

SEXUAL ABUSE / SEXUAL VIOLENCE

As you are looking at this section, it is likely that you or someone close to you has had experience of sexual violence or sexual abuse, recently or in the past. This might be the first time you have looked into support options and you might be feeling anxious and overcome. Our role at the Beacon is to try to help you make some sense of what has happened to you and make sure that you get the right help as quickly as possible.

If your assault/rape has happened to you within the last 7 days, and you have not yet reported it to the police, we can support you to contact the Hertfordshire SARC, where you are able to access the help you need to preserve evidence, which will give you time to process what has happened to you and allow you to decide if you want to report your crime to the police.

You will also receive support and guidance from a trained nurse, who can advise you about your own sexual health and safety. You will then receive one to one help from an Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) who will be able to explain all your options to you and arrange counselling from trained counsellors.

You might have decided that you do not want to go to the police and you are outside the forensic window, in which case you will be able to work with a Vulnerable Victim Case Manager here at the Beacon who will be able to speak to you and help you to make sense of what has happened to you. Your case manager will be able to ensure you are feeling safe and supported; and should you decide at a later date, you would like to report your crime to police – even if it is an anonymous report, you will receive support for that also.

Whichever route you chose on your journey to recovery, Beacon will listen, believe and support you.

Additional support

Local

- <https://www.hertssarc.org/>
- <https://www.hertssunflower.org/im-being-abused-or-someone-i-know-is/rape-and-sexual-abuse.aspx>
- <https://hertsrapecrisis.org.uk/>

National

- <https://www.supportline.org.uk/problems/rape-and-sexual-assault/>
- <https://rapecrisis.org.uk/get-help/>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sexual-health/help-after-rape-and-sexual-assault/>