

## **Sexual Abuse Advocacy**

**(SAA)**

**2019 Annual Report**

## **SEXUAL ABUSE ADVOCACY PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

In January of 2018 NYC Health + Hospitals (H+H) Correctional Health Services (CHS) started the SAA Program by hiring two full-time sexual abuse advocates. The sexual abuse advocates are available every business day to offer continuous on-site advocacy within 48 hours of a reported event. The SAA program is geared to provide confidential and compassionate advocacy, crisis services and referrals services to victims of sexual abuse in New York City's correctional system. Rape crisis intervention and counseling services are offered and delivered to victims of sexual abuse. The SAA Program provides appropriate services, education, advocacy, and referrals for both inside and outside the correctional setting in an effort to bring awareness of sexual abuse and advocate for patients. The SAA Program has been highly effective in its service delivery offering high quality, respectful, and accessible advocacy to all patients who report sexual abuse as demonstrated by the metrics below.

CHS became a division of NYC H+H in August 2015. Since the transition from a for-profit vendor model of care delivery, CHS has leveraged the resources of the nation's largest public health care system and changed the culture of service delivery in the jails. The SAA Program has specifically benefitted from this transition as the emergency room forensic examinations and rape crisis intervention all occur within the NYC H+H system, which improves communication and coordination of care. Additionally, the vast number of community services within the NYC H+H network has expanded the services we are able to offer our patients in the SAA Program.

### **SAA PROGRAM METRICS**

#### **A. SCOPE OF SERVICES**

1. Provide sexual abuse advocacy services to all victims who report sexual abuse in the DOC system.
2. Reported victims are contacted and offered counseling services within 48 hours of the allegation being reported.
3. The SAA Assistant Director is responsible for oversight of the program, including regular review of reported cases, documentation, and all administrative functions, including coordinating staff schedules.
4. When the discharge date is known, victims are connected to care in the community at a location of their choice.
5. Each victim receives in a confidential envelope:
  - H+H resource guide
  - SAA Program flyer

- List of resources in the community for victims services in case the patient is discharged
- NY State Victim Services Rights pamphlet
- Contact information for the Sexual Abuse Advocacy Program (347)-774-7037
- All materials are given to victims who initially decline services with SAA

## **B. STAFF TRAINING & QUALIFICATIONS**

1. SAA staff attend a mandatory PREA (Prison Rape Elimination Act) training along with completing a refresher course every two years.
2. SAA staff read, and adhere to, the NYC Health + Hospital's confidentiality policies and procedures including but not limited to completing the mandatory trainings
  - HIV Core NYS 27F Training.
  - NYS Certified Advocacy Training (40 hours)

## **C. SAA PROGRAM PATIENT ACCESS**

1. All new reports of sexual abuse made by a patient while in the custody of DOC are reported to CHS Operations and logged into the Correctional Health Information Reporting Program (CHIRP). The SAA Program uses this information to reach out to every patient to offer services. Additionally, patients who request SAA services can do so to any CHS medical and mental health provider who will make a referral to SAA through the electronic health record and/or by notifying the SAA Program.
2. Victims with a history of sexual abuse can request services from the SAA Program with medical staff.
  - Patients who answered "Yes" to experiencing prior sex abuse history during initial medical assessment can be referred to the SAA Program.
  - All patients can request services from the SAA program due to sexual abuse in the community.

## **D. PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

1. All records pertaining to a patient's medical history and treatment in the SAA Program are private and may not be disclosed except as authorized by law and identified in CHS policy.

2. All discussions of a patient's case or examination by the SAA Program are held as private and as confidential as possible within the correctional health environment.
3. Only SAA staff with a legitimate job-related reason may access a patient's medical record.
4. DOC staff are not entitled to protected health information, even if they have clinical training.

#### **E. PATIENT EDUCATION**

All patients who have reported sexual abuse receive appropriate advocacy at each SAA visit. The response to advocacy, and the patients' understanding of the materials covered are documented in the patients' record.

1. Ensure that all patients receive a SAA Program confidential packet, even if the patient refuses services.
2. SAA Program posters are delivered to all Health Services Administrators for posting in clinical areas.

#### **F. NUMBER OF PATIENTS RECEIVING SERVICES**

1. From June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 – May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019, 506 of the 634 patients who reported sexual abuse in the jails had a corresponding SAA encounter.
2. During this same time period, 644 patients reported a history of sexual victimization during their CHS medical intake.

#### **G. FORENSIC EXAMINATIONS**

From June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 – May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019, 28 sexual abuse (SA) reports resulted in a referral to the hospital for forensic exams by a Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner (SAFE) and/or Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE).