



Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority

SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE (ADULT POPULATION) SPECIALTY PRACTICE FOR REGISTERED NURSES

This RN Specialty Practice is applicable to RN AAP's and NP's employed in designated Nursing Stations within the NITHA Jurisdiction.

October 24, 2023

SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE ADULT POPULATION RN SP

RN TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

OPTION 1:

NITHA Training: Sexual Assault response training will be provided to Registered Nurses who are working in Primary Care roles in NITHA communities. The training will focus on the sexual assault response for adults (16 years and older) only. The 3-day training will be facilitated by a trained Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Coordinator and a certified Mental Health Therapist. Training will encompass the holistic model of care that incorporates physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health. Training for Nurses is conducted in a psychologically safe environment with a Mental Health Therapist and a Traditional Elder available for counselling with participants if requested. Cultural competence is an additional requirement. This is a 22.5 hour in-session course with group discussions and a practical component.

OPTION 2:

SANE course is a Nationally accredited course for Registered Nurses who wish to provide comprehensive compassionate care to clients reporting sexual assault. It is an online course with 48 hours of theory that includes the adult and pediatric populations.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFIGANCE:

In response to reported cases of sexual assault and the lack in support services, the Provincial and Federal Governments are working to address this issue. The Status of Women office has developed a provincial initiative on training nurses/first responders with respect to sexual assault.

Trained staff are more effective in responding to the initial needs of victims. Survivors who receive safe and supportive responses to disclosures of sexual violence are more likely to reach out for help from medical and counselling services and/ or report to police. Having the option to provide this service to clients in their home communities will be conducive to client needs.

This RN Specialty Practice for Sexual Assault Response authorizes primary care nurses to provide the following services for clients 16 years of age and older:

- To respond effectively to disclosures of sexual assault and sexual abuse
- Provide emotional support and initial counselling
- Refer to mental health services and community resources
- Perform physical exam for clients who have been sexually assaulted
- Perform forensic examination steps, as outlined in the Sexual Assault Evidence Kit, for clients who have been sexually assaulted and consent to evidence collection.
- Documentation
- Consulting when necessary to a Physician or NITHA MHO for consideration of prophylactic medications for HIV
- Provide client with information on the option to report the sexual assault to the local RCMP.
- Assess for the need for emergency contraception or STBBI testing and/or prophylactic treatments
- Reporting all cases of sexual assault for clients 16 years and under to RCMP and Indian Child and Family Services (in reference to the legal age of consent in Canada).

Cross Reference to the following NITHA RN Specialty Practice Documents:

- NITHA Overarching Policy for Specialty Practice by Registered Nurses Employed by the NITHA Partnership (June 2023)
- NITHA RN Specialty Practice Short Term and Emergency Contraception (August 2023)
- NITHA RN Specialty Practice Sexual Health program for Sexually Transmitted Infections & Blood Borne Illnesses (April 2023)

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DIRECTIVE FOR CLIENT POPULATION

This RN Specialty Practice Clinical Protocol provides the authority and direction for trained RNs to respond to sexual assault cases for clients 16 years and older

This directive applies to the 13 Communities within the NITHA Partnership that have Primary Care Centres (Identified Nursing Station status) and Health Centres that have Nurse Practitioners employed.

This directive is consistent with the NITHA OVERARCHING POLICY FOR SPECIALTY PRACTICE BY REGISTERED NURSES EMPLOYED WITHIN THE NITHA PARTNERSHIP (June 2023)

Vital Information pertaining to RN AAP's and NP's who completed the Sexual Assault Response for Trained Registered Nurses

- **Priority of any urgent medical concerns shall take precedence**
- **This RN Specialty Practice applies to the adult populations only - 16 years of age and older**
- **All Pediatric cases, under 16 years of age, shall be referred to the pediatric Sexual Assault Response Team or appropriate medical authority**
- **Under this RN Specialty Practice, trained nurses are not obligated to perform medical or forensic examinations if not comfortable with any circumstances of the case.**
- **Client consent is required for each step of the Sexual Assault Evidence Kit collection**
- **Signed consent is required and should be accessible in client's medical file.**

RECOMMENDED STEPS FOR SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE CASES

- 1) **Provide initial nursing counselling and acknowledgement of traumatic event.**
- 2) **Contact local RCMP for Sexual Assault Evidence Kit (SAEK) if this is not in stock in your clinic.**
- 3) **Obtain informed consent for each step of the medical examination and SAEK. Client has right to refuse any part(s) of the SEAK Kit or medical examinations.**
- 4) **SAEK KIT (Steps 1-10) All instructions are provided with instruction sheets and on each envelope of the SAEK Kit**
- 5) **Obtain urine for SAEK and STBBI/ HCG testing**
- 6) **Bloodwork recommendations: HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and Syphilis testing**
- 7) **If applicable, emergency contraception options**
- 8) **Prophylactic treatment options for chlamydia, gonorrhea and bacterial vaginosis per RN Specialty Practice.**
- 9) **Consultation to MHO, if applicable, for the following considerations: HIV PEP Kit, HPV Vaccination, or PAP follow-up, Hep B vaccine, or Hep B immune globulin.**
- 10) **Referral to appropriate mental health services.**

- 11) Discuss the follow-up requirements with client (i.e., repeat blood work and treatment options).
- 12) Complete documentation for SAEK Kit and medical records per employer.

