



Rape Crisis National Service Standards

Standard 0: Specialist Service Provision

Rape Crisis specialist services are independent, community-based services, which work from a trauma-informed, gendered analysis and empowerment perspective to provide confidential specialist services to survivors of sexual violence.

Core Standard	Core Indicator	Indicative evidence
The organisation meets and adheres to Rape Crisis England & Wales or Rape Crisis Scotland membership criteria and is defined as a specialist Rape Crisis service.	The organisation is a Registered Charity, Company Limited by Guarantee (not for profit), Community Interest Company, Charitable Incorporated Organisation or Industrial and Provident Society – Community Benefit Society and so adheres to the principles and expectations of The Charity Commission (England & Wales) or The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (Scotland).	Standard 0 underpins the criteria for membership of Rape Crisis England & Wales and Rape Crisis Scotland. For further information about the evidence required to meet the criteria for membership, please contact your national body.
	The organisation has as its primary or major purpose to deliver services to women and girls who have experienced any form of sexual violence at any time in their lives.	
	The organisation is women led and is committed to remaining women led.	
	The organisation strives to maintain and develop services that meet the needs of survivors in their area who have experienced any form of sexual violence at any time in their lives.	
	The organisation works from a feminist perspective that recognises sexual violence as a crime of violence, an abuse of power, and as a cause and consequence of gender inequality.	
	The organisation provides and protects dedicated spaces and times for women and girls to access services.	
	The organisation has a clear commitment to anti-racism and is working towards or already takes an actively anti-racist approach to working with survivors, staff and volunteers.	

Standard 1: Strong Leadership

Rape Crisis specialist services have strong leadership and governance that ensures services are survivor-centred and delivered to the highest quality. There are robust strategic plans and frameworks in place to ensure that organisations are safe, sustainable and values driven. Strong leadership should also be evident in the way that intersectional feminist values operate in centres, driving anti-oppressive practices, to the benefit of survivors, staff and volunteers.

Core Standard	Core Indicator	Indicative evidence
1.1 Strategic plan, values and professional frameworks The organisation has a clear strategic plan that outlines the aims and objectives of the organisation and promotes values supporting empowerment, dignity and respect.	a) The organisation has clear and transparent aims and objectives that are clearly communicated to trustees, staff and volunteers. All trustees, staff and volunteers are aware of their part in achieving these aims and objectives.	▪ Development, Organisational, Strategic or Business Plan ▪ Induction programmes for trustees, staff and volunteers (including organisational aims and objectives) ▪ Annual/impact report ▪ Support and Supervision policy
	b) The organisation has clear values, which are defined by being survivor-centred, trauma-informed, gender-informed, empowerment-orientated, embodying a culture of belief, actively anti-racist, and employing an intersectional feminist approach.	▪ Vision, mission and values statements ▪ Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy ▪ Training plans and records ▪ Promotional material (online or in print)
	c) The organisation has a written strategic plan that supports the long-term sustainability of high-quality service provision. The strategic plan is reviewed regularly and updated in line with changing circumstances.	▪ Development, Organisational, Strategic or Business Plan ▪ Finance policy (including finance control procedures) ▪ Funding policy ▪ Reserves policy ▪ Annual/impact report
	d) The organisation's approach and delivery are in line with relevant professional ethical frameworks, legislation and evidence-based good practice guidance appropriate to specialist service provision.	▪ Professional ethical frameworks (e.g. BACP or COSCA) and/or relevant accreditations of good practice guidance appropriate to the services provided by the Centre (e.g. Home Office, The Role of the Independent Sexual Violence Adviser: Essential Elements)

Core Standard	Core Indicator	Indicative evidence
1.2 Good governance The members of the governing body are aware of their legal duties and responsibilities; quality, performance and risks are understood and managed.	a) Trustees are provided with sufficient information and training about their legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities to enable them to govern effectively, fostering a culture of accountability.	▪ Organisational chart (showing governance structure) ▪ Trustee role descriptions ▪ Recruitment and induction process for trustees ▪ Conflict of Interest policy ▪ Trustee guidance ▪ Scheme of Delegation
	b) Trustees regularly review and respond to relevant internal and external developments, identifying, assessing and taking steps to mitigate organisational risks, including those that might impact the wider movement.	▪ Risk management strategy ▪ Risk register ▪ Notes of trustee meetings (showing discussion of risks) ▪ Induction programme for trustees (including serious incident reporting to Charity Commission in England & Wales or OSCR in Scotland) ▪ Business/Emergency Continuity policy
	c) The organisation has transparent policies and procedures to support effective governance, including the lawful and relevant use and control of its funds. Governance policies and procedures are reviewed regularly.	▪ Finance policy (including finance control procedures) ▪ Conflict of Interest policy ▪ Induction programmes for staff and trustees (including policy awareness) ▪ Annual/impact report ▪ Quarterly and annual management accounts ▪ Treasurer role description
	d) Trustees periodically review their efficiency and effectiveness and take steps to develop, adapt and improve where gaps are identified.	▪ Trustee Skills Audit ▪ Training plan(s) and record(s) for trustees

Core Standard	Core Indicator	Indicative evidence
1.3 Survivors as organisational leaders The organisation works in a way that centres survivor voice and recognises the value of lived experience. Survivors of sexual violence and service users have opportunities to be involved at all levels of the organisation, from evaluation of services to strategic developments.	a) The organisation ensures it is addressing barriers faced by service users to enable them full access to participate in feedback and involvement opportunities in a way that is appropriate and relevant to their needs.	▪ Case study [showing how service users access feedback opportunities – including adjustments made to remove barriers and ensure inclusion]
	b) Service users are informed about a range of opportunities to give feedback on all aspects of the service they receive. There are opportunities to respond to relevant external consultations and campaigns in relation to wider social issues affecting their lives.	▪ Service User Involvement policy ▪ Case study [showing how service users are informed of feedback opportunities on service provision and how feedback is captured] ▪ Case study [showing how service users are given opportunities to respond to external consultations or campaigns]
	c) The organisation has a policy for actively involving service users and survivors in strategic planning, and in the planning of specific services.	▪ Case study [showing how service users/survivors have been involved in strategic planning and the planning of specific services]
	d) There are clear opportunities for service users and survivors to influence decisions within the organisation (for example, survivor reference groups feeding into strategic decision making).	▪ Case study [showing how service users/survivors have been empowered to influence strategic decisions]
	e) The organisation recognises that service users may wish to become trustees, staff or volunteers, and that trustees, staff and volunteers may themselves need access to specialist sexual violence support – and has an agreed approach to this.	▪ An agreed approach to recruiting service users (past or present) to trustee, staff or volunteer positions ▪ An agreed approach to the provision of specialist sexual violence support for current trustees, staff and volunteers

Core Standard	Core Indicator	Indicative evidence
1.4 Leading healthy work environments Trustees and the senior leadership team in the organisation create a healthy work environment where feminist leadership and anti-oppressive principles are put into practice.	a) Organisations foster empowering work environments that embrace feminist leadership, anti-oppressive and anti-racist practices. Power dynamics are reflected on, with active efforts to dismantle bias, discrimination, and privilege within the organisation taking place.	▪ Case study [showing how feminist leadership, anti-oppressive and anti-racist practices are fostered in the work environment]
	b) Organisations embrace a mindset that values and celebrates staff and volunteers, nurturing their growth and their personal and professional development.	▪ Training and Development policy ▪ Volunteer policy ▪ Health and Wellbeing policy ▪ Support and Supervision policy ▪ Case study [showing how staff and volunteers are valued, celebrated and nurtured]
	c) Organisations cultivate open communication, fairness and respect. There are comprehensive support systems that empower staff and volunteers to consider their wellbeing as well as self and collective care.	▪ Health and Wellbeing policy ▪ Employee handbook ▪ Volunteering policy
	d) Organisations implement recruitment practices that actively dismantle biases, creating opportunities for marginalised groups and fostering genuine inclusion, fairness, and a sense of belonging.	▪ Recruitment and Selection policy ▪ Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy ▪ Equity, Diversity and Inclusion action plan ▪ Anti-racism policy and/or action plan ▪ Case study [showing how recruitment practices actively dismantle biases]

Standard 2: Responsive to Survivors

Rape Crisis specialist services are responsive to the diverse needs of survivors and actively working towards ensuring that services are relevant, accessible and survivor led.

Core Standard	Core Indicator	Indicative evidence
2.1 Designing services for survivors The organisation understands and responds to diversity of need within the population it serves, and uses this knowledge to inform service planning, delivery and partnerships.	a) The organisation understands the complexity of sexual violence, and its impact on marginalised groups. Staff and volunteers respond to the specific and diverse needs of service users through planning and delivery of services.	▪ Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy ▪ Equity, Diversity and Inclusion action plan ▪ Training plans and records for equity, diversity and inclusion ▪ Case study [showing how service provision has changed as a result of needs analysis]
	b) The organisation conducts equalities monitoring of its service users and takes positive steps to listen and respond to needs identified by lesser heard or underrepresented voices in the service.	▪ Monitoring records and reports ▪ Case study [showing action taken to address specific needs and ensure inclusion]
	c) The organisation has processes in place to ensure that its services recognise and respond to changing needs and demand regarding demographic changes, using robust data.	▪ Development, Organisational, Strategic or Business Plan (showing evidence base for strategic decisions)
	d) The organisation seeks to work in partnership to meet survivor need and to develop robust referral pathways, where available and appropriate. Staff and volunteers have reliable and up-to-date information and are enabled to effectively signpost or refer service users to relevant organisations.	▪ Referral and Signposting policy ▪ Partnership agreements ▪ Referral/Signposting directory

