

# RCNI Best Practice Standard

## Therapeutic Referral Standard

*While every care is taken to ensure that this standard accurately reflects current legal obligations, please note that it does not and cannot guarantee to any Centre, and/or any Centre staff member or volunteer, immunity from suit and/or legal liability in civil courts, criminal courts or other tribunal.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

RCC services are offered from an empowerment, survivor-centred and trauma-based approach. There are times when, in order to facilitate this approach, our Centre will need to refer a survivor or supporter to another counsellor, psychotherapist, psychologist or psychiatrist. There are also times when a counsellor, psychotherapist, psychologist or psychiatrist will refer a survivor or supporter to the Rape Crisis Centre.

This standard covers therapeutic referrals to and from counsellors, psychotherapists, psychologists and psychiatrists. It is to provide guidance to both staff and volunteers in relation to: the desirability or necessity for making a therapeutic referral, the process of making a therapeutic referral and, receiving a therapeutic referral.

### 2. DEFINITION

A therapeutic referral is defined as a referral for the purpose of counselling, therapy, psychological evaluation or psychiatric evaluation.

### 3. REQUIREMENTS

#### 3.1 Referral relationships

- Our Centre will ascertain and maintain up-to-date information regarding the qualifications, experience and approach of counsellors, psychotherapists, psychologists and psychiatrists who work within the catchment area of our Centre so that if a survivor or supporter needs or wants to be referred elsewhere, we will have knowledge of what options are available. We will develop and maintain relationships with these other professionals in order to facilitate referrals to them from us and to us from them.
- If a survivor or supporter is moving to another area and wants to continue with counselling/therapy, we will contact the nearest Rape Crisis Centre to find out what options are available in that area.

#### 3.2 Necessity or desirability

A referral to another counsellor, psychotherapist, psychologist or psychiatrist may be desirable or necessary or when:

- There is a long waiting list for counselling/therapy in our Centre
- A survivor or supporter would prefer a counsellor of a different gender than is currently available with our Centre

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- There are a number of survivors who are related to each other, or had sexual violence perpetrated against them in the same incident, and there are not enough counsellors/therapists at our Centre for each survivor to have a different counsellor/therapist
- Our Centre offers a limited number of sessions and a supporter or survivor wants to continue with counselling/therapy
- A survivor or supporter is moving and would like to continue counselling/therapy
- A survivor or supporter would like to work with another counsellor/therapist and one is not available in our Centre
- A survivor or supporter requires another type of counselling or therapy than is available through our Centre
- A survivor needs a psychological or psychiatric evaluation

### 3.3 Referral process

#### 3.3.1 To

- Always done with the survivor/supporter's explicit consent and participation.
- The survivor or supporter gives written consent to release of any personal information used to facilitate the referral process.
- First choice for referral is:
  - another Rape Crisis Centre if the client wants to access services in another area;
  - an accredited counsellor, psychotherapist, psychologist or psychiatrist who has experience and training in sexual violence if the client wants to access services in the same area, if the client requires services that our centre does not provide, or if the client would prefer.
- The decision to refer is discussed with Centre Manager/ line manager and/or Clinical Supervisor.

#### 3.3.2 From

- We speak with survivor or supporter to ensure that being referred to a Rape Crisis Centre is what she/he wants.
- We only release a survivor or supporter's personal information back to the referring professional with the explicit written consent of the survivor or supporter.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Review Date \_\_\_\_\_