

Who do I contact to arrange a medical examination?

Please contact **The Family Centre**, based at St. Finbarr's Hospital in Cork.

Telephone Number: 021-4923302

Ms. Roisin Hudner, Clinical Nurse Manager 2 is available to offer advice about medical examinations of children and make the necessary arrangements. **Please leave a telephone message outside of working hours**, to ensure appropriate care and follow up for the child and family, on the next working day.

Other St. Finbarr's Hospital staff are unable to arrange medical examinations at the Family Centre.

When is the Family Centre open?

The Unit is open Monday to Thursday from 8.30am to 5.00pm and on Fridays from 8.30am to 4.30pm.

What next?

Family Centre staff will liaise with the Consultant Paediatrician about the appropriateness, urgency and timing of the medical examination, and will revert back to Gardaí with arrangements.

Your personal data will be processed in compliance with all relevant data protection legislation and the other legal requirements to which Tusla is obliged to adhere. Full details of Tusla's Privacy Policy (setting out how we will use your personal data as well as information regarding your rights as a data subject) are available in the About Us (data protection)

What do I do if the Family Centre is closed?

Outside of working hours, Gardaí need to contact the local GP/ Southdoc for treatment (i.e morning after pill/ antibiotics) and/or A&E Departments at Cork University Hospital or Mercy University Hospital if an injury is suspected and examination required.

How do I access the Medical Report?

The medico legal report can be requested for the purposes of the criminal investigation. Gardaí need to obtain signed parental consent for same. A written request for the report can be made to the Principal Social Worker in The Family Centre. When requesting a report please include the name of the person suspected of sexual abuse.

Children on a care order require consent from TUSLA, with the exception of Interim or Voluntary Care Orders where parental consent is still necessary

We will acknowledge all requests in writing.



*An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency*

**Family Centre,
Block 16,
St. Finbarr's Hospital,
Douglas Road,
Cork.
T12 XH60
Tel: 021 4923302**

Child Sexual Abuse Medical Examination

**Guide for Children
under 14 years
in Cork**

Who are we?

The Family Centre is the Child and Family Agency Child Sexual Abuse unit for counties Cork **and Kerry**. We provide medical examinations as part of our service. Our office is based in St. Finbarr's Hospital, Douglas Road, Cork City. Eircode T12 XH60.

Currently, three Consultant Paediatricians in Cork carry out these medical examinations during day time hours on a rota basis for the Family Centre.

There is no specialist service on-call out of hours or at weekends.

There are two types of Child Sexual Abuse medical examination – acute/urgent, and non-acute/non-urgent.

Crucial information is required to differentiate between them.

- The nature of the assault. (penetrative versus non penetrative)
- The time-frame involved-precise details of date and time of incident or incidents should be obtained if possible.

All Family Centre Medical examinations include a developmental history of the child, and a head to toe physical examination, including genitalia. This is carried out with the aid of magnification and enhanced lighting. The examination consists of a really good inspection of the area, while the child assumes certain positions. In almost all cases this is a non invasive examination. It is not the same as an adult examination. The child has a parent/guardian with them at all times. Parental /Guardian consent is obtained to carry out the examination, which is recorded on DVD without any identifying features (such as face) being shown. The recording is necessary to enable post examination review without re-examining the child.

Everything is explained in advance to the child/parent or guardian and the examination takes place at a pace led by the child. Our colleagues in Galway made a video to outline what happens in advance of attendance at any centre in the country. The name of the *You Tube* video is **CASATS pre-attendance video.** Viewing is highly recommended.

The Acute/Urgent Medical Examination

An acute/urgent medical examination also includes forensic sampling (i.e. semen samples, saliva samples) for DNA analysis.

For children who have entered puberty an acute/urgent forensic medical examination can take place up to a week after the last known incident. In pre-pubertal children an examination can yield forensic samples up to 72 hours later. Up to 48 hours is best.

Drainage onto clothing is the best source of DNA evidence. Gardaí can collect unwashed, recently worn clothing (including nappy if relevant), in advance of medical sampling.

Gardaí have early evidence kits, and are best placed to get mouth/saliva samples before the child drinks, in advance of medical sampling.

If forensic sampling is being carried out as part of the medical examination, the Family Centre requests Gardaí to bring a forensic examination kit which must be in date. Gardaí are present (behind a screen) to accept and label forensic samples to maintain the chain of evidence for processing by Forensic Science Ireland.

If the alleged sexual assault is **recent** (up to 48-72 hrs in a young child) or up to 7 days in a well developed child, who is under 14 years of age, and the time line dictates that the examination **could not** be facilitated during normal working hours in Cork, the Gardaí may wish to contact the Galway service.

The service in Galway offers out of hours for children under 14, this service is called CASATS (Child and Adolescent Sexual Assault Treatment Service).

Hence if an out of hour's examination is **urgent**, and or **forensics collection is required**, the Galway Service has 24hr cover. The number for this service is 087 6338118.

However, if the child is over 14, the **Cork based SATU** (Sexual Assault Treatment Unit) South Infirmary/Victoria Hospital, Old Blackrock Road, Cork, should be contacted, their number is 021 4926297/ 021 4926100.

Outside of the above scenarios, a child may be offered a non-acute/non urgent medical examination by appointment.

The Non Acute/Non Urgent Medical Examination

The non-acute/non urgent medical examination has no forensic element or Garda presence.

The vast majority of Child Sexual Abuse medical examinations are not suitable for forensic analysis as they are outside of the forensic time limits. However, **in every case it is important to consider the physical wellbeing of the child.**

If in doubt, please consult.