Core Standard	Core Indicator	Indicative evidence
2.2 Service users are well informed Service users are informed about the scope, independence and any limitations of the services being provided.	a) Service users are informed about the scope, independence and provision of services available to them and systems are in place to enable appropriate access.	- Services information (online or in print) – including information about accessing services and the management of waiting lists - Service user agreement(s)
	b) The organisation supports children and young people in accessing the service, in their own right, in a way that is accessible, empowering and appropriate to them.	- Services information (online or in print) – for young service users and parents/ carers - Good practice guidance for staff and volunteers working with young service users
	c) The organisation follows an ‘empowerment model’ – working alongside all service users in an holistic, flexible and person-centred way to enable them to re-establish control and direction in their own lives.	- Service delivery procedures/ documentation - Counselling policy - Advocacy policy - Service user agreement(s) - Case study [showing how the empowerment model has been used in practice to support survivors to take control]
	d) The organisation recognises that some survivors may be best served or may prefer to use specialist services run ‘by and for’ marginalised groups outside of the Rape Crisis centre, and actively signposts where asked.	- Partnership agreements with local ‘by and for’ specialist support services - Referral/Signposting directory including local ‘by and for’ specialist support services

Core Standard	Core Indicator	Indicative evidence
2.3 Service users shape the individual services they receive Services are informed by the needs of service users and each service user is an active partner in the service they receive.	a) The organisation seeks explicit and informed consent from service users, in line with relevant consent and decision-making guidance and legislation, to enable service users to engage meaningfully with services provided.	▪ Service user agreement(s) ▪ Specific counselling, ISVA and/or advocacy agreements ▪ Case study [showing how service users are engaged as active partners in service delivery]
	b) Service users are enabled to make their own choices about the support and interventions they receive and who provides them.	▪ Service user agreement(s) ▪ Services information (online or in print) ▪ Service User Involvement policy ▪ Referral and Signposting policy
	c) The organisation ensures that children and young people are enabled to be active partners in the support they receive and are empowered to make their own decisions in line with their age and development stage.	▪ Service user agreement (for children and young people) ▪ Case study [showing how the empowerment model has been used in practice to support children and young people to take control]
	d) Individual support needs are understood, and plans are in place that are tailored to meet service users' specific needs – and are flexible to meet these needs. Service users are active partners in their development and review.	▪ Case study [showing how a service user agreement has been tailored to meet the specific needs of a service user and how support has been reviewed and modified, as necessary, over time]

Standard 3: Safe Practice

Rape Crisis specialist services seek to expand the safety and wellbeing of all survivors (as well as staff and volunteers) and work within safe, trauma-informed models of practice that facilitate this.

Core Standard	Core Indicator	Indicative evidence
3.1 Safety for service users The organisation has robust and reliable systems and practices in place to keep people safe and safeguarded from harm.	a) The organisation has in place robust policies, procedures and practices that reflect good practice guidance for safeguarding children and adults, which adhere to legislation and local statutory frameworks.	▪ Safeguarding policies (Children and Vulnerable Adults) ▪ Training plans and records for safeguarding (staff, volunteers and trustees) ▪ Recruitment and Selection policy ▪ Support and Supervision policy ▪ Whistleblowing policy ▪ Privacy statement for service users
	b) The organisation has robust risk assessments in place that reflect and respond to specific risks to service users and client-facing staff, and these are reviewed and updated at regular intervals.	▪ Service User Risk Assessment and Management policy (and supporting documentation) ▪ Notes of meetings (showing discussion of risks and safeguarding as agenda item)
	c) Staff, volunteers (and where relevant, trustees) are supported to carry out needs and risk assessments and receive sufficient training and information to do so safely within the remit of the service.	▪ Training plans and records for service user needs and risk assessment/management (staff, volunteers and trustees)
	d) The organisation keeps up to date with knowledge and good practice in relation to changing legislation, forms that abuse may take, and potential risks related to service users and this learning is incorporated into the service's policies, training and response to safeguarding issues.	▪ Training plans and records for safeguarding training (including types of risk and forms of abuse) ▪ Safeguarding policy

Core Standard	Core Indicator	Indicative evidence
3.2 Safety for staff The organisation ensures a safe working environment for staff, volunteers, trustees and service users.	a) Robust policies and procedures are in place to assess and manage the physical safety and emotional wellbeing of staff, volunteers and service users, both within the centre and when working off site, and action is taken to provide and maintain a safe place of work.	▪ Employer's Liability Insurance ▪ Public Liability Insurance ▪ Risk Management policy ▪ Health and Safety policy ▪ Health and Wellbeing policy ▪ Lone Working policy ▪ Home Working policy ▪ Workplace Violence policy ▪ Bullying and Harassment policy ▪ Grievance policy ▪ Disciplinary policy ▪ Support and Supervision policy (including controls for secondary trauma)
	b) The organisation prioritises robust recruitment practices, and implements comprehensive systems of training, support and supervision to ensure a culture of safe and reflective practice.	▪ Recruitment and Selection policy ▪ Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS) policy/Protecting Vulnerable Groups policy ▪ Training and Development policy ▪ Support and Supervision policy
	c) The organisation sets out and observes clear professional boundaries to guide appropriate relationships between service users and staff/volunteers.	▪ Employee handbook ▪ Code of Conduct ▪ Professional Boundaries policy/guidance

Core Standard	Core Indicator	Indicative evidence
3.3 Secure data The organisation operates policy and guidance on confidentiality and data protection that is compliant with current legislation and good practice.	a) The organisation has clear policy and procedures in place that protect service user confidentiality. Limitations to confidentiality are clearly communicated.	▪ Confidentiality and Data Protection policy ▪ Confidentiality agreements ▪ Privacy statement
	b) The organisation has transparent policy and procedures in place that relate to the lawful collection, handling, processing, movement and disposal of data and all trustees, staff and volunteers are aware of their rights and responsibilities in line with current data protection legislation.	▪ Professional Indemnity Insurance ▪ Registration with Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) ▪ Confidentiality and Data Protection policy ▪ Training plans and records for data protection
	c) Service users are active partners in the collection and control of their personal information and are made aware of their rights to access, amend or delete data in line with data protection legislation.	▪ Data processor agreement ▪ Service user agreement(s) ▪ Confidentiality and Data Protection policy ▪ Data Retention and Control policy ▪ Subject Access Request policy ▪ Privacy statement
	d) Where information is shared with a third party, it is relevant and proportionate, and governed by robust protocols that protect the interests and privacy rights of service users.	▪ Service user agreement(s) ▪ Confidentiality and Data Protection policy ▪ Data Retention and Control policy ▪ Subject Access Request policy

Core Standard	Core Indicator	Indicative evidence
3.4 Implementing learning The organisation has processes in place to support the continuous improvement of safety and protection across the service.	a) The organisation has a process in place to enable the recording, review and learning from safety incidents and relevant staff, volunteers and trustees are involved in this process.	▪ Health and Safety policy ▪ Accident/incident recording, reporting and reviewing procedures ▪ Training plans and records (including induction) for health and safety
	b) The organisation has an open, transparent and blame-free culture that encourages reporting, learning and continuous improvement.	▪ Employee handbook ▪ Code of Conduct ▪ Training plans and records (including induction) for health and safety ▪ Support and Supervision policy ▪ Whistleblowing policy ▪ Complaints policy ▪ Notes of meetings (showing reporting, learning and continuous improvement) ▪ Service user agreement(s)

Standard 4: Lasting Impact

Rape Crisis specialist services are dedicated to ending sexual violence and abuse, driving the impact and effectiveness of services, and fostering lasting change.

Core Standard	Core Indicator	Indicative evidence
4.1 Setting outcomes The organisation identifies outcomes for its service users that are meaningful to those users and to funders and commissioners.	a) The organisation has an outcomes framework in place that is meaningful and relevant to all of its service users.	▪ Outcomes Framework
	b) The organisation monitors progress towards service user outcomes and uses monitoring methods that give opportunities for all service users to express themselves in their own words.	▪ Service User Involvement policy ▪ Outcomes monitoring records ▪ Local outcomes data > 12 months ▪ Case study [showing how service users have contributed to developing meaningful outcomes]
	c) The organisation recognises that minoritised survivors may face additional barriers due to oppressive and inaccessible systems that affect their ability to contribute feedback, and puts measures in place to overcome these barriers.	▪ Case study [showing how measures have been taken to remove barriers that impact on the opportunities for minoritised survivors to contribute feedback]
4.2 Gathering data and feedback The organisation has a structure in place for collating and analysing service user feedback and using it to inform service provision, quality and improvement.	a) The organisation demonstrates that service user feedback is used to inform and improve service planning, development and campaigning priorities (where relevant).	▪ Case study [showing how service user feedback is used to plan and develop services and, where relevant, campaign priorities]
	b) The organisation has processes in place to ensure need and demand are identified and responded to and there are clear service performance measures that support continuous quality and improvement.	▪ Service Users' needs analysis ▪ National and local prevalence and incidence data analysis ▪ Service performance measures
	c) Service users are informed how and to whom they can complain if not satisfied with any aspect of the service or response they receive.	▪ Complaints policy ▪ Case study [showing how complaints are received and responded to]

Core Standard	Core Indicator	Indicative evidence
4.3 Effective staff The organisation ensures that staff and volunteers have the relevant skills, knowledge and experience to deliver effective and high-quality service provision.	a) The organisation ensures that all staff and volunteers are sufficiently skilled, trained and experienced to work effectively within their role and the aims and objectives of the service.	▪ Recruitment and Selection policy ▪ Role descriptions ▪ Person specifications
	b) The organisation has effective policies and procedures in place to support the on-going training, learning and development of staff, volunteers and trustees to ensure they are sufficiently trained for their specific role and client group.	▪ Appraisal/Performance Management policy ▪ Training needs analysis ▪ Training plans and records for staff/volunteer/trustee development in relation to service delivery ▪ Support and Supervision policy ▪ Training and Development policy
	c) The organisation sets clear development objectives for all staff, reviews progress against these regularly and takes effective steps to improve performance.	▪ Development, Organisational, Strategic or Business Plan ▪ Annual/impact report ▪ Appraisal/Performance Management policy ▪ Support and Supervision policy ▪ Employee handbook ▪ Volunteering policy/agreement
	d) Staff and volunteers are equipped with up-to-date information and knowledge, empowering them to deliver specialist support services effectively.	▪ Case study [showing how staff and volunteers have been provided with up-to-date information to improve specialist support services]

Core Standard	Core Indicator	Indicative evidence
4.4 Impact on wider society The organisation recognises violence against women and girls as a human rights violation, raising awareness of the impact of sexual violence including challenging misperceptions and social tolerance.	a) The organisation provides anonymous data to their national Rape Crisis membership body on service delivery outputs and outcomes, to enable national pictures around prevalence and demand to be formulated and used in all its work.	- Local output and outcome reporting data, e.g. monitoring reports - Local comparative data > 12 months
	b) The organisation actively contributes to ending sexual violence – through engaging in public awareness activity across wider communities regarding the impacts of sexual violence, challenging rape myths and rape culture, and empowering survivors to be involved in this work.	Case study [showing recent public awareness activity]

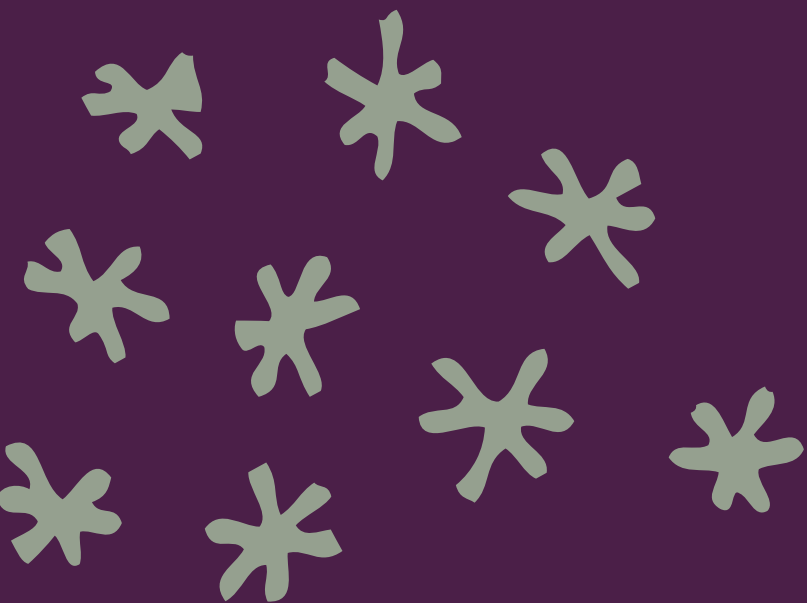
If you require any further information about the Rape Crisis National Service Standards, please contact us:

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