

SPECIFIC FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES****HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY****RECOMMENDATION:**

1. *Train all hospital staff to properly interview patients and to recognize the possibility of rape, consequently notifying law enforcement and the Rape Crisis Center advocate.*

RESPONSE:

Riverside County Regional Medical Center considers rape examinations and evidence collection to be an important part of our overall medical care mission. Comprehensive Emergency Sexual Assault examination and treatment have been provided by the Hospital in a high quality way for many years. These services are continuously monitored for quality care and collection of evidence by the Hospital's Quality Assurance program.

Trained registered nurses are now responsible for the initial interview of the sexual assault victim.

The Hospital recently updated the Rape Crisis Advocates Call List in consultation with the Rape Crisis Center, in order to minimize delays in notifying the "on call" advocate of a need to respond to the Emergency Department.

RECOMMENDATION:

2. *Continue to provide properly equipped separate examination, waiting and conference room where the patient can be attended by the advocate and afford some privacy. This will help prevent further embarrassment, and release the officer for other duties while waiting for the medical and forensic examinations.*

RESPONSE:

The old RGH Emergency Department lacked a dedicated examination room for sexual assault patients; however, this has been remedied at RCRMC. There is a now a dedicated examination room used solely for this purpose. In the new RCRMC Emergency Department, there is an accessible and private examination room, which has been remodeled through the generosity of a private benefactor. To provide greater comfort to the patient and ease the appearance of the sterility of the hospital, the room has been decorated with pleasing pictures, wood pattern linoleum, wallpapered walls, wooden base boards and painted cabinets.

In addition, there is an adjacent private consultation room that is available to Law Enforcement, the advocate and victim for interview purposes.

RECOMMENDATION:

3. *Properly train hospital personnel to perform the forensic examination according to recommended protocol. An alternative is to contract with an outside firm of nurses with forty hours or more training, to be called to perform these examinations and testify in court when needed. This would also help prevent the victim from being further traumatized by an inadequately trained medical person.*

RESPONSE:

RRCMC hospital policy requires that trained Nurses in the RRCMC Emergency Department perform the medical history and specimen collection for sexual assault patients using Department of Justice approved Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kits. Nursing Assistants are no longer permitted to perform the initial part of the evidence collection.

Emergency Department physicians who conduct forensic examinations must demonstrate proficiency in use of the colposcope. A program of ongoