



# SATU ANNUAL REPORT 2019

Dr Maeve Eogan and colleagues  
from all 6 SATUs  
June 2020



This summary was developed with on-site SATU clinical staff. Sincere thanks also to all forensic examiners who contribute to the on-call rota, and to all affiliated administrative and support staff.

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# Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	3-5
Opening Remarks	
Department of Health SATU Policy Review	
11th Annual Interagency Study Day	
Service Provision	
The SAFE Way	
Thank You	
<b>Key Service Activity in SATU 2019</b>	6-9
Attendance in each SATU 2019	
Time of Day incident occurred	
Details of Incident	
Gender, Age, Nationality, Referral Source	
Patients Reporting the Incident to An Garda Síochána / Interval from Incident till SATU	
Alcohol and Drug Use	
Pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) Prophylaxis	
STI Screening	
<b>Updates from Each SATU Service in Ireland</b>	10-18
Cork SATU	
Donegal SATU	
Dublin SATU	
Galway SATU	
Mullingar SATU	
Waterford SATU	
MidWest Forensic Medical Examination Service (Limerick)	
<b>A decade of highlights 2009-2018</b>	19-22
2009-2018 Timeline	
Key Stats of 2009-2018	

## Opening Remarks

The six Sexual Assault Treatment Units (SATUs) in Ireland provide clinical, forensic and supportive care for those who have experienced sexual violence. These units are located in Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Mullingar, Galway and Letterkenny and, in 2019, these units provided care for 943 people who disclosed rape or sexual assault. An additional 20 people were cared for in the out-of-hours service at University Hospital Limerick, which has a slightly different structure and funding stream.

For the fifth consecutive year, the numbers of patients attending SATUs has increased; albeit only by less than 1% in 2019. The counties most frequently represented in the figures are those in which there is a SATU, we need to ensure equitable awareness of and access to the service regardless of where or to whom a person reports an incident. While it is important not to over interpret small changes year on year, it is vital that we continue to collate these figures in order to identify trends and adapt our services appropriately to ensure that we remain responsive to peoples' needs.

## Department of Health SATU Policy Review

We were therefore delighted with the enhanced service profile that SATU received in 2019 – due to the launch, publication and implementation of the Department of Health SATU Policy Review. This review focussed on the unpredictable demand for this relatively low volume service and the review team (comprising policy-makers, front-line staff, and sectoral experts) consulted a large number of stakeholders to identify potential solutions to identified staffing & service gaps. It was a pleasure to be involved in such a solution focussed project – and it has already delivered a number of positives for the service:

- Accountability for implementation of the Policy Review has been identified in the HSE and is being driven by the directorate of the National Women and Infant's Health Programme (NWIHP)
- I have been appointed as National Clinical Lead for SATUs, and Medical Directors in the six units now have protected time to provide necessary expertise and clinical leadership in their SATU (with Dr Nicola Maher being appointed as my replacement in the Rotunda SATU)
- Nine additional Forensic Nurse Examiners (FNEs) have been in post since September 2019 and funding for a twice yearly FME education module has been provided. Thanks to Dr Andrea Holmes and colleagues in NUIG for their ongoing commitment to optimising training for medical staff.
- Small upgrades to the physical environment of SATUs have been made to improve patient experience.

## **11<sup>th</sup> Annual Interagency Study Day**

This year's interagency study day for those involved in SATU care provision took place at the Pillar Room of the Rotunda Hospital, and was combined with a celebration of 10 years of forensic nursing including acknowledgement of the new CNSs (SAFE) in the service. We were also delighted to welcome Minister Simon Harris to launch the study day and to address the audience on the outputs and implementation of the Policy Review. His personal and professional support for SATU is greatly appreciated. We also appreciated hearing updates on a range of other aspects of SATU work and are already working on the programme for the 2020 conference. As ever, this day afforded plenty of opportunities for interagency networking to drive quality patient care & service improvements – always a really valuable component of this annual date in our calendars and we are delighted that a ringfenced budget for this event is now included in the annual SATU budget.

## **Service Provision**

In terms of service provision we continue to offer three streams of care for survivors of sexual violence. These include forensic examination following reporting to An Garda Síochána, health assessment and care without reporting to An Garda Síochána and health care & forensic examination with safe storage of evidence providing the opportunity for subsequent reporting. Just over 100 people chose this storage of evidence option in 2019, and a number subsequently reported the incident to An Garda Síochána. We acknowledge the ongoing support from COSC and the Department of Justice in funding the freezers in which we securely store this evidence; it has been a very valuable initiative in terms of responding to patient choice, and providing an opportunity to increase reporting rates after an incident of sexual violence.

## **The SAFE Way**

We continue to produce 'The SAFE Way' – an e-newsletter for those involved in delivering the SATU service. This includes features on a variety of SATU developments and events, as well as relevant articles, links and reviews. It provides the SATU services and partner agencies with a forum for disseminating information and remaining updated.

## Thank You

Working in a SATU is never an 'easy option', and I thank each and every member of each SATU team. Their commitment to those who present for care, as well as to providing training to nurses/midwives and doctors who are upskilling in this sector is greatly appreciated. This report of key service activity is only possible because of the commitment to collation and inputting of relevant data into the database to ensure accurate presentation of service activities and key performance indicators. This year, the anonymised data on 87% of attendances were inputted within 10 days of the first visit, ensuring availability of accurate data promptly. Thanks again to Connie McGilloway, CNS in the Donegal SATU, who has supported the database project from its inception and continues to provide a clinical interface between the SATUs and the project team to ensure that IT problems & challenges are identified and resolved promptly. Also thanks to colleagues from the Rotunda research department who have provided additional support in collating & presenting this report.

I would also like to thank a number of key personnel within the Health Service Executive, including Killian McGrane, Grace Turner and Davinia O'Donnell (NWIHP) and Patrick Glackin (NMPDU), and Department of Health (Emily De Grae, Rhona Gaynor & Liam Hawkes). Their commitment to SATU services despite multiple demands on their time and resources is greatly appreciated. We also would be nowhere without our collaborators and colleagues in the hospitals and health care environments in which we are based. I acknowledge the support we receive from Masters, Clinical Directors, Directors of Midwifery/Nursing and hospital & network managers who advocate for us despite frequent, competing and important demands on their valuable resources.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge the men and women who attend SATUs around the country. Nobody ever 'wants' to attend a SATU and we never cease to be amazed by the strength that our service users display, despite significance of the events they have experienced. We really value the feedback that they provide; in order to critically appraise our service through the lens of a service user, and we look forward to streamlining that feedback mechanism in 2020. This underpins continuous quality improvement, and is really valuable in informing ongoing staffing and infrastructural developments.

Please contact me directly, or via [satu@rotunda.ie](mailto:satu@rotunda.ie), if you have any questions or comments on this Executive Summary of Key Service Activity.



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Key Service Activity in  
**Sexual Assault Treatment Unit**  
2019



## Attendance in each SATU 2019

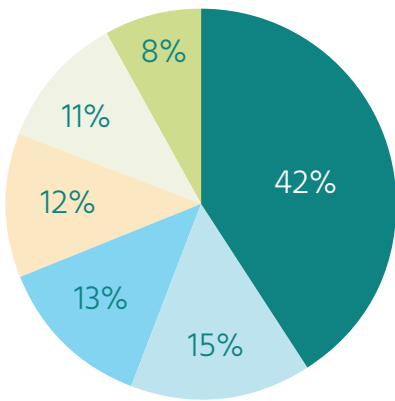
### SATU Locations 2019



There were **943 attendees** at the **6 SATUs** in the republic of Ireland in **2019**, an **increase of 2 attendees from 2018** (when **941 patients** attended)

- |   |              |   |                |
|---|--------------|---|----------------|
| 1 | Cork SATU    | 5 | Mullingar SATU |
| 2 | Donegal SATU | 6 | Waterford SATU |
| 3 | Dublin SATU  |   |                |
| 4 | Galway SATU  |   |                |

**823 (87%)** of incidents occurred in the Republic of Ireland with the **greatest number of incidents occurring in Dublin (23%)**



- 393 Rotunda Hospital Dublin
- 144 South Infirmar Victoria University Hospital Cork
- 122 Midlands Regional Hospital Mullingar
- 110 Donegal SATU
- 102 Galway SATU
- 72 University Hospital Waterford



**79%** of patients met with a **Psychological Support Worker** at the first SATU visit (n=920)

**92%** of patients were seen by a **Forensic Clinical Examiner** within 3 hours of a request for **Forensic Clinical Examination** (n=603)

## Time of Day incident occurred

July 2019						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

SUN **MON** TUE WED THUR FRI SAT

**Monday** was the busiest day of the week and **July** was the busiest month of the year



While the majority of patients were seen between 08 00hrs and 20 00hrs, **30% attended at night which underpins the importance for round the clock service.**



## Details of Incident



**734 (78%)** of patients reported sexual assaults **within 7 days** of the incident.



**89%** of assaults were by a **single assailant** with **10%** being by **multiple assailants**.



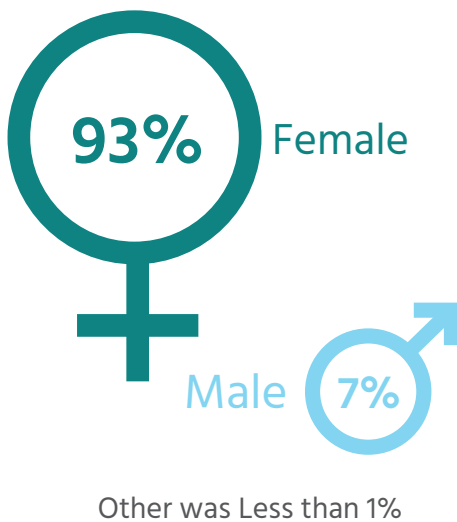
Out of the **943** reported incidents, **67%** occurred **indoors** with **21%** being in the **assailant's home** and **21%** being in the **patient's home**.

**675 (62%)** of **1084 perpetrators** were described as **'stranger'** or **'recent acquaintance'**, **177 (17%)** as **'friend'** or **'family member'** while **94 (9%)** were described as an **intimate (or ex-intimate) partner**.

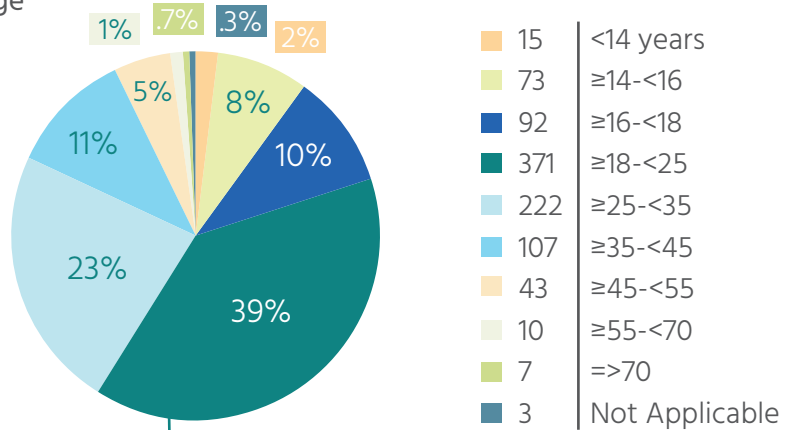
**130/943 (14%)** were unsure if a sexual assault had occurred.

## Gender, Age, Nationality, Referral Source

### Gender



### Age



The mean age was **26 years**

The age of people attending range from <14 years (15 people) to over 70 (7 people)

### Nationality



**36%** **337** Were Either School or College Students

**31%** **296** Were Employed

### Referral Source



**596 (63%)** cases were referred to the SATU by An Garda Síochána



**148 (16%)** were **self-referral**.

## Patients Reporting the Incident to An Garda Síochána / Interval from Incident till SATU



- **638 (68%)** patients reported the incident to **An Garda Síochána**.
- The majority reported to the SATU within 3 days of the incident'. **394 (53%)** of patients reported the incident **within 24 hours** and **196 (27%)** reported the assault **between 24-72 hours**.
- **101 patients** opted to securely store their forensic evidence in SATU to give them an option to report the incident and have this forensic evidence released.

## Alcohol and Drug Use



**422 (45%)** had consumed **more than 6 standard drinks**



**194 (21%)** had consumed **less than 6 standard drinks**

**242 (26%)** had consumed **no alcohol**, in the 24 hours prior to the incident.



When recorded, **684 (73%)** had not taken any drugs, **143 (15%)** had taken recreational drugs and **22 (2%)** had taken both recreational and prescription drugs, in the 24 hours prior to the incident.

**153 (16%)** were concerned that drugs (including alcohol) had been used to facilitate sexual assault.

## Pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) Prophylaxis



**709 (81%)** of female patients **received emergency contraception (EC)**. EC was not indicated in the remainder for a range of reasons including age, pre-existing effective contraceptive and patient preference.

All units offer Chlamydia prophylaxis, Hepatitis B vaccination and risk assessment for HIV postexposure prophylaxis (PEPSE) at time of SATU attendance. **64% received Chlamydia prophylaxis**, **61% commenced a Hepatitis B** immunisation programme and **10% started postexposure prophylaxis for HIV**.

## STI Screening



- **709 (75%)** either **had an STI screen** at their first attendance or were offered an appointment for STI follow up.
- **447 (63%)** of those given a follow up appointment attended for follow-up STI screening which means 262 did not return for their screen. It is important to highlight the importance of offering prophylaxis at the time of initial attendance to reduce the long term health effects of sexual violence.

# Updates from Each **Sexual Assault Treatment Unit** Service in Ireland

A stylized map of Ireland with a green-to-teal gradient background. Several white location pins are placed across the map to indicate the locations of Sexual Assault Treatment Units (SATUs). The pins are located in the north, west, south, and east of the island.

Cork SATU

Donegal SATU

Dublin SATU

Galway SATU

Mullingar SATU

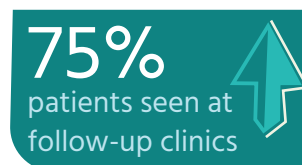
Waterford SATU

MidWest Forensic Medical  
Examination Service (Limerick)

### The Key Message

2019 brought physical changes within SATU Cork, the most remarkable being the establishment of a specific forensic room and complete redecorate and refurbishment. This means that at follow-up appointments, patients do not have to receive treatment in the same room they had an examination in at the time of their first attendance. Painting and new furniture helped to create a space that is comfortable, secure and discreet for our patients. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Department of Health along with the SIVUH Board of Management for acknowledging the value of this project, acknowledging the difference a physical environment can make for our patients and demonstrating their commitment to our patients with financial assistance to improve this environment.

We wish to thank and acknowledge all the hard work and effort by everyone involved with the provision of services at the Cork Sexual Assault Treatment Unit, including Dr. John Coulter, Medical Director, Nursing Management, Forensic Examiners, Assisting Nurses, clerical support, cleaners and the support workers from the Cork Sexual Violence Centre.



There were 144 new attendances at the Cork SATU in 2019, 13 (9%) men and 131 (91%) women. This is almost double the number of male patients that attended the unit in 2018. Additionally, 233 patients were seen for follow-up clinics, which is an increase of 75% from 2017. This increase can be partly attributed to a follow-up reminder text that we now send patients (with written consent) prior to their follow up appointments. Furthermore, 167 referrals were made by SATU staff to other services at the time of patient's first presentation to SATU; this figure does not capture the number of referrals that were made at follow up appointments. It highlights the holistic approach taken by SATU staff where we provide so much more than just forensic care to all patient's that attend our service.

Along with the clinical care of patients, SATU staff are involved in providing education and training to schools, universities and other institutions with a large annual increase in the number of schools requesting this education. Ms. Margo Noonan has developed a comprehensive schools programme which includes education on busting myths, fears regarding sexual assault and rape, the law around sexual violence including the laws pertaining to social media and how it applies to young men/women. It covers the topic of consent and how it applies to real life with anonymised case studies. Margo has worked tirelessly during 2019 providing this education to 13 secondary schools and approximately 1600 students.

2019 brought many changes to the Cork SATU with the most notable, regrettably, being the loss of our much loved, long standing Forensic Medical Examiner, Dr. David Murphy. Dr. Murphy joined the SATU forensic medical examiner on call rota in October 2001. He provided victims of sexual violence with compassionate, holistic, non-judgemental and focused care. Dr. Murphy had a passion for working with victims of sexual violence and continued to work in SATU until November 2019 when illness made this no longer possible for him. He continued to fight with immense dignity and never saw his time away from SATU as anything other than a 'short break'. Unfortunately this was not to be the case and Dr. David Murphy passed away peacefully on January 15th 2020. His loss is greatly felt and he will be fondly remembered by all who knew him in SATU. May he rest in peace.

October 2019 welcomed our newly qualified Clinical Nurse Specialist, Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners Louise Tiernan and Sinead Maher to the unit on a full time basis. We congratulate them in completing what can only be described as a very challenging year while undertaking the Postgraduate Diploma in Nursing (Sexual Assault Forensic Examination). September 2019 saw Margo Noonan commence on a 2 year pathway as a candidate Advanced Nurse Practitioner in Sexual Assault Forensic Examination. We thank all SATU staff for their involvement in facilitating training opportunities in a supportive manner throughout 2019, it is greatly appreciated and we look forward to the contribution our new colleagues will make to the SATU services in the future.

## Donegal

### Key Message

Multi-agency collaboration, extensive education programmes and flexibility in clinical hours were pivotal in the provision of person centred services in the Donegal SATU.

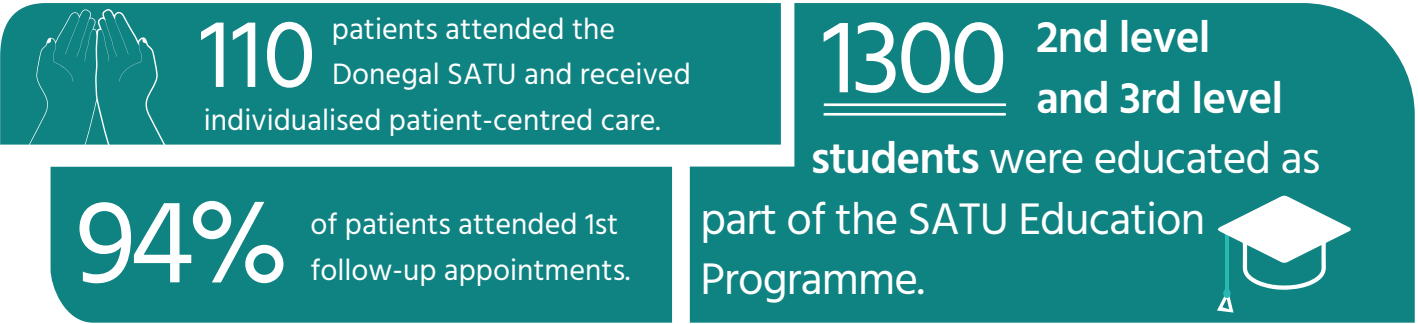
### Introduction

**Collaboration:** The Donegal SATU collaborated with 21 multi-agencies/services within the Donegal/Sligo/Leitrim area of which 17 agencies requested and received additional SATU related training in 2019.

**National Input:** The Donegal SATU CNS FCEs were representative on several national projects. E.g. National SATU Review (Challenge Panel), National SATU Implementation Group and the National Review of the SAFE Training Programme. One of the CNS FCEs continues to provide support for all SATUs in the National SATU Database.

**Continuous Professional Development:** mandatory training, clinical supervision, peer review and additional relevant workshops and training were attended during the year. One CNS FCE became a Fellow of the Faculty of Nursing in the RCSI.

## Key Stats



## 2019 Review

110 patients attended the Donegal SATU in 2019, an increase of 31% compared to 2018. Although there has been a year on year increase in patient attendances, there has been no additional staffing or on-call Forensic Examiner support since 2016. Notwithstanding these staffing challenges, both CNS FCEs have facilitated extensive education programmes that anecdotally have led to a marked increase in the referrals from multi-agencies. In 2019, because of increased collaboration, the development of referral pathways and the provision of education and awareness raising programmes, 57% of all patient attendances either were self-referrals or referred from agencies other than An Garda Síochána. In addition, of the 110 patient attendances, 65% of patients reported the incident to An Garda Síochána. This indicates that 22% of patients, who had not previously reported the incident, went on to report to An Garda Síochána following the care and support they received from the Donegal SATU. 88 patients were given a follow-up appointment and of these; 94% attended for follow-up care. Based on patient feedback this high attendance rate for follow-up care may be attributed to flexibility offered regarding follow-up appointment times and the provision of satellite clinics. One of the positive progressions in 2019 was the approval and development of a much needed and sought after purpose-built SATU Facility; providing a safe environment that will address patient expectations such as safety, privacy, dignity and anonymity. It is anticipated that the new SATU will be operational in the spring of 2020.

## Dublin (Rotunda)

### Key Message

We continue to strive to improve service and patient care and have introduced new patient feedback systems to aid with this. In addition we have had much needed facelifts to our department. We hope these measures ultimately lead to an easier experience for patients at a difficult point in their journey.

## Introduction

2019 has been a busy and successful year at the Rotunda unit. Enhanced staffing with newly trained forensic nurse specialists provided much needed increased core support to our unit. This meant that despite being our busiest year to date we were able to provide cover 97% of the time without diverting to other units.



## Key Stats



**393**

**Patients**

8% of patients identified as male



**68%** of patients (266)

reported to An Garda Síochána

**166 patients reported to An**

Garda Síochána **within 24 hours**



2019 Was Our Busiest Year to Date with a **23% increase in attendances** compared with 2018

**24%** concerned regarding DFSA

**11%** of patients availed of option 3 for storage of evidence.



32% of patients attended either school or third level education.

**80%** of patients were under the age of 35

### 2019 Review

393 patients attended the Rotunda SATU in 2019. This was a 23% increase on the numbers attending in 2018. 68% of these referrals came from An Garda Síochána however there was an increase in number of patients (41) who availed of forensic examination with storage of evidence (option 3). Of these to date 11 patients (22%) have proceeded to make complaints to the Gardai, highlighting the need to provide this service.

50% of patients who attended were 25 years or younger, with 7% aged 14-16, and a further 7% aged 16-18 years. Additionally an increase in attendance amongst male patients was seen 8% versus 4% in 2018. Concern regarding drug facilitated sexual assault (DFSA) was also noted to be increased year on year. In 2017 and 2018, 9% and 13% respectively reported concern re DFSA. This number increased to 20% in 2019 with a further 13% of patients attending reporting they were unsure re DFSA.

This year we have been fortunate to welcome Naomi Finnegan & Kate O'Halloran as forensic nurse examiners and they will soon be joined by Christine Pucillo. The increase in numbers of forensic nurses and the significant support provided by forensic medical examiners, including Obstetric and Gynaecology trainees, and doctors in general practice and other specialties, has eased the significant staffing challenges of recent years and has meant that our service was not required to divert to the same extent as previous years and 97% of the time referrals to the unit were seen in the Rotunda. In addition 91% of referrals were seen within 3 hours.

The team has continued to provide education and training in many areas. This included the well-established Transition Year programme, run by Deirdra Richardson visited 10 schools in the area. In addition Deirdra provided a session to the Mini-Med students who attend the Rotunda for observership during TY year. Key allied services were also provided with updates and education sessions included ED departments in Tallaght and Naas, primary care services for the Traveller community, the RCC and An Garda Síochána. Discussions were held with staff at the American Embassy, improving pathways for patients who have experienced sexual assaults as tourists. Of note just under 10% of referrals involved incidents which happened outside of Ireland.

## Key Message

2019 was our busiest, yet most supported, year to date.



102

**Patients**

attended for  
acute care



**4 new**

Clinical Nurse Specialists

**22 doctors** attended SATU/NUIG Introduction to  
Sexual Assault Forensic Examination course

2019 was Galway SATU's busiest year to date with 102 acute patient attendances. During the year, two developments contributed significantly to our aim to provide each of these patients with sensitive, professional care. The first was the qualification of our four excellent new clinical nurse specialists (CNS), Ms Mary Mahony, Ms Cathy Bergin, Ms Susan Hogan and Ms Caitriona Shortt who, following several years without a CNS at Galway SATU, have transformed the provision of service, interagency working, education and advocacy. As Galway SATU continues to engage closely with its interagency partners such as Gardai and Rape Crisis Centres in multidisciplinary meetings, there is now more capacity for education and awareness programmes on SATU services to occur. The CNSs provided training to Domestic Abuse Services, Paramedics, Emergency Department staff, Rape Crisis Centres and local third level institutions.

The second factor supporting us to support patients was the commencement of the implementation of the recommendations of the 2019 Department of Health National SATU Review; bringing welcome clarification on governance, workforce planning, education and essential funding throughout the SATU network. Galway staff contributed to the Review and continue to contribute to the Implementation Group. Arising from the Review, staff from Galway SATU in conjunction with NUI Galway School of Medicine and the Irish Centre for Applied Patient Safety and Simulation, developed and delivered two runs of an introductory Sexual Assault Forensic Examination course for doctors. Overall, twenty-two doctors attended the courses and we hope they will go on to act as Forensic Medical Examiners in their local SATUs.

2019 also brought opportunities for the nurse and physician examiners to spread their wings beyond Galway. The CNSs visited the Rowan Centre in Northern Ireland and attended the Haven's Conference in the UK, Dr Andrea Holmes was invited to present on Sexual Assault in Travellers at the International Society of Travel Medicine Conference in Washington D.C. and Dr Roger Derham visited the Thuthuzela Care Centre in Karl Bremmer Hospital in Capetown, South Africa; one of 51 sexual assault units established in South Africa since 2006.



## Key Message

The resilience shown by all the team in Mullingar SATU in the face of challenges has cemented the commitment of all staff to our patients and has ensured the growth and development of our service which we are building on in 2020.

## Introduction

The Sexual Assault Treatment Unit in the Regional Hospital Mullingar delivered care to 122 patients in 2019. The previous year had seen exceptionally high numbers due to referrals mainly from Dublin. Patient referrals were received from 16 counties with the majority of our patients coming from Westmeath (27). Ten cases were seen from Dublin which reflects the bidirectional referral pathway between the units in the Rotunda and Mullingar and the ease of access to both units. The large number of counties is reflective of the geographical position of SATU Mullingar which results in the ease of access to our unit.

## Key Stats



## 2019 Review

In 2019 SATU Mullingar availed of more frequent support from the Rotunda Hospital. We would like to sincerely thank the Rotunda Hospital for working together during this time. In addition to this we are extremely grateful to Forensic Nurse Examiner Sarah O Connor for joining us as an examiner and the knowledge and experience she has brought to SATU Mullingar has been most welcome.

Patient referrals were received from 16 counties with the majority of our patients coming from Westmeath (27). Ten cases were seen from Dublin which Patient referral numbers reflect the bidirectional referral pathway between the units in the Rotunda and Mullingar and the ease of access to both units. The large number of counties is reflective of the geographical position of SATU Mullingar which results in the ease of access to our unit.

Deborah Marshall resigned effective February 2019. Deborah was the first Registered Advanced Nurse Practitioner in Sexual Assault Forensic Examination and Sexual Health in Ireland and was a pioneer in our service. We wish her well.

Despite the difficulties the on-going commitment to service development and delivery of educational programs continued with a successful school and college program being delivered as well as delivery to other professions and outside agencies.

Representation on Regional and National Committees continued and Nessa Gill continued to represent SATU on the Midlands Needs Assessment Program a TUSLA funded review of sexual domestic and gender based violence. Attendance at local and national peers review by forensic clinical examiners continued throughout 2019.

Catherine Marsh completed her training and joined SATU Mullingar in September as our newest Clinical Nurse Specialist Sexual Assault Forensic Examination. We are delighted to welcome Catherine to our unit and we wish her well on the beginning of her journey as a forensic clinical examiner. The appointment of Catherine in September 2019 has supported and provided a fully covered on call SATU Rota. Coupled with this there is significant commitment from Forensic Medical Examiners Barbara Hynes and Charlotte Coyle, Medical Director along with our six Support Nurses and Clerical Staff has ensured that SATU Mullingar has thrived and flourished during 2019.

In November funding was received from the Department of Health for the refurbishment of patient areas in the Sexual Assault Treatment Unit. This refurbishment was carried out with the aim of minimizing patient distress and providing a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere. Feedback from patients and staff has been overwhelmingly positive.

We would like to thank the team in SATU Mullingar whose care and commitment to our patients and to each other ensures that an excellent service continues to grow despite the challenges faced.

## Waterford

### Key Message

2019 welcomed the approval for a much needed renovation and upgrade of the Current Satu at UHW. Works are due to commence and be completed in 2020.

2019 saw the appointment of a newly qualified Clinical Nurse Specialist in Sexual assault forensic examination. We are delighted to welcome Ann Folan to our team.

### Introduction

Servicing the south east region: The Satu at UHW continues to serve clients and engage with all relevant multi agencies in the south east region namely Waterford, Wexford, Carlow, Kilkenny

### Key Stats



**72**  
**Patients**  
attended and  
accessed treatment

**72%** of patients attended 1st follow-up appointments, an increase on previous years this can be attributed to the flexibility of appointment scheduling with an additional CNS in post.

The appointment of an infectious disease consultant at UHW has been well received and has had a positive impact on the patient experience as they can now access follow up locally when commenced on PEPSE and are no longer required to attend Dublin

## 2019 Review

There were 72 attendances at the SATU at University Hospital Waterford.

July and December were the busiest months with 9 presenting cases each (12.5% each)

Sunday was the busiest day with 12 (17%) of patients presenting on that day.

50 (70%) of patients attended SATU in daytime hours of 09.00-20.59, 22 (30%) of patients attended during night time hours of 21.00-08.59.

62 (86%) reported the incident to An Garda Síochána. Of which 51 (82%) were seen within 72 hours. Storage of evidence (Option3) 5 (7%) of patients opted to have forensic evidence stored without immediate reporting to An Garda Síochána.

The training of an additional CNS was completed in 2019 and saw the allocation of a second CNS at UHW.

Two GP forensic examiners have retired from the SATU roster and one new GP is currently in training and hoping to join the on call roster in 2020.

The SATU Advisory group consisting of the following; Rape Crisis Centre Manager, Garda Liaison Officer, Clinical Nurse Specialist (SATU), Clinical Nurse Manager II (SATU), DOM (Maternity and Paediatric services) and a GP representative met three times throughout the year. Minutes of all the meetings and attendance were compiled.

The introduction of opportunistic smear taking commenced in 2019 at SATU UHW allowing one trained CNS to carry out smear sampling on patients due to have a smear or those who are entitled to and have not yet had one.

Training and education sessions were provided for all regional Caredoc staff.

Regional LBGTI awareness training was attended by both Clinical nurse specialists.

All mandatory training and clinical safety updates attended by CNS/CNM II.

CNS attended quarterly peer review meetings/CNS attended Satu national study day.


## Mid West Forensic Medical Examination Service (Limerick)

### Introduction

The Mid West Forensic Medical Examination Service (FME) was established in 2006 and provides a comprehensive Forensic Medical Examination Service. This service is open to both male and female aged 14 years and upward who have experienced rape or sexual assault and area referred by An Garda Síochána. This is an Out of Hours Service Monday to Friday 6pm to 8am and 24 hours over weekends and Public Holidays, with on call commitment being provided by six Forensic Clinical Examiners (General Practitioners) through Shannondoc.

The service is delivered from a clinical room at University Hospital Limerick and provided care for 20 people in 2019 (4 men and 16 women) a decrease from 36 in 2018, with an age range of 14 to 42.

Limerick Rape Crisis Network volunteers are specifically trained to attend at forensic medical examinations with victims and their family/friend and attended approximately 75% of these examinations in 2019.



# 2009-2018

A decade of highlights



**2009** Two new SATUs opened in 2009, in Mullingar (February 2009) and Galway (August 2009). These new units meant that there was a more equitable geographical availability of services, improving accessibility for patients throughout the Irish Republic. The service extended its reach, not just to those who wished to report sexual violence to An Garda Síochána, but also to those who wished to attend for care, support and preventative treatment.

8 nurses/midwives completed a higher diploma in Sexual Assault Forensic Examination and graduated from the RCSI in March 2009. Following accreditation by the National Council for the Professional Development of Nursing and Midwifery (NCPDM) were appointed as Clinical Nurse/Midwife Specialists (CN/MSs) in Sexual Assault Forensic Examination. This was a huge milestone for the SATUs and enabled the sustained development of SATU service provision. The first SATU study day, entitled, 'Current Issues in Management of Rape and Sexual Assault' took place; this has become an annual event and a highlight in our team's calendar each year.

A preliminary version of the SATU database was rolled out nationally in January 2010, with 2009 data being inputted retrospectively. It was a password protected database that was designed to prospectively record key data on each case seen at the SATU. Each record was identifiable in the database by chart number only, ensuring the anonymity of all patients. This commitment to data collection has assisted greatly in the writing of reports, papers and presentations throughout the last 10 years. The database also identified emerging trends and possible targets for intervention strategies.

**2010** The development and implementation of the SATU database enabled presentation of an Annual Report including data from each of the 6 SATUs in April 2010. This document was launched by the Minister for Health and Children. Letterkenny was chosen by the Minister to launch the 2009, first National SATU Report. Much media surrounded this event, with Newspaper and TV interviews given.

National Guidelines were revised and the Second Edition of the 'National Guidelines on Referral and Forensic Clinical Examination in Ireland' was launched.

5 nurses/midwives commenced the 2nd Programme for Higher Diploma in Nursing (Sexual Assault Forensic Examination)

**2011** In line with the National Rape and Sexual Assault Guidelines 2010, routine Hepatitis B vaccination for all SATU attendees was implemented in the final quarter of 2011 in addition chlamydia prophylaxis and to STI screening already in place. Increased provision and uptake of prophylactic treatment and immunisation, led to a reduction in the number of positive results at follow up STI screening.

The Royal College of Physicians in Ireland established a Sexual Health Policy Group, which worked on position statements in various aspects of sexual health. Members of the SATU team were involved with the prevention subcommittee.

**2012** We noted a small reduction in numbers of patients seen in the SATUs in 2012, compared with two previous years. Optimistically we hoped that this was due to a reduction in overall rates of sexual crime, but we continued to be concerned that those who needed SATU services were unaware how to access care. Education was embedded as a vital component of the work of all the SATUs with many units running 2nd and 3rd level educational outreach.

**2013** The Galway report this year included the 2012 report from the co-located Child and Adolescent Sexual Assault Treatment Service (CASATS). These two services operate out of the same facility with some of the same staff and provide a coordinated and integrated forensic medical service to those who need it. We welcomed the focussed commitment of the HSE to improving facilities for children under the age of 14 who require SATU services in other parts of the country.

In 2013 many of us visited the then recently opened Rowan facility in Northern Ireland, this is a purpose built unit which provides care for both adults and children after sexual crime. This model of care is what

we continue to strive towards for all SATUs; as well as providing appropriate patient focussed care, there are many staff, funding, educational and infrastructural efficiencies with a co-located service.

**2014** The multiagency National Guidelines Development Group collaborated to review and update the guidelines for care leading to the launch of the 3rd Edition of the 'National Guidelines on Referral and Forensic Clinical Examination in Ireland'.

A suite of key performance indicators (KPIs) were developed within the interagency SATU context. We continued to engage with a range of personnel and agencies to progress data collection platforms to ensure accuracy and allow appropriate and secure sharing between units and selected agencies. As well recording relevant metrics to guide service provision, there was a strong motivation to ensure that data collection platforms would facilitate future high quality Irish research in this area.

**2015** 6 nurses/midwives commenced the 3rd Programme for Higher Diploma in Nursing (Sexual Assault Forensic Examination), with 5 graduating the following year.

Funding was finally received through COSC and the Department of Justice to implement secure storage of forensic evidence which ultimately commenced in 2016. This enabled us to store forensic samples for a defined period for people who are uncertain as to whether or not they wish to report an incident to An Garda Síochána. The patient can then evaluate their options in terms of engaging with the criminal justice system, and as the evidence is being securely stored the chain of evidence is being appropriately maintained.

**2016** In 2016, we undertook a large project, in conjunction with the HSE Office of the Chief Information Officer, to develop & launch a secure, web-based database and reporting system for all 6 SATUs. This also collated key performance indicators (KPIs) which drives quality care and performance. This project went live in January 2017, and the 2016 activity report document was the last in the old format, a more comprehensive national overview of activity followed from 2017 onwards.

**2017** 2017 was the first full year following launch of the option of secure storage of forensic evidence for people who are uncertain as to whether or not they wish to report an incident to An Garda Síochána. 79 patients chose this option in 2017, some of whom went on to report the incident to An Garda Síochána. This highlighted the importance of offering this option to increase reporting of sexual crime.

The first Registered Advanced Nurse Practitioner (RANP) (Sexual Assault Forensic Examination (and Sexual Health) was accredited with the NMBI.

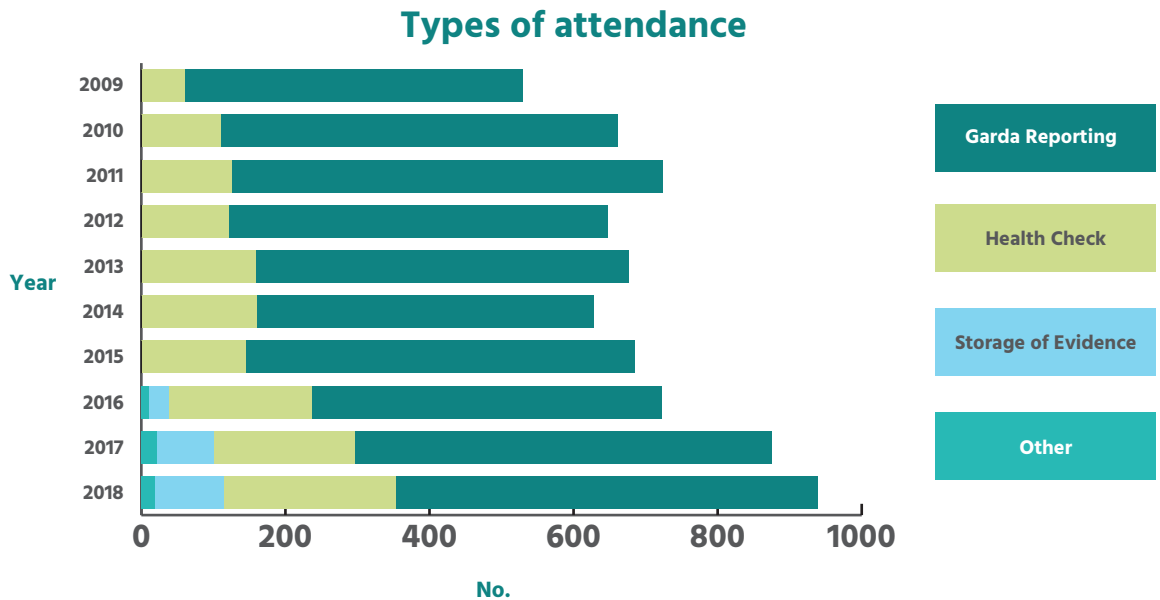
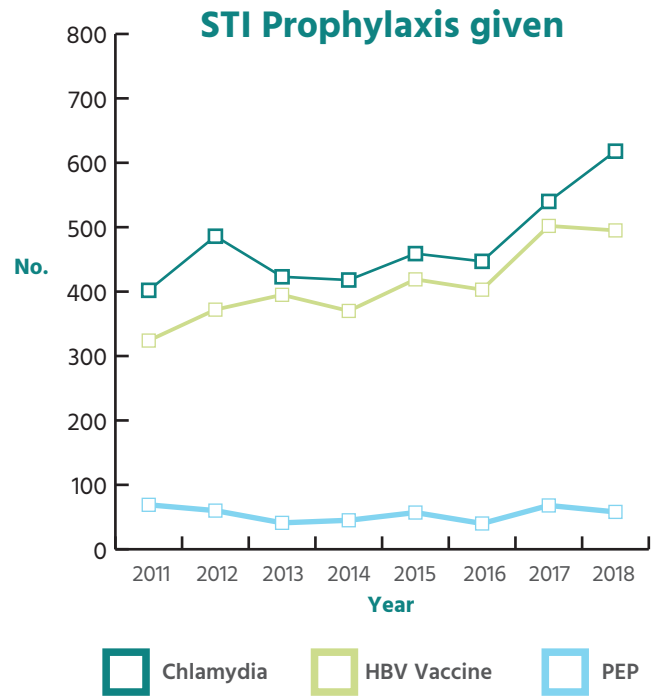
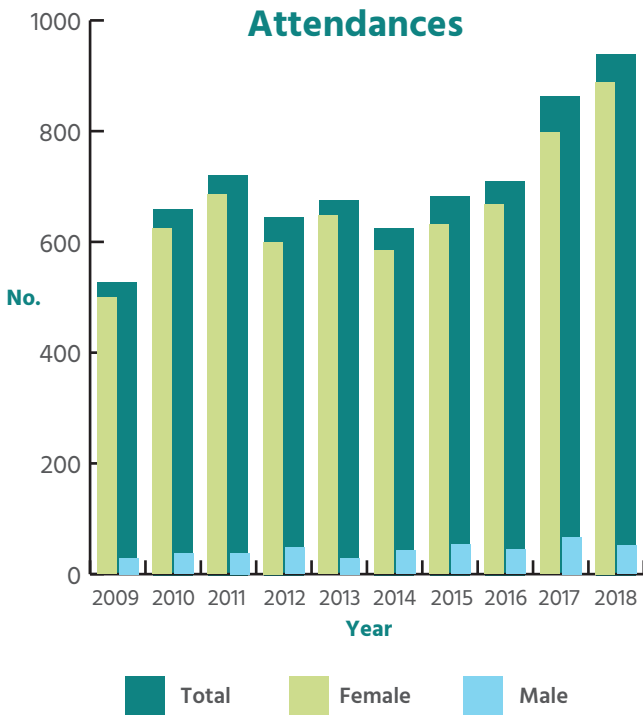
**2018** Again the interagency guidelines were reviewed and updated, and the 4th Edition was launched with a new title, the guidelines of the Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) – to reflect the collaborative nature of care provision.

The commitment of the Department of Health and Minister, Simon Harris to undertake a short review of SATU services was welcomed. This commenced in autumn 2018 and focussed on solutions to drive a sustainable and consistent SATU service. A large number of stakeholders were consulted to identify solutions to identified staffing & service gaps. It was a pleasure to be involved in such a solution focussed project, the outputs of which were launched in early 2019 with a committed, multiagency implementation team and budget to optimise and enhance the service setting, patient experience, accountability and quality assurance.

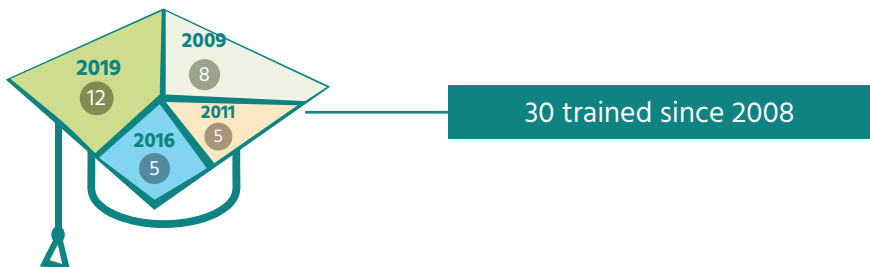
The Post Graduate Diploma in Nursing (Sexual Assault Forensic Examination) was revised and re-accredited at QQI Level 9, thirteen nurses/midwives commenced training, with twelve of them going on to graduate and take up positions in SATUs in 2019.

# Key Stats of 2009-2018

Over 8000 People Accessed SATU Care in the decade between 2009 - 2018



Completed postgraduate diploma in nursing (Sexual Assault Forensic Examination) and commenced Clinical Nurse/Midwife Specialist Role





Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
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Version 1.0 24/06/2020