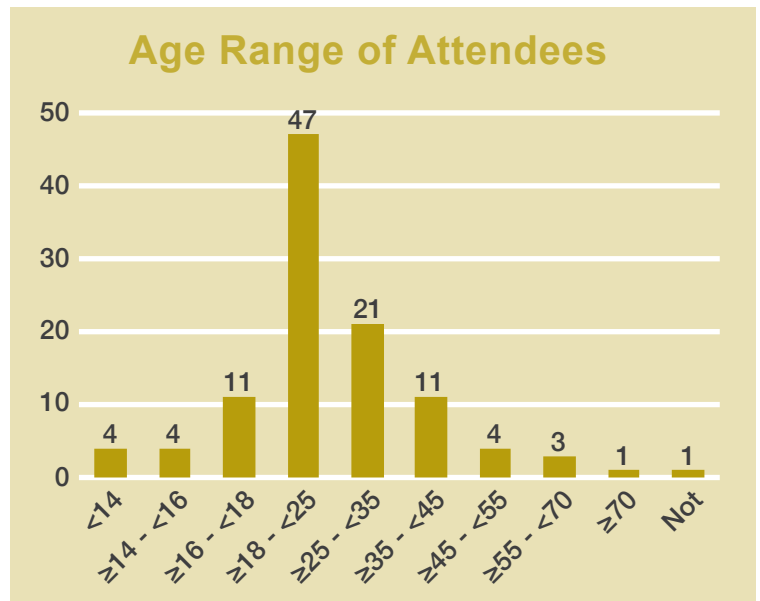


| Year | Attendances (n) | Difference on previous years (n) | % Increase / Decrease |
|------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2022 | 107 | +7 | +7% |
| 2021 | 100 | +11 | +13% |
| 2020 | 89 | -13 | -13% |
| 2019 | 102 | +5 | +5% |
| 2018 | 97 | +12 | +14% |

LOCAL STATISTICS

Age Profile:

The mean patient age at time of assault was 26 years of age, the youngest 14 years of age and the oldest being over 70 years of age.



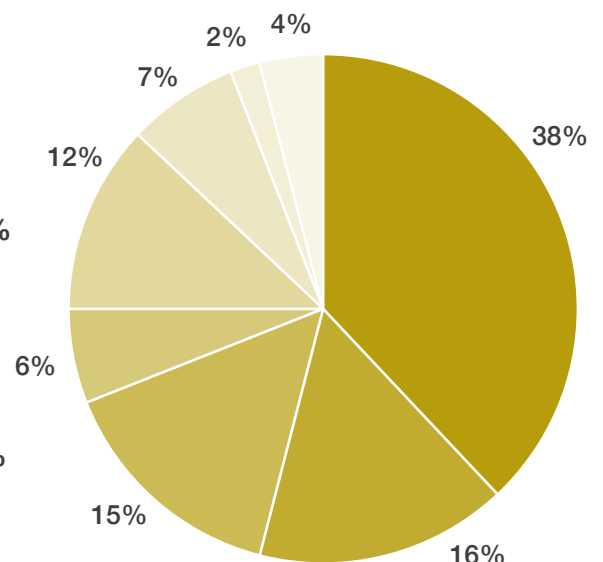
Patients seen within 3 hours of a request for a Forensic Clinical Examination:

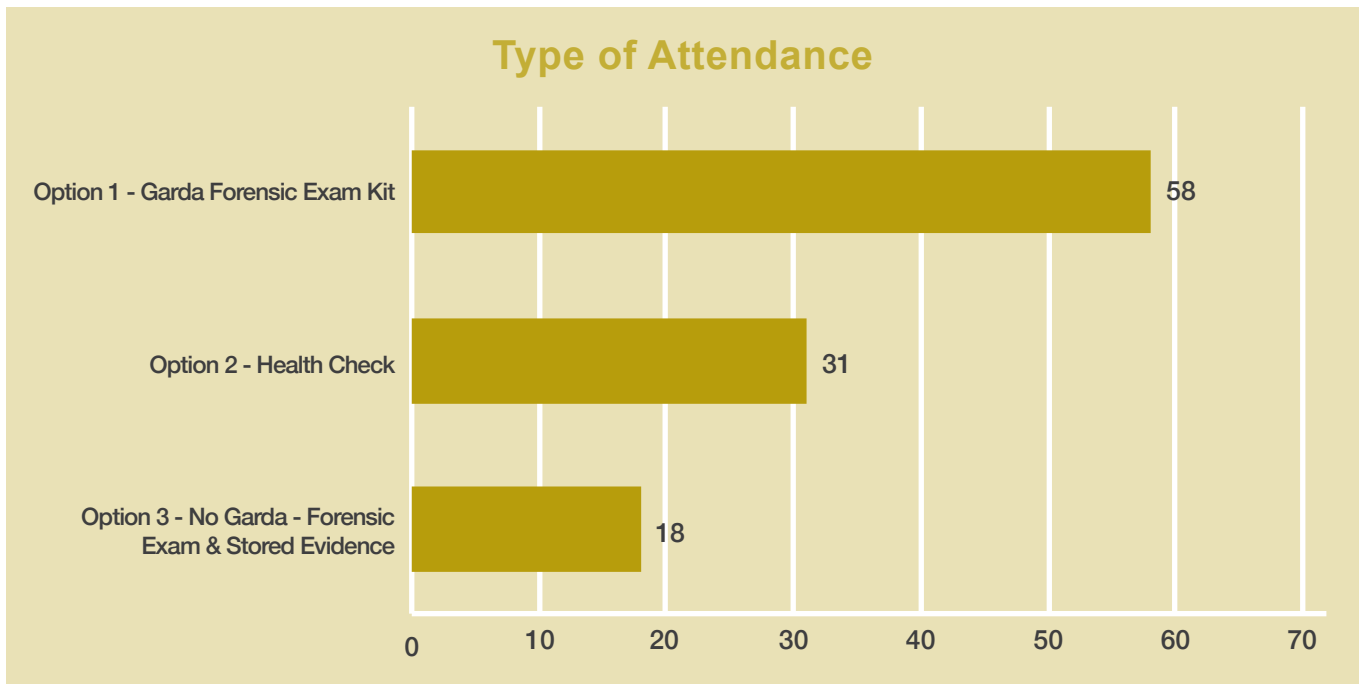
Examination:

Galway SATU saw **87%** of patients who contacted their service **within 3 hours** of a request to SATU for Forensic Clinical Examination.

Duration of time since incident:

- < 24 hrs - 38%
- 24 hrs - 72 hrs - 16%
- 72 hrs - 120 hrs - 15%
- 120 hrs - 7 days - 6%
- 7 days - 1 month - 12%
- > 1 month - 7%
- Unrecorded - 2%
- Long Term Abuse - 4%





KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2022

New Location:

In January 2022 Galway SATU began operating from The Willow Centre, co-located with the Hazel Clinic (Child and Adolescent Sexual Assault Treatment Service) and Barnahus West. These new premises mean the physical environment for patient care is greatly improved. Being “under one roof” allows for close collaboration with our multi-agency colleagues from Tusla and An Garda Síochána in Barnahus West, which will benefit our 14-17 year old patients.

Staffing:

- In September and October 2022, an additional number of assisting nurses were recruited and trained which has greatly enhanced covering the 24-hour on-call roster.
- Two new trainee Clinical Nurse Specialists, Ms Catherine Conroy and Ms Caitriona Freaney, commenced the Higher Diploma in Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner in the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland this year.
- Two new Forensic Medical Examiners have joined the on-call Galway SATU rota; Dr Lia Kyranoudi and Dr Claire Harrison and we welcome them.

In 2022 we said goodbye to Dr Jo Freeman who had been a Forensic Examiner at Galway SATU for more than a decade. We will miss her excellent clinical advice, gentle professional manner and warm collegiality badly. We also bid a farewell to Ms Susan Hogan as a Clinical Nurse Specialist but are delighted that she has remained on as an examiner on the Galway on-call rota.

Education and Development:

Galway Forensic Physicians and Clinical Nurse Specialist gave presentations, undertook clinical audits, facilitated training and professional examinations with a variety of colleagues and allied professionals.

The Introduction to SATU course for Doctors was held at NUIG Irish Centre for Applied Patient Safety and Simulation in February and May 2022 and overall 25 doctors attended.

Ms Mary Mahony was awarded a Masters in Science in Advanced Nursing Practice from the RCSI.

Peer review of SATU charts and local meeting of Forensic Clinical Examiners continued in 2022 sharing knowledge and experience. Which not only provides support but promoting continues engagement and collaboration among staff.

KEY OBJECTIVES FOR 2023

Recruitment:

At Galway SATU there will be ongoing recruitment of Forensic Medical Examiners to the on-call roster;

- Two new Clinical Nurse Specialists will join the Galway SATU team
- A Clinical Nurse Manager 2 will be recruited
- An Advanced Nurse Practitioner (SAFE) will be appointed in 2023

Infrastructure:

The Willow Centre interior will be enhanced with a specially commissioned mural and artwork to enhance patient comfort.

| GALWAY SATU TEAM | |
|---|--|
| Dr. Andrea Holmes Clinical Director | Ms. Cathy Bergin Clinical Nurse Specialist |
| Ms. Susan Hogan Clinical Nurse Specialist | Ms. Cathy Shortt Clinical Nurse Specialist |
| Ms. Mary Mahony Clinical Nurse Specialist | Ms. Caitriona Freeney Clinical Nurse Specialist (Trainee) |
| Ms. Catherine Conroy Clinical Nurse Specialist (Trainee) | Ms. Meave Geraghty Administrator |

The core team in Galway are supported by the on call team of Forensic Examiners and Support Nurses. These include the following Forensic Examiners: Dr Therese O'Reilly, Dr Lia Kyranaoudi, Dr Claire Harrison, Dr Neasa Conneally and Dr Joanna Freeman.

They also include the following support nurses; Ms Mags Bourke, Ms Eileen Coen, Ms Lorraine Courtney, Ms Caroline Farrell, Ms Orelia Ryan Fox, Ms Deirdre Gallagher, Ms Fiona Gilmore, Ms Nicola Glynn, Ms Teresa Hynes, Ms Mary Rooney Hynes, Mr Raj Karamala, Ms Ann Marie Mc Garry, Ms Kathy O'Loughlin, Ms Yvonne O'Donovan, Ms Jincy Scaria, Ms Heather Stanley. Thank you to the whole team for your contribution and commitment to the SATU service.

V. MULLINGAR SATU



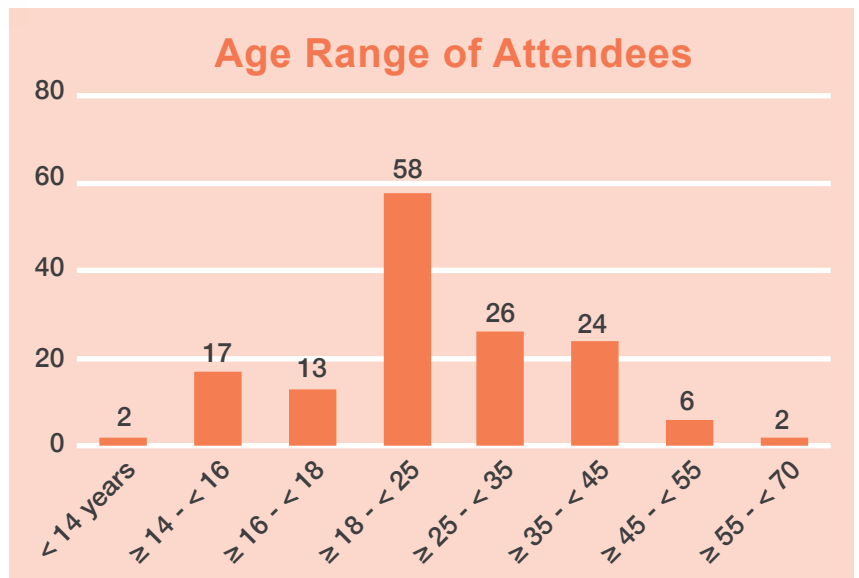
Mullingar SATU

| Year | Attendances (n) | Difference on previous years (n) | % Increase / Decrease |
|------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2022 | 148 | +28 | +24% |
| 2021 | 120 | +19 | +19% |
| 2020 | 101 | -21 | -17% |
| 2019 | 122 | -81 | -40% |
| 2018 | 203 | +29 | +17% |

LOCAL STATISTICS

Age Profile:

The mean age of attendees was 26 years; the youngest patient was 14 years, the eldest was 55 years.



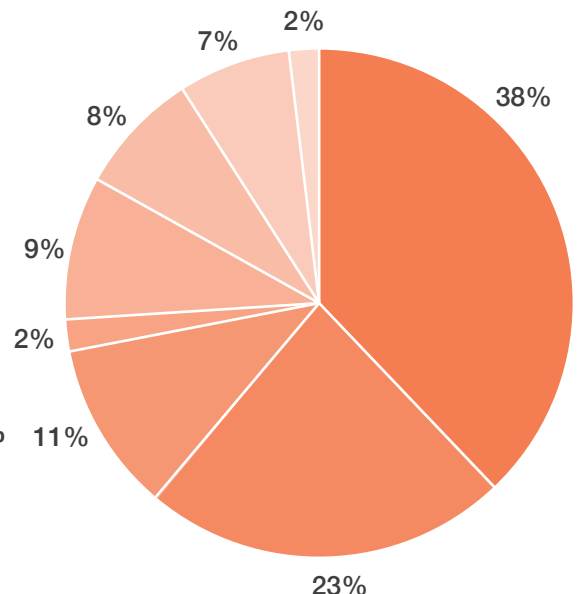
Patients seen within 3 hours of a request for a Forensic Clinical Examination:

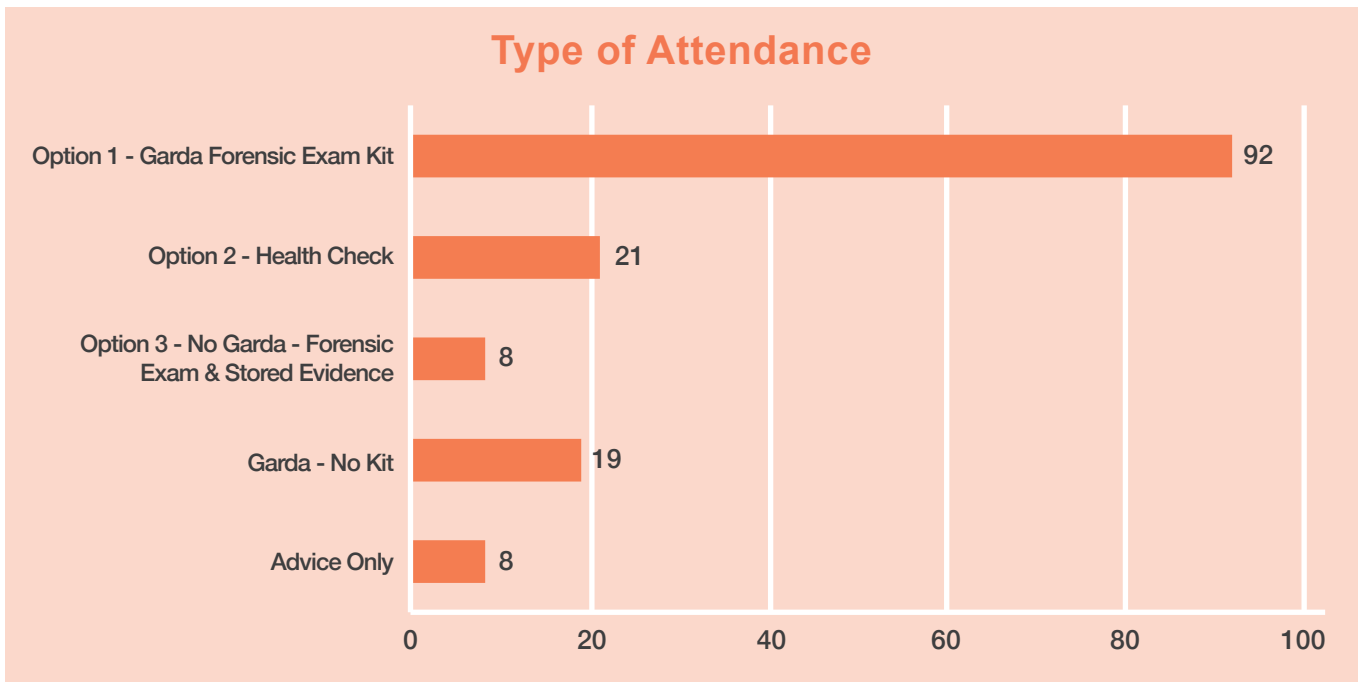
Examination:

Mullingar SATU saw **96%** of patients who contacted their service **within 3 hours** of a request to SATU for Forensic Clinical Examination.

Duration of time since incident:

- < 24 hrs - 38%
- 24 hrs - 72 hrs - 23%
- 72 hrs - 120 hrs - 11%
- 120 hrs - 7 days - 2%
- 7 days - 1 month - 9%
- > 1 month - 8%
- Unrecorded - 7%
- Long Term Abuse - 2%





KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2022

Key Highlights:

There were many key highlights and achievements in 2022, some of these included:

- Nessa Gill (ANP) completed Certificate in Ionising Radiation in Trinity College Dublin. This development in advanced practice will benefit our patients in treatment.
- SATU Mullingar was short listed for Irish Healthcare Awards for the Provision of Outreach Services in the Outpatient Initiative Category.
- SATU Mullingar was a finalist in Spark Ignite Program for Photo documentation.
- Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly visited the Mullingar SATU in December 2022.

Staffing:

Last year saw a commitment to addressing the staffing needs of our department and we have solidified the growth and development of SATU with the appointment in the first instance of an additional Clinical Nurse Specialist Sexual Assault Forensic Examination. Clare Mahon joined our team in January 2022 from the UK where she worked as a Forensic Clinical Examiner and brings with her a wealth of knowledge and experience which will help to grow and develop our team. Coupled with this Nessa Gill was appointed as Registered Advanced Nurse Practitioner Sexual Assault Forensic Examination in November 2022. This appointment provides for senior responsibility for service development, unit management and staff support and will help to further enhance and develop SATU services. To complete our staffing developments in 2022, SATU Mullingar appointed a 1.0 WTE Grade V SATU Administrator. Irene Monaghan took up position in July 2022 and provides administrative guidance and support to the department.

Patients in Outreach Locations:

In 2022 SATU Mullingar provided care to 32 patients in 9 Outreach locations in Ireland. Of those 32 patients to whom care was provided to on an outreach basis they were seen in 9 locations. These areas included Emergency Departments, Mental Health Facilities and Prisons. The patients seen in those areas are not transferred to SATU on the basis of patient, medical and security need along with staffing need for the referring area. The further six locations where people received care included Hospital Outpatient Departments, Health Centres and College Campus'; Outreach provision was also given in Domestic Violence Settings and in Services for those who have experienced homelessness.

Patient Feedback:

The experience of patients in SATU and throughout their follow up engagements with our services are of fundamental importance to those of us who work in this service. We build and adjust our practices based firmly on patient need and the patient is central to all developments.

The feedback received was encouraging with respondents highlighting the compassionate care that they received from SATU Staff with one patient noting;

“In a moment when you feel very vulnerable they were very gentle caring and compassionate”

With another commenting;

“I cannot find fault with my treatment I received there, I felt so afraid and anxious and in a really bad place in myself and the care I got was exceptional, thank you to the staff in Mullingar”

All respondents noted their experience in SATU RHM as “very good” which is heartening for those of us who provide SATU services in Regional Hospital Mullingar.

Photography:

2022 saw the beginnings of what is hoped to be a significant development in practice for Forensic Clinical Examinations in Ireland. Photo documentation of extra genital injuries provides numerous advances in Forensic Clinical Examination Practices in Ireland. An idea that germinated from our Clinical Nurse Specialist Clare Mahon who had previously used photo documentation in both a paediatric Sexual Assault Treatment Unit in Ireland and through her work in forensic medicine in the United Kingdom. 2022 saw an exploratory phase in the introduction of photo documentation. These photographs are traditionally taken by the Scene of Crime Gardaí. The benefits of providing this service include 24/7 access to photo documentation, along with photography taken at time of reported incident. This initiative, which is supported by both the Gardaí and National SATU Network, provides for a huge leap

forward in the provision of care to those who experience physical injuries. Mullingar SATU has been chosen as the pilot site for this evaluation and pilot study and it is hoped to commence this pilot study in early 2023.

KEY OBJECTIVES FOR 2023

Audit and Research:

Ongoing engagement in audit and research to ensure robustness of service.

Outreach and Awareness:

- Continuing engagement in Outreach services as it has a proven value to patients by noting increased attendance at follow up appointment.
- Continuing awareness campaigns and ensure that those campaigns are measurable and value adding to the service.
- Exploration of other clinical initiatives that SATU patients require for example extension of RANP Service to include assessment and management of patients who have experienced Domestic Violence.
- Noting of age profile of patients, a targeted approach to those patients is recommended.

Photo Documentation:

The importance of a timely introduction of photo documentation cannot be underestimated and will benefit our service immeasurably. As mentioned previously Mullingar SATU has been chosen for a pilot study with photography service and it is hoped to commence this pilot study in early 2023.

Education:

- Ongoing engagement in communication through monthly peer review and education sessions with the SATU Team.
- Mullingar SATU in association with the Regional Centre for Nurse and Midwifery Education developed a NMBI accredited course to Healthcare Professionals. This course which included presenters from various members of the Sexual Assault Response Team was very well received and has now been registered as an accredited course on offer to all health care professionals through the RCNME. Feedback on this course was extremely positive with respondents noting the value of attending such a course. This course now forms part of the education program of RCNME and is offered multiple times per year.

Infrastructure:

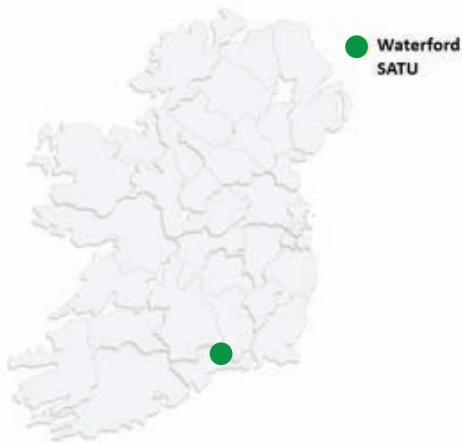
- Provision of designated SATU Car Parking Space
- Addressing the need for appropriate discrete SATU accommodation to ensure patient privacy

| MULLINGAR SATU TEAM | |
|--|--|
| Professor Michael Gannon Clinical Lead | Ms. Nessa Gill ANP Forensic Clinical Examiner |
| Ms. Catherine Marsh CNS Forensic Clinical Examiner | Ms. Clare Mahon CNS Forensic Clinical Examiner |
| Irene Monaghan Administrator | |

As always we could not do this job without the unstinting support of so many and for that we thank you. We respect the fortitude of those patients whom we are privileged to provide care to, and it is that which drives us forward into 2023.

The core team in Mullingar are also supported by a team of on call Forensic Examiners and Support Nurses. The 2022 team included the following forensic examiners; Dr Barbara Hynes, Dr Charlotte Coyle and Dr Roswitha Junold-Martin. They also include the following support nurses Marie Corbett, Liz O’Grady Brennan, Tricia Kenny, Edel Shannon, Stacey Egan, Maria McDonnell, Breda Ward and Mary Cleary.

vi. WATERFORD SATU

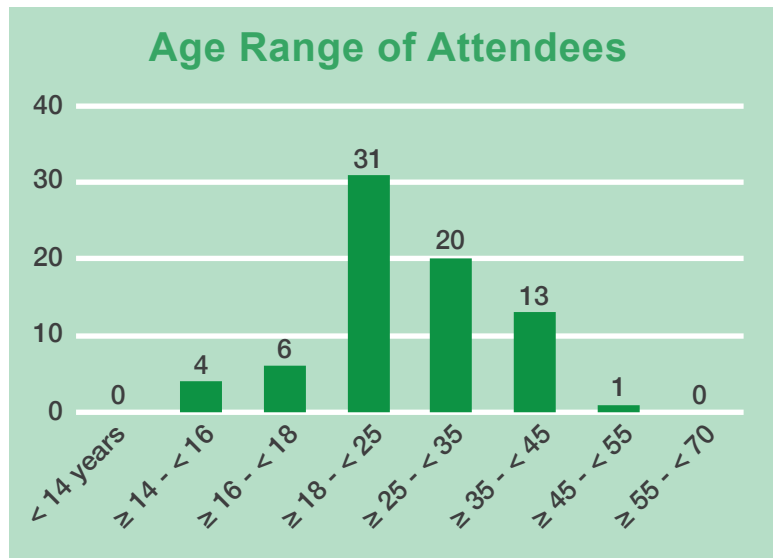


| Year | Attendances (n) | Difference on previous years (n) | % Increase / Decrease |
|------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2022 | 75 | -6 | -8% |
| 2021 | 81 | +3 | +4% |
| 2020 | 78 | +6 | +9% |
| 2019 | 72 | -1 | -1.4% |
| 2018 | 73 | +7 | +11% |

LOCAL STATISTICS

Age Profile:

The age group with the highest number of attendances was the 18-25 year olds, the same group as 2021, down slightly from 43% to 42%.



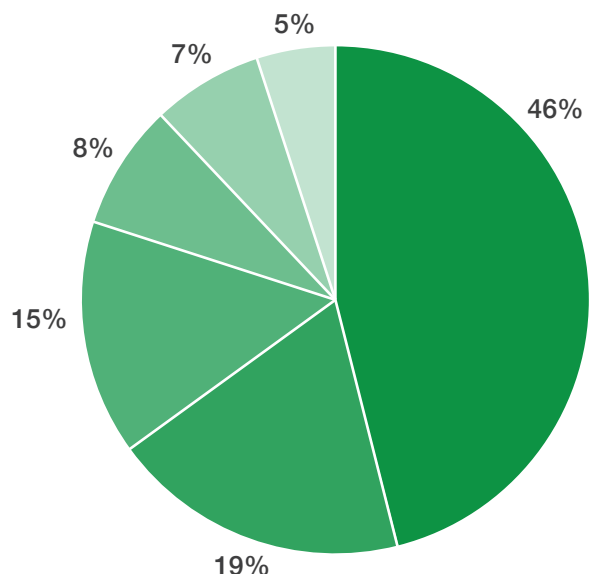
Patients seen within 3 hours of a request for a Forensic Clinical Examination:

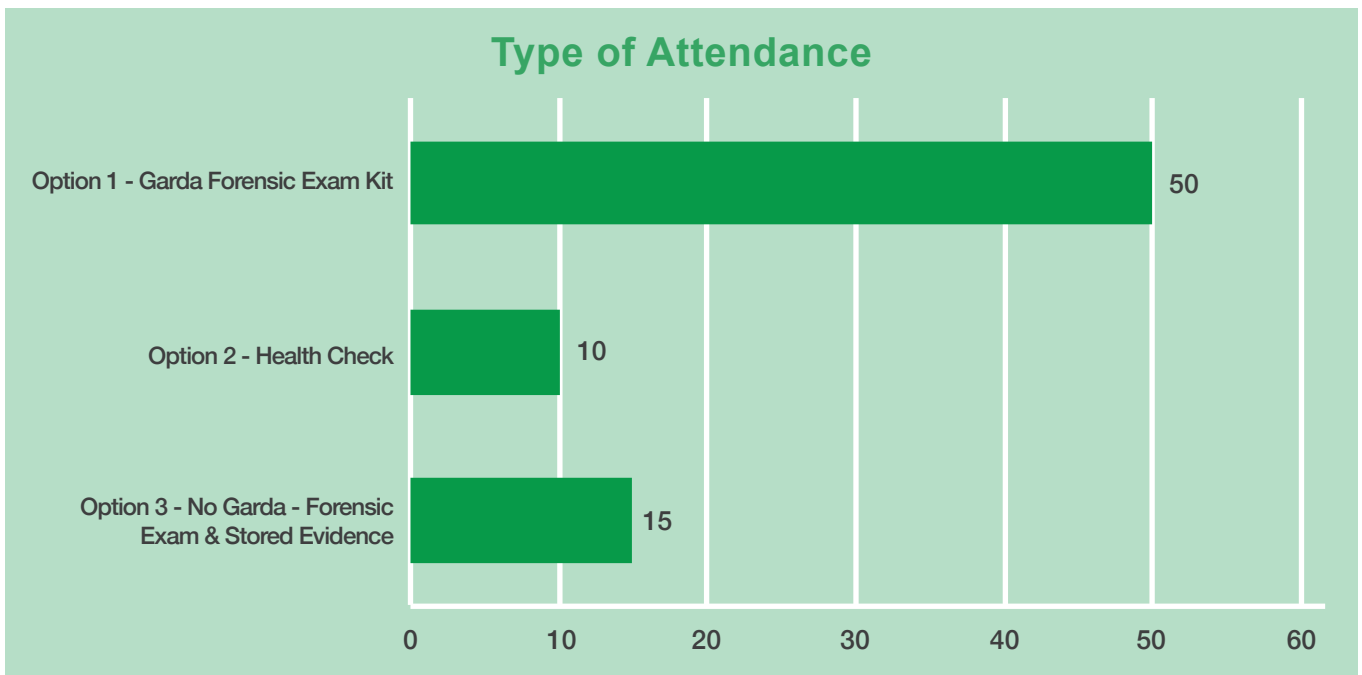
Examination:

Waterford SATU saw **98% (42)** patients who contacted their service **within 3 hours** of a request for Forensic Clinical Examination.

Duration of time since incident:

- < 24 hrs - 46%
- 24 hrs - 72 hrs - 19%
- 72 hrs - 120 hrs - 15%
- 120 hrs - 7 days - 8%
- 7 days - 1 month - 7%
- > 1 month - 5%





KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2022

Staffing:

- Recruitment of Grade V administration post was filled, Gemma Fitzgerald started with us in January 2023.
- Two new nurses were trained, and commenced on call on the out of hours roster, another nurse is currently in training.
- Three new doctors were trained and commenced on call on the out of hours roster, three more are currently in training.

Training:

- We held a number of in hospital training and awareness programmes for staff, including for students.
- We held training for a number of new Rape Crisis volunteers on a rolling basis.

Congratulations to Dr Helen Doyle and Dr Ciara Nolan on the birth of their baby boys.

We would like to thank our colleagues at Cork SATU for providing out of hours cover for our service when we faced difficulties with staffing.

KEY OBJECTIVES FOR 2023

Infrastructure:

We are awaiting a date for the relocation of the SATU to the larger more suitable premises.

Education and Training:

We will continue to deliver training in person to associated stakeholders and relevant healthcare professionals that was curtailed due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

The candidate ANP is currently completing the second year of a two-year Master of Science in advanced nursing practice at UCC.

| WATERFORD SATU TEAM | |
|--|---|
| Dr. John Bermingham Clinical Director | Ms. Sinead Boyle cANP/Forensic Clinical Examiner |
| Ms. Ann Folan Clinical Nurse Specialist | Ms. Gemma Fitzgerald Administrator |

The core Waterford SATU team are supported by the on call team of Forensic Examiners and Support Nurses. These include the following Forensic Examiners: Dr Nell McGovern, Dr Pat Devlin, Dr Sarah Dorrian, Dr Helen Doyle, Dr Ciara Nolan and Dr Rebecca Howley. They also include the following support nurses; Mary Doherty, Rhona Boland, Mary Whittle, Maria O'Neill, Claire Lalor, Emma, Blake and Carmel Doyle. We thank you for your support and commitment to the SATU service and the people we care for within.

SECTION 3

SATU Other Areas of Work



i. POLICY REVIEW

The Policy Review of Sexual Assault Treatment Units (SATUs) commenced in 2018 as a proactive response to issues highlighted by those directly using and operating SATU. It highlighted crucial steps needed to strengthen the health response to some of Ireland's most vulnerable patients.

The issues highlighted included:

- Under funding of the service;
 - Poor governance structure for the service;
 - Independent and siloed working and in varied physical environments;
 - Low staffing levels and an inconsistent staffing mix;
 - High attrition rate due to burn out;
- and
- A lack of emotional support for staff

In order to address the issues identified, the SATU Policy Review Team - comprising policy-makers, front-line staff, and sectoral experts – set out clear, practical actions that could make tangible differences for staff and patients in this critical service - ten medium term, four short-term and two long-term Areas For Action (AFAs). The over arching aim of the AFAs is to provide a consistent, sustainable and co-ordinated service for people who experience sexual violence.

The four short term AFAs identified were:

1. Patient Quality

- Prioritise recruitment of the National Staffing and Operational Manager and secure transitional clinical leadership.
- Urgently identify and fill remunerated clinical directorship posts to improve governance.

2. Patient Experience

- Immediately provide a small investment to enable improvements to the physical environment for patients (e.g. doorbell, paint etc.).
- Commit to provide a CPD bursary to all existing full-time SATU staff in order to allow space to prioritise personal recovery and wellbeing in 2019 given their extraordinary level of commitment to date.

3. Patient Recovery

- Immediately develop and introduce case review and management processes.
- Urgently review pathways to mental health services in addition to the RCC provision.
- Immediately recruit Patient Liaison Manager.

4. Patient Access

- Invest €5,000 in a national peer-led medical training programme to increase number of FMEs available to support on-call in year.
- Pilot the “Rapid Responder” programme in Dublin, Galway and Mullingar.
- Canvass health sector staff to identify colleagues with FNE or FME qualifications from other jurisdictions who may have the competency to support on-call provision in 2019.

The ten medium term AFAs identified were:

1 Consistent

Every patient should have a common and consistent experience of the service irrespective of where they live or where the assault happens. **National Planning, decision making, accountability and investment** is the only way to achieve this.

1. Increase and ring-fence baseline funding for SATUs nationally by 25%.
2. Create a National SATU Service Network, supported by a National Management Team.

2 Sustainable

A Patient's experience is influenced almost exclusively by the staff they meet. It is critical to take action to build a **flexible, competent, supported SATU workforce** for the long term.

3. Resource a minimum day-time, team-based staffing model for each SATU.
4. Create a rapid responder 'on-call' rota so that forensic examiners can travel to support patients in their local unit.
5. Roll out more frequent, flexible, modular, and inter-professional training to build a sustainable pipeline of qualified staff.
6. Recognise the challenge of the working environment by introducing high quality emotional supports for all staff (core and on-call).
7. Improve oversight and quality assurance by introducing mandatory clinical supervision for all core and on-call staff.

3 Coordinated

Boundaries between professionals and services make it too easy for patients to get "lost in the cracks". Increasing awareness of SATU and coordination within health services and across social services and patients is a primary step to improving this.

8. Expand the scope of service to include patient liaison and the coordination of medium-term after-care for patients.
9. Communicate the role of and support available through SATUs more routinely and effectively.
10. Convene a Sexual Assault Services Management Group of senior operational decision makers from different sectors to improve patient experiences and outcomes.

And the two long term AFAs identified were:

1. Long-Term Service Configuration

There are several cross-government processes in train which may impact on SATU service delivery: the Children's SATU Services Barnhaus Pilot and the Policing Review (Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland).

Following this, the Review Team recommends initiation of a short, deliberative process to consider the following options with a view to ensuring sustainability, consistency and integration of SATU services over the long-term:

1. Developing a mobile SATU service
2. Developing a resourced night service
3. Integrating adult and child services
4. Developing a smaller number of centre(s) of excellence which are purpose built, co-located and co-funded with An Garda Síochána and other relevant services (learning from the Rowan Centre in Northern Ireland)

2. Long-Term Service Setting

Planning should begin immediately to ensure a high-quality, purpose-built environment for patients in each location, informed by decisions taken under Action 1 above. This should be aligned with and embedded in all relevant capital decisions (e.g. Rotunda re-location, GUH re-location etc.)

A SATU Implementation Team was established to drive the implementation of these AFAs. The collaborative approach is evident in the cross-sectoral composition of the Implementation Project Team, with members drawn from health, justice, and voluntary sectors and co-chaired by the Department of Health's Policy, Strategy & Integration Unit (PSIU) and the HSE's National Women and Infant's Health Programme (NWIHP).

Initial membership included representatives from the following services:

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
|  <p>National Women & Infants Health Programme</p> <p>National Women and Infants Health Programme HSE</p> |  <p>An Introduction to HBE Communications</p> <p>Communications Division HSE</p> |  <p>Nursing & Midwifery Planning & Development Unit South East</p> <p>Nursing Midwifery Planning and Development Unit Saolta Hospital Group</p> |  <p>An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais, Michumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Oige Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth</p> <p>Policy Strategy & Integration Unit Department of Health</p> |
|  <p>Performance Management Unit, Maternity Services Department of Health</p> |  <p>Department of Health</p> <p>Chief Nurse's Office Department of Health</p> |  <p>An Roinn Sláinte Department of Health</p> <p>Press and Communications Department of Health</p> |  <p>SATU Sexual Assault Treatment Units</p> <p>Sexual Assault Treatment Unit National Clinic Lead</p> |
|  <p>SATU Sexual Assault Treatment Units</p> <p>Sexual Assault Treatment Unit Galway</p> |  <p>SATU Sexual Assault Treatment Units</p> <p>Sexual Assault Treatment Unit Donegal</p> |  <p>COSC The National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence</p> <p>The National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence</p> |  <p>An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt agus Comhionannais Department of Justice and Equality</p> <p>Department of Justice and Equity</p> |
|  <p>LAW REFORM COMMISSION/COIMISIÚN UM ATHCHÓIRIÚ AN DLÍ</p> <p>Criminal Law Reform</p> |  <p>Garda National Protective Services Bureau</p> |  <p>An Garda Síochána Ireland's National Police and Security Service</p> <p>An Garda Síochána</p> |  <p>DRCC Dublin Rape Crisis Centre</p> <p>Dublin Rape Crisis Centre</p> |
|  <p>RAPE CRISIS NETWORK IRELAND</p> <p>Rape Crisis Network Ireland</p> |  <p>Domestic, Sexual and Gender Based Violence</p> |  <p>TUSLA An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach Child and Family Agency</p> <p>TUSLA</p> |  <p>Ireland East HOSPITAL GROUP</p> <p>Director of Midwifery Representatives from Regional Hospital Mullingar</p> |

By 2022 all AFAs were either completed, superseded or realigned to another policy unit. The significant progress achieved in the short space of time since the launch of the Policy Review in March 2019 is testament to the commitment and drive shown by the SATU Implementation Project Team.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2019-2022

Short-Term AFAs:

Patient Quality

- Clinical directorship posts were structured, remunerated and filled, and the Clinical Lead for SATU was uplifted from a 0.4 WTE to 0.5 WTE.
- A National Staffing and Operations Manager was recruited.

