

## A brief Summary of Project Goldcrest Pilot

Essex Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in partnership with Essex Police, Thurrock Social Care, and South East Rape Incest Crisis Centre (SERICC) are implementing a pilot project involving children and young people who are at risk of, or who are currently victims of child sexual exploitation (CSE).

This pilot is named Project Goldcrest and is offering a new and innovative approach to safeguarding victims of CSE.

This project is victim focused and designed for young people who feel unable or currently unwilling to engage with the police to support an investigation; for whom the existing approach is not meeting their needs.

It is proposed that the project will not replace existing child protection procedures but will offer an additional approach which will enable the young person to engage with services and receive support.

For this small but high-risk cohort of children who have been selected for the project, we are proposing to remove the emphasis of providing an evidential account and allowing them a choice about how forensic evidence is obtained which can be stored securely and anonymously until a point in the future where they feel able to disclose.

One aspect of this pilot will be to use new and innovative ways to collect forensic evidence. We will be trialling a 'SAFE KIT' (Self-Administered Forensic Evidence) which has been developed by a Forensic Scientist, and which allows the young person to self-swab outside the normal forensic environment (SARC).

These new approaches will allow the young person control and choice around evidence collection and intelligence gathering in a supportive environment.

### **Main Points**

The pilot will commence on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2019 and will be initially trialled in Thurrock.

The pilot is planned to run for 12 months

The target age range for this pilot is 13 years to 25 years.

Storage of evidence will be for a maximum of 25 years.

Our website has a dedicated Project Goldcrest page which has all the information about the project.

[www.oakwoodplace.org.uk](http://www.oakwoodplace.org.uk)

As FNE on call you could be asked by the PSS to talk to a young person or their carer, to answer questions or to give advice. I have started a list of possible queries

which may get directed into the PSS and suitable responses, these will be relevant to you as FNE on call.

**Q. A young person calls and states they have looked on the website and would like to be included in this project.**

A. As this project is currently a pilot for specific young people (most are in care) who have been identified by professionals as being at risk of sexual exploitation and is only being piloted in Thurrock we are unable to include other young people onto the project, however if they are identifying with this project it could mean they are experiencing abuse or exploitation, therefore we need to talk to them about other options available such as the Self-Referral process.

**Q. A young person/carer calls and states they have a SAFE box which they want to use but are unsure of the process.**

A. The young person/carer can be directed onto the website and told there are individual videos which explain how to take each sample. You can also talk them through how to take a sample.

We can always consider offering a young person the option of coming into SARC where we can help them through the process (similar to S/R option)

**Q. A young person/carer calls and states they are unsure how to complete the paperwork.**

A. The young person/carer can be directed onto the website and informed there are examples of completed paperwork for them to refer to. There will also be examples of completed paperwork included in their information pack given to them with the box. You can also talk them through how to take a sample.

**Q. A young/person carer calls to say they have used the SAFE Kit and completed the paperwork, what do they do now?**

A. Out of Hours - Inform them you will pass on their details for the SARC admin team to get in touch the next day to arrange a time and place for collection of the samples and paperwork.

In office hours – Find out what time is best for them for someone to pick up the samples within the next day or so. Tell them you will organise this and call/ text them back to confirm. Liaise with either Viv or Caroline Williams re who will be picking up the samples.

You need to advise them to place the samples in the plastic carrier bag provided and place into a freezer until they are collected.

**Q. I don't have a freezer/ or don't have room to store in a freezer?**

A. Advise to keep samples in a cool place and contact Viv Kemp Essex SARC manager or DI Williams Essex Police. We will then arrange collection asap.

**Q. I have used the SAFE box, or...something has happened, and I'm worried about getting pregnant/ having an STI...**

A. Discuss aftercare, and arrange any appointments needed depending on risk assessment over phone.

**Q. I have been given a box, I have read the paperwork and watched the videos, but I am not sure if I want to do this myself?**

A. Offer them to come into the SARC and either have the nurse take the samples as per self-referral process or be supported by the nurse to self-swab in the SARC..

### **Contacts**

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