Sexual Assault Evidence Kit (SAEK)

The SAEK comes in a sealed box that contains envelopes, swabs and other containers used to collect evidence (See figure 1 and 2).

For forensic purposes, the SAEK should be completed at least 72 hours or sooner following the sexual assault case. However, if 72 hours has lapsed, it could still be completed up to 7 days (168 hours) past incident.

At the earliest conversation, advise client not to shower or douche prior to SAEK collections at the clinic. If possible, try not to urinate prior to the SAEK collections.

It is recommended not to change your clothing (including underwear), as this is considered forensic evidence. Advise client to bring a change of clothes prior to coming to the clinic facility. If not, each clinic may consider purchasing basic clothing supply for this purpose.

The SAEK collection, or any portion thereof, if voluntary. Informed consent must be obtained per Registered Nurse.

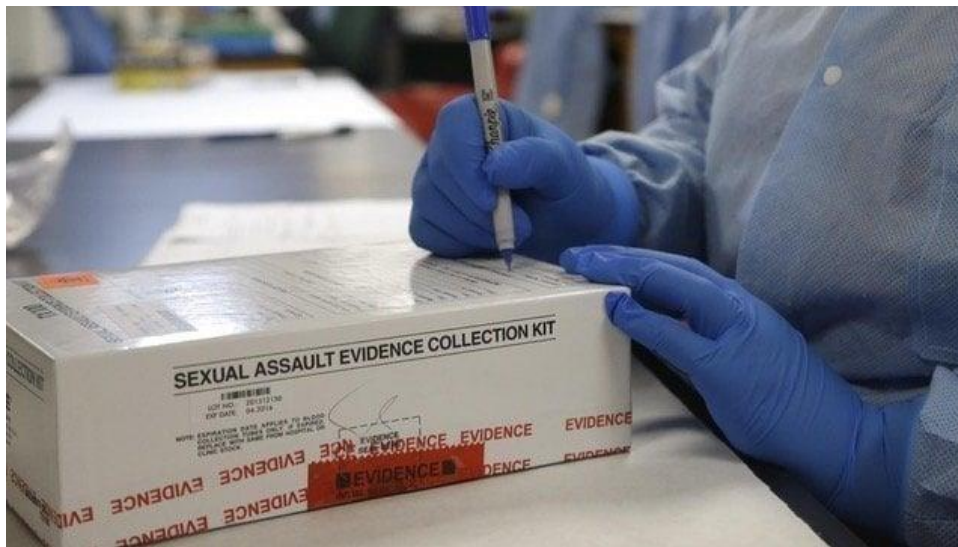


Figure 1: Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kit

SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE ADULT POPULATION RN SP

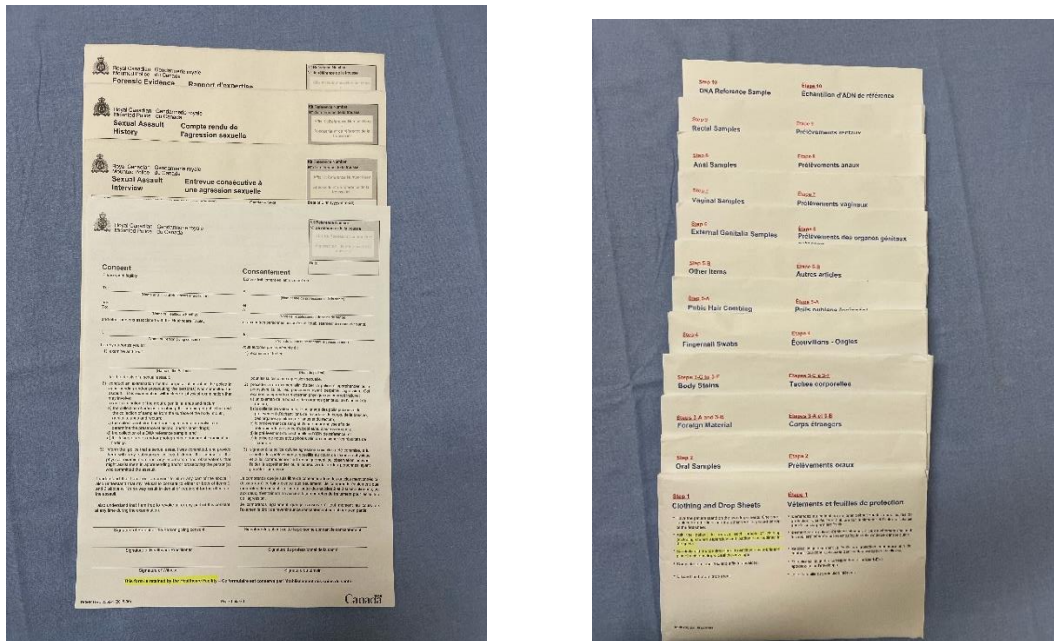


Figure 2: Sexual Assault Kit Envelopes

OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION:

- Trained RN AAP's and NP's can solely preform or opt to have 2 RN's complete or assist with the medical exam and the Sexual Assault Evidence Kit (SAEK)
- Current Canadian Law indicates that Police Officers do not need to be present with medical professionals to complete the SAEK.
- RCMP to be Informed soon after client arrival if proceeding with a SAEK.
- Contact the on-call physicians for your community if any consultation or clarification required.