Patient Experience

- Funding totalling €118,134 was transferred to the SATUs for small but significant improvements to each SATU, with the aim to improve the experiences of the patients.
- Funding was also issued to improve the CPD opportunities for all SATU staff.

Patient Recovery

- Funding of dedicated time for the local clinical leads has facilitated time for team meetings and case reviews. Video conferencing facilities have also been funded.
- The SATU teams have reviewed and optimised local pathways to mental health services in each of the SATU sites. Each SATU has collaborations and pathways to streamline care for their patients. While it would be ideal to have standardised pathways this is a challenge due to location and geographical disperses of SATUs, mental health structures around the country and the age range of people accessing SATU care.

Patient Access

- Staffing in SATU was bolstered in September 2019 with the addition of nine new FNEs in the adult and adolescent service. Work to identify colleagues with FNE or FME qualifications to support on-call provision has progressed informally through existing SATU staff networks. A further cohort of forensic nurses is currently in training and will commence their roles in September 2023.

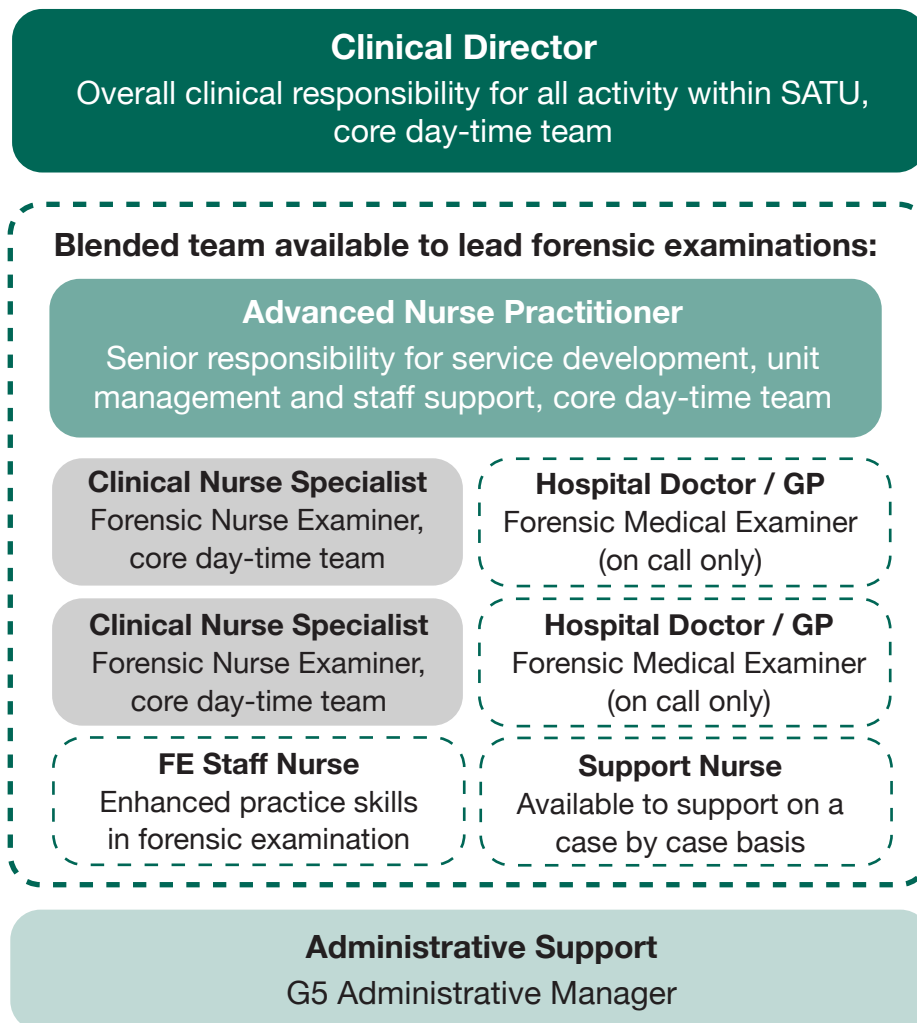
Medium-Term AFAs:

Consistent

- In 2022 the ring-fenced funding was increased by 0.25m to 0.8m in total, as per the original implementation plan costing undertaken by the Department of Health (DOH).
- An interim staffing model for the SATU National Management Team (NMT) was implemented in 2020. A review exercise was undertaken in 2022, and a new structure for the NMT was presented to and accepted by the DOH. This structure will be implemented in 2023.

Sustainable

- A staffing gap analysis was completed, and €515k of the total SATU budget was allocated to the posts identified in this analysis. Each SATU now has a blended day-time team in place.



- The HSE's Office of the Nursing and Midwifery Services Director (ONMSD) commissioned a review of current training for nurses and midwives in the area of sexual assault forensic examination, and a more flexible, responsive and inclusive training programme will be tendered for in 2023.
- Since November 2021 the SATU staff (medical, nursing, and administrative), can avail of a professional reflective practice and clinical supervision service. €60k of SATU's budget has been allocated to this support service.

Much Needed Coordination

- The need for a national patient liaison manager was reviewed by the NSOM for SATU. The review concluded that this role was no longer required, as each of the SATUs were resourced with blended teams who fulfil this role on an ongoing basis.

- Members of the HSE Communications Division developed a SATU communications and awareness building plan. Alongside the development of communications content, the group involved in this work assessed the communications needs for patients, service providers, allied services and others.
- In relation to the implementation of a cross sectorial Sexual Assault Services Management Group, it was agreed that this action be transferred to the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the office for the prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender based Violence (DSGBV). The DSGBV have a steering group, on which SATU will be represented.

Long-Term AFAs:

Long-Term Service Configuration

- A 24/7 service is provided by each of the SATUs. The demand led nature of the service and the requirement for 24/7 cover requires monitoring to ensure the appropriate level and skill mix of staff. The sustainability of the service and maintaining appropriate on call and day time resources is a key priority for the National Clinical Lead, NWIHP and the SATUs.
- The integration of the adult and child services is not entirely within the remit of the SATUs to progress, although much work is being done in this regard as part of the Barnahus project. The National Management Team and the National Clinical Lead represent SATU at all relevant groups.

Long-Term Service Planning

- Significant developments with regard to physical infrastructure have taken place in the Galway and Letterkenny sites. Other sites are in need of refurbishment or upgrading, and ongoing advocacy for inclusion in capital development plans continues.

Objectives for 2023:

- Implement the new National Management Team;
- Create new managed Clinical Networks for SATU;
- Clearly outline pathways of escalation and access for interagency groups to this clinical network;
- Continuously review the sustainability of 24/7 cover for each SATU.

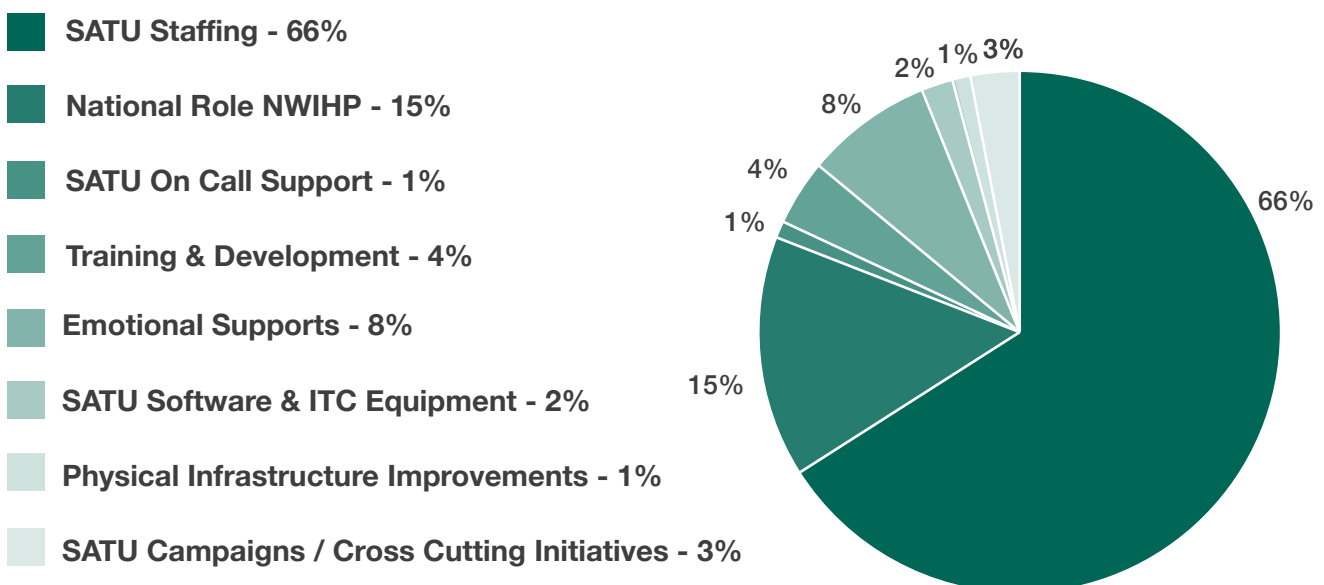
ii. FUNDING

Funding was sought in 2022 to increase the ring-fenced funding by 0.25m to 0.8m in total, as per the original Implementation plan costing undertaken by the Department of Health. The original 0.55m received in 2020 was allocated to the support new staffing posts across the SATUs as identified in the staffing gap analysis as per the policy review. The additional 0.25m allocated in 2022 ensured that progress could be made across key areas, such as:

- Provision of dedicated emotional supports for SATU staff;
 - Standardising Clinical supervision;
 - Clinical guideline development/revision;
 - Developing and sustaining delivery of more accessible and flexible multi-agency training and development programmes;
 - Developing/strengthening pathways for onward management of patients;
- and
- Supporting the co-location of adult and paediatric services in the East.

Funding will also ensure the SATU service appropriately resourced to continue to analyse the performance of the service in terms of patient quality and patient experience whilst utilising all of the data and information to continuously improve.

The total allocation of the 0.8m can be seen in the graph below.



iii. STUDY DAY

The 14th annual interagency study day took place in October 2022. There is secured recurring funding in the SATU budget every year to facilitate the Study Day. It was a very informative day, with much discussion on a range of pertinent topics including internationally renowned speaker Prof Patricia Speck, who spoke on Examination and Care of Older Survivors of Sexual Violence as well as presentations on training, reproductive coercion, the impact of the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act on SATU care.

This year allowed for the return of in-person attendance at the conference, as well as facilitation of online attendance (given the success of the 2020 and 2021 online study days). We were energised by the networking opportunities that in-person attendance provided for colleagues representing the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) Ireland, as well as other key agencies. As this year’s study day included online attendance, we were joined by our colleagues from Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom and the United States. This study day is very much a fixed item in our SATU calendar, and we are already looking forward to our 2023 meeting which will take place on September 28th 2023.



National Sexual Assault Treatment Unit Study Day Agenda

Venue: The Ashling Hotel, Dublin and Online (via Zoom)

Date: Thursday, October 20th 2022. Time 9:30 to 14:15

Contact Info: satu@rotunda.ie

| Start | Finish | Title | Speaker |
|-------|--------|--|--|
| 9:30 | 9:45 | SATU Network: 2022 Experience | Prof Maeve Eogan, National Clinical Lead, SATU |
| 9:45 | 10:25 | The Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015: Impact on Access to SATU Care | Ms Patricia Rickard Clarke, Safeguarding Ireland |
| 10:25 | 10:40 | Sexual Violence Survey Update | Dr Helen McGrath, Central Statistics Office |
| 10:40 | 10:55 | Sexual Assault Forensic Examination (SAFE) Training for Nurses and Midwives: National and International Evidence to Inform Future Training | Dr Maria Noonan, Lecturer, Department of Nursing & Midwifery, Faculty of Education & Health Sciences, University of Limerick |
| 10:55 | 11:20 | Break | |
| 11:20 | 11:35 | Healthcare Providers Experiences of Reproductive Coercion Within Intimate Partner Violence: A Qualitative Evidence Synthesis. | Clinical Nurse Specialist, Bridin Bell, SATU Donegal |
| 11:35 | 11:50 | Garda Divisional Protective Services Updates | Detective Garda Seamus Houlihan |
| 11:50 | 12:40 | Examination and Care of Older Survivors of Sexual Violence | Prof Patricia Speck, School of Nursing, University of Alabama at Birmingham. |
| 12:40 | 13:15 | Lunch | |
| 13:15 | 13:35 | Trauma at Work: Reflecting on the Emotional and Relational Impact of Working with Sexual Violence | Dr Nicola O’Sullivan, Prof Doctorate in Social Care & Emotional Wellbeing. |
| 13:35 | 14:05 | Trauma in Organisations: Reflecting on the Emotional and Relational Impact of Working with Sexual Violence | Dr Christopher Scanlon, Independent Psychosocial Researcher/ Consultant |
| 14:05 | 14:15 | Close & Thanks | Prof Maeve Eogan |
| | | RCPI 5 CPD Credits (External) – NMBI 5 CPD Credits | |

iv. REFLECTIVE PRACTICE AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORTS

The specialist administrative and nursing team in the Sexual Assault and Treatment Units (SATUs) in Ireland provide complex treatment to a particularly vulnerable group of people from various backgrounds in Irish society.

The SATU Policy Review recognised the challenging nature of the work and recommended the provision of high quality emotional supports for all staff (core and on-call). In addition they recommended clinical supervision for all core and on-call staff.

The benefits of clinical supervision to the supervisee are well supported across the literature. They include:

- The development of professional skills and competence,
 - Prevention of stress and burnout,
 - Improved job satisfaction,
 - Reduced sick leave,
 - Feeling of being valued and improved self-esteem,
 - Enhanced personal and professional development,
- and
- Promotion of safe practice.

The activities that Reflective Practice Groups focus on can include:

- Issues/ areas where workers feel stuck, stressed, or struggle to think about aspects of their work that are pertaining to service user, as well as other relational dynamics, including practice, team, or organisational issues.
- It can also consider issues that impact on the ability of staff to engage with service users and what might interfere or impinge on this or impact on decision making.

The Reflective Practice Group sessions aim to:

- Provide spaces for staff to reflect on their work.
- Support understanding of group and team dynamics related to the working environment.
- Increase the participant's capacity for reflection and understanding of the complexity of the role related to the task of the organisation.

- Support relationship-based practice.
- Promote personal and professional development and awareness.
- Support and promote the use of authority, negotiation and effective working with those who use the service, stakeholders, and within teams as a unit.
- Support future interventions particularly related to safeguarding, and complex cases.
- Develop members of the team that could act as leaders in the service and provide Reflective Practice Groups within the service going forward using the same model.

Reflective Practice is a form of in-depth thinking about work activity with the aim of developing as a practitioner (Kurtz, 2020). High quality clinical supervision and reflective practice is associated with increased staff well-being and job satisfaction, and reduced burnout (Hyrkas, 2005, Kurtz, 2020).

Beginning in November 2021 the SATU service began offering their staff, (medical, nursing/midwifery and administrative), the opportunity to avail of professional reflective practice spaces. These confidential and safe spaces are offered online across all SATU sites. In addition group reflective practice spaces are offered to the current cohort of nurses in training to become Forensic Examiners. The service is offered by Dr Nicola O’Sullivan who is trained and experienced in providing reflective practice and clinical supervision to staff working in health, forensic and social care settings.

These reflective practice spaces are offered in recognition of the complex and emotive work that is being undertaken in SATU. Once per quarter staff across the SATU team are invited to attend a workshop to contribute further to the individual spaces provided. Vicarious Trauma; reflective practice; compassion and compassion fatigue, are subjects that have formed the basis of these workshops.

The provision of this supportive and safe service offers the opportunity to think, reflect and get in touch with experiences at work. It is also recognized as essential that the mental health of practitioners treating survivors of sexual assault are offered a supportive and structured environment regularly.

In 2022, the SATU teams have taken up 199 reflective practice spaces between January and December 2022. The impact that this new service and support has had on the SATU staff delivering care to victims of rape and sexual assault is evident from the feedback that was received in the service evaluation.

A sample of this feedback is provided below:

“I really look forward to my reflective practice. It’s a safe open space that always grounds me and allows me to reflect, especially after the difficult days. I always feel better after my sessions and strongly believe that it has a positive impact on both me personally and professionally.”

- *CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALIST, SATU*

“Therapeutic support provides us with a safe, confidential space to process day to day work and our exposure to trauma and it is vital for staff wellbeing”

- *ADMINISTRATOR, SATU*

“Having the space and time to talk out issues with Nicola has made the world of difference to my every day and overall practice. It has given me confidence in my practice, my decision making, my working relationships and in myself to make me a better practitioner, colleague and nurse. I look forward to our sessions knowing that I will feel lighter and more able afterwards”

- *CLINICAL NURSE SPECIALIST, SATU*

v. TRAINING AND CONTINUED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The main educational initiative in 2022 was the commencement of another RCSI based SAFE education programme for nurses and midwives, Level 9 QQI (Masters Level). On completion of this, an additional cohort of clinical nurse specialists (CNS) will join the SATU team, and we look forward to all they will bring. As with the previous time this course was run, nurses/midwives who wish to train to also deliver care in the paediatric response to sexual violence will complete the programme. Investing in a dedicated, committed and highly expert workforce to provide a skilled response to anyone who has experienced sexual violence regardless of age is so important.

We also caught up with provision of the formal programme for forensic medical training this year, having been unable to provide this in the preceding few years due to the Covid 19 pandemic. This programme now takes the form of a suite of online resources, in conjunction with on site observation in a host SATU combined with a day of simulation based training hosted at The Irish Centre for Applied Patient Safety and Simulation (ICAPSS) at the University of Galway in order to support participants to achieve the relevant competencies. Going forward, the in-person component will be offered twice/year in order that we can continue to train medical staff in SATU care provision.

A number of key learning opportunities for continuous professional development were undertaken in 2022. Identification of CPD training requirements is a collaborative approach between the National Lead for Education and Training, SATU, individual SATUs and clinicians. When relevant training is identified, clinicians attend based on their education and training requirements and the overall needs of the SATU service. Given the prevalence of online training since COVID-19, online/on-demand training has continued to be the most utilised form of CPD this year.

2022 saw the renewed subscription to the Academy of Forensic Nursing. This opportunity provided clinicians with weekly, flexible, on-demand, innovative education resources from a community of global experts. Other CPD opportunities arose from a wide variety of relevant sources, such as Faculty of Forensic Legal Medicine (FFLM) online webinars. Clinicians from across the SATU service attended both the International Association of Forensic Nursing (IAFN) Conference (in-person and online) and the St. Mary's, Sexual Assault Referral Centre Annual Conference. As well as attendance at conferences and webinars, we had a number of guest speakers throughout 2022, including a two SATU focused lecture from the National Office for Human Rights and Equality on the upcoming changes in relation to the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act (2015).

Thank you to Ann Brennan, Deirdre Duggan and their colleagues at the Nursing & Midwifery Planning and Development Unit (NMPDU) for their ongoing support which provides SATU clinicians with excellent learning opportunities and allows them to access, connect and engage with nationally and internationally recognised educators and associations.

vi. SATU CURRENT AWARENESS BULLETIN

Late 2022 saw the release of the quarterly SATU Current Awareness Bulletin. This provides an aggregated source of information which includes Academic Journals, Reports, Recommendations and Guidance relevant to SATU clinical forensic practice. Thank you to Aoife McGrath from the HSE Health Library Ireland Knowledge Support Team for her work on coordination and dissemination of this valuable learning resource.

vii. NATIONAL GUIDELINES ON REFERRAL AND FORENSIC CLINICAL EXAMINATION FOLLOWING RAPE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

2022 saw much hard work by the Sexual Assault Response Team as we worked together to collate the 5th Edition of the 'National Guidelines on Referral and Forensic Clinical Examination Following Rape and Sexual Assault'.

This is designed to cover all aspects of a responsive and coordinated service and outlines comprehensive, best practice care for any survivor of sexual crime, regardless of their age.



The document is currently available online through a number of platforms (link below), but will be available in printed form in 2023, and please contact your local SATU if you would like a copy. Many thanks to all contributors, to the agencies who funded this revision (National Women and Infant's Programme (HSE), An Garda Síochána, Tusla) and most of all, sincere thanks to Sarah O'Connor who led the National Guidelines Development Group and ensured the project was completed on-time and to a high standard.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/healthprotection/sexual-assault-response-team-national-guidelines.pdf>

viii. RESEARCH AND OUTREACH

Many members of the SATU team remained actively engaged in a range of outreach and research initiatives in 2022, and we look forward to continuing that in 2023.

Outreach

Educational Outreach:

Following limitations during COVID the Secondary Schools and other education outreach resumed in 2022. All the SATUs undertake this and the commitment to preventative work and education in relation to sexual violence is hoped to increase awareness and contribute to the reduction in harm associated with sexual violence.

For example, 2022 saw Cork SATU deliver an education programme to over 30 schools in Cork and surrounding areas. The programme includes education on busting myths, fears regarding sexual assault and rape, the law around sexual violence and laws pertaining to social media and how it applies to young men and women. It covers the topic of consent and how this applies to real life with anonymised case studies. The programme is targeted at educating young people about the many faces of sexual violence, how to recognise sexual violence and where and how to look for help. The aim is to empower as many young people as possible with this knowledge to protect them as they get ready to start their young adulthood journeys. The Cork programme was short listed at the Irish Healthcare Centre Awards 2022 in the Healthcare Initiative- Patient Education and Lifestyle Project of the year category.

Nessa Gill and Catherine Marsh from Mullingar SATU worked in collaboration with Laois Offaly CYPSE (Children and Young Peoples Services Committee) in the development and rollout of a multi-agency educational program to Secondary School Students. SATU, Rape Crisis, An Garda Síochána and Domestic Violence Services and Sexual Health along with TUSLA joined together to deliver a very well received program which will continue into 2023. Catherine Marsh also oversaw the delivery of the Secondary Schools Program to schools in the Midlands area.

Letterkenny SATU's 'Schools programme' for Transition Year Students was re-introduced to two post-primary schools in 2022.

The Rotunda SATU staff are delighted to be part of the Science Foundation Ireland funded programme 'Debunking the Myths', an award winning initiative which provides workshops for TY students and online tools to provide clear and reliable information about sexual health including SATU care. The feedback from this event has been very positive and has allowed the services to be highlighted to an age group that make up a significant proportion of SATU attendances annually.

A significant investment in time for educational outreach is planned by most units for 2023.

Training Outreach & Inreach:

SATUs around the country are also involved in many training initiatives with An Garda Síochána, a number of universities, as well as allied professional bodies including the National Drug Treatment Centre, AkiDwA victim support officer, Code Blue, a number of general emergency departments, GSOC, DPSU, the Irish Association of Emergency Medicine Conference, STI Foundation teaching, various RCCs and more besides.

For example in Letterkenny SATU collaborative (SATU, An Garda Síochána, Donegal RCC) Education workshops for Law and Humanities undergraduate students, Nursing and Health and Social Care Students were facilitated throughout the year.

SATU workshops were facilitated for Counsellors (Pastoral Centre), Triage nurses (NoWDOC), Domestic Violence Service (Sligo), Nurses/Doctors working in Gynae services (LUH), Divisional Protective Services Units (Galway, Mayo, Sligo/Leitrim, and Donegal), Counsellors and Nurses (Donegal Women's Centre), Psychological Support Workers (Donegal Rape Crisis Centre), Probationers (An Garda Síochána) and General Nursing students (ATU-Donegal).

Garda Workshops 'The Journey of the patient/injured party following a report of sexual assault' were facilitated for Regular Garda, Sergeants, Inspectors and Specialist Gardaí every quarter throughout 2022.

Donegal SATU facilitated placements for General, Intellectual Disabilities and Psychiatric pre-registration nurses (in collaboration with ATU Donegal) throughout the year. In adhering to the Quality Standards set out by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland for associated healthcare providers (AHCPs), the ATU Donegal conducted a National Quality Clinical Learning Environment Audit in 2022. The Donegal SATU was successful in meeting all the standards. Rotunda SATU accommodates nursing and midwifery students throughout the year. Given the prevalence of sexual violence, it is worthwhile to enhance exposure of a range of healthcare practitioners to the SATU services in order that they can signpost the service to their patients in other aspects of the clinical roles.

Cork SATU facilitated CPD training on managing disclosures of Sexual Violence to local and national units of An Garda Síochána and were involved in the development of policies, procedures and guidelines relating to disclosures in University College Cork, Munster Technological University Cork and Munster Technological University Kerry.

Outreach Clinics:

Donegal SATU provided monthly outreach clinics in Sligo and Donegal Town. This proved successful with 95% of patients returning for their first follow-up appointment.

In the Mullingar SATU, whilst the majority of patients did attend follow up appointments; for various reasons including economic, time, child care difficulties, as well as supporting those patients who experience Domestic Sexual and Gender Based Violence for whom accessing appointments is difficult as well as unsafe an Outreach Service is provided on a needs basis. This outreach service is available for patients who are availing of a Health Check or Follow Up SATU Care and is facilitated by a Forensic Clinical Examiner and Support Nurse. This service is offered within office hours only and differs from call out for a Forensic Clinical Examination based on Medical or Security need which is available 24/7.

Waterford SATU developed a referral pathway for those in direct provision in the south east requiring SATU services through and including NGOs (AkiDwa and Spirasi).

In December 2022, Cork SATU expanded their outreach services to include a clinic in Tralee, Co Kerry. This is the second outreach clinic established by the Cork team, enabling patients to access follow up care when travel might otherwise be an issue. This clinic, similar to the one in Bantry, is scheduled on a monthly basis to provide aftercare and infection management to those who have attended the Cork SATU initially to disclose a sexual assault. While the number of patients seen in the outreach services remain small, the value of such a service to those who do require it cannot be underestimated.

Festivals:

A number of SATU staff led out on pitches for including SATU staff at concert and festival events. Engagement with the public regarding sexual violence is increasingly recognised as an important factor in creating awareness, reducing incidents, facilitating disclosure and providing a swift care response for people following a disclosure of sexual violence.

A request was forthcoming from the organisers for SATUs presence at various events to support and advise festival goers, workers and event organisers. These included Longitude, Electric Picnic and Independence Festival, amongst others.

Staff attended equipped with information leaflets, educational materials and condoms. SATU provided the venue with early evidence kits and instruction on the use of these if necessary. We were available on the grounds meeting people ensuring SATU was visible to those needing any help or support with many also attending the SATU tent requesting advice on the service and safety measures to take while attending festivals. There was an overwhelming positive response from all organisations in having SATU on site creating awareness and highlighting the issue of sexual violence while providing the support necessary to manage disclosures in a proficient manner.

The level of professionalism and ability to integrate agencies for patient benefit was visible and the experience was above and beyond what we could have expected for in the short time frame spent there.



Following what we would consider a very successful venture SATU staff have been invited to present and offer education opportunities for event medicine / pre-hospital staff with the focus of highlighting the role and function of SATU and how to manage / approach a case presenting at a concert or event. We have been invited back to events organised for summer of 2023.



Research

A number of national and international research presentations as well as local and national media contributions were made by many members of the team.

Ms Mary Mahony (Galway SATU) undertook research through a systematic review meta-analysis in “Is sex education interventions among adolescents effective in increasing the knowledge of Sexually Transmitted infections (STIs)”. This is currently in the process of being published.

Congratulations to Margo Noonan and colleagues from the Cork SATU who won a prize at the NWIHP Quality and Safety meeting in October 2022 for their work entitled ‘Helping Adolescents to Navigate Sexual Violence with an Education Program challenging Rape Myths and Consent Misconceptions’ and to Catherine Marsh and Claire Mahon who presented work entitled ‘Reaching Out; Developing Outreach Clinics for an Irish SATUs Most Vulnerable Patients’ on behalf of the SATU services at the International Association of Forensic Nurses in Dallas, Texas.



As part-fulfilment of the MSc Nursing (Advanced Practice) Brídín Bell (CNS FCE) conducted research entitled ‘Reproductive Coercion within Intimate Partner Violence’. Brídín presented this research at the National SART Conference and the International Council of Nurses - Nurse Practitioner / Advanced Practice Nursing Network Conference.

In Waterford SATU the c/ANP is conducting a national research study on the development of advanced nursing practice roles within sexual assault treatment units in Ireland.

Dr Dan Kane is undertaking a higher degree as part of his higher specialist training in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, while continuing to work as a clinical tutor and forensic medical examiner at the Rotunda SATU. The primary focus of the research is on genital and non-genital injuries after sexual assault but a number of allied projects are also in progress.

ix. INNOVATIVE WORK

Many innovative initiatives have taken place across the 6 SATUs in 2022.

In 2022 a patient care fund was established in Cork SATU which welcomed donations from organisations and fund raising events with all proceeds used directly for patient requirements. It is managed on an individual needs basis and allows assistance in situations where patient’s struggles are impeding their ability to attend for medical care including travel, accommodation, clothing and psychological support

costs. This fund has made a big impact on the patients who have needed it most and other units are looking at ways of launching similar initiatives.

The Donegal SATU is leading out on a National Project in improving access to the Sexual Assault Treatment Units for members of the Deaf Community through the use of Irish Sign Language (ISL). The project is being implemented in collaboration with the Rape Crisis Centre, An Garda Síochána, CHIME, Justisigns2, the Centre for Deaf Studies, Trinity College Dublin and the Irish Deaf Society. This is a very exciting project that is anticipated to reach completion by the second quarter of 2023.

In addition, the Donegal SATU continues to offer cervical screening under the governance of Letterkenny University Hospital and the National Cervical Screening Programme (NCSP). 21 (31%) women 25-years-and-over who had previously not accessed the free national cervical screening programme, were delayed in accessing the programme or were unlikely to avail of the programme due to a history of sexual violence, were offered and underwent a cervical screen at their follow-up appointment. 7 (33%) women had abnormal results. 2 (29%) women were referred back for recall in one year and 5 (71%) women were referred on for colposcopic investigations.

Waterford SATU also offer a cervical screening service allowing victims of rape/sexual assault to have their cervical screening in an area that fosters trauma informed care. The c/ANP is currently undergoing training in the insertion of Intrauterine devices (Mirena and copper coils) this will offer alternatives for patients requiring emergency and long-term contraception.


SATU would like to be involved in providing 'catch-up' HPV vaccination, for eligible people who have not previously accessed this. Currently the SATUs are not part of the HSE structures that can provide this service, but it is a possible work stream for development in the future.

With the support of the HSE and SIVUH 2022 Cork CNS Sinead Maher commenced a certificate of continuous professional development in sexual health advising skills in Staffordshire University, we wish her every success in the completion of this program.

A number of other SATU nursing staff are currently completing nurse prescribing qualifications as well as other postgraduate educational endeavours. We commend them all for their commitment to ongoing professional development and wish them the very best with their studies.

SECTION 4

Exploring A Key Theme Emerging in 2022

The bottom half of the page features a decorative background consisting of several overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes. On the left, there is a large green shape. To its right, a lighter green shape overlaps it. At the bottom, a teal shape overlaps both the green shapes. The overall effect is a modern, layered design.

Adolescent Patients:

The SATU network provides care to anyone over the age of 14 who has been sexually assaulted. On occasion the SATU service may care for people under the age of 14, when paediatric services are unavailable and there is an acute forensic need for attendance and it is clear from the data presented in this annual report of key service activity, that adolescents are significantly represented in SATU attendances every year. Furthermore, between 2017 and 2022 we noted an increase of 37% (156 V 214 $p < 0.01$) in the number of adolescent attendances to the SATU network (figure 1).

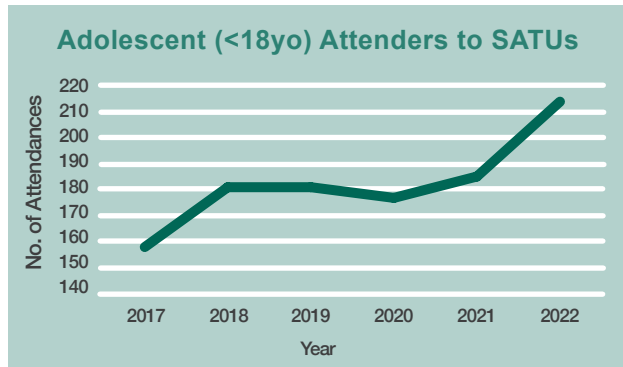


Figure 1.

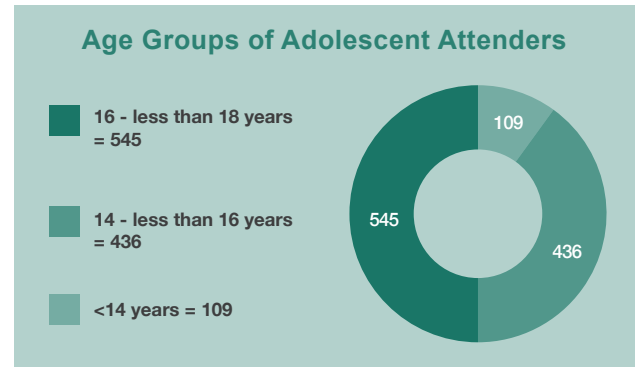


Figure 2.

Because of this, a piece of work was undertaken by Dr Dan Kane to evaluate attendances by female adolescents to the national sexual assault treatment unit (SATU) network and compare these attendances with adult women accessing the service.

This was a cross-sectional study analysing the attendances of all adolescent female attendances at the 6 SATUs in the Republic of Ireland and comparing them with all adult female attendances between 1/1/2017 and 31/12/2022.

There were 1014 female adolescent attendances and 3951 female adult attendances consecutively over the time frame studied. Adult attenders were more likely to attend within 7-days of the assault compared with adolescent attenders (80.3% V 70.2% OR1.513 CI 1.35-1.697 $p < 0.001$). When compared with adult attenders, adolescent attenders were significantly more likely to be assaulted outdoors (40.9% V 15.7% OR2.607 CI 2.346-2.898 $p < 0.01$), during the day (58.4% V 34.4% OR1.673 CI 1.565-1.790 $p < 0.01$), assaulted by a friend/family member (28.9% V 16% OR 1.812 CI1.603-2.049 $p < 0.01$) (Figure 3) and less likely to have consumed any alcohol prior to the assault (45.6% V 25.3% OR1.807 CI 1.653-1.975 $p < 0.001$). Physical injuries were less likely in adolescent attenders (30% V 35.5% OR0.845 CI .758-.942 $p = 0.02$).

The majority (72%) were referred to the SATU by An Garda Síochána, however, 10% self-referred. This number highlights the importance of outreach programmes that are run by individual SATUs in local schools & colleges, and indeed at festivals and concerts.

This study has identified that sexual assault experienced by female adolescents may have distinct differences when compared with adult sexual assault – in terms of location of the incident, relationship to perpetrator and prevalence of alcohol consumption. Knowledge of these factors support appropriate tailoring of treatment, prevention and awareness strategies to help modify the impact and reduce the incidence of SA in this vulnerable cohort.

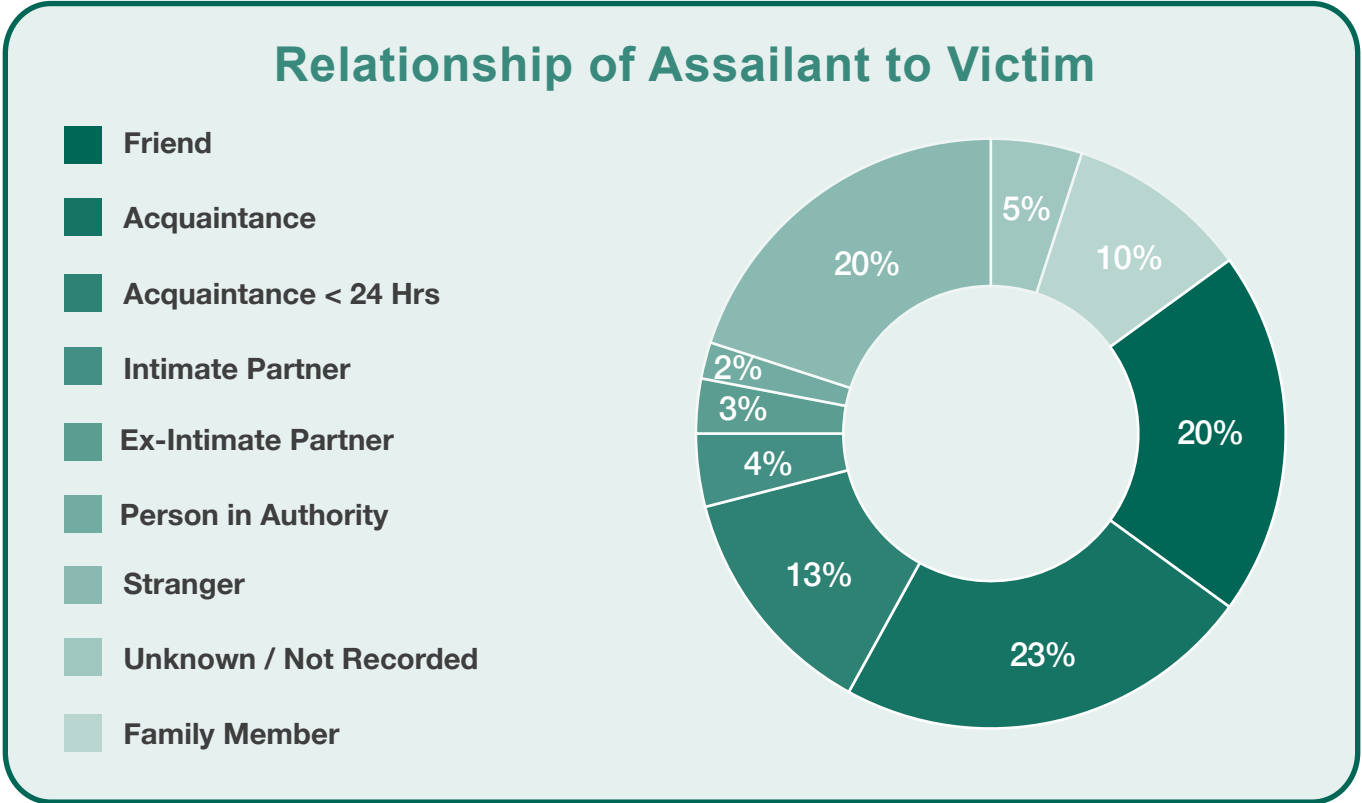


Figure 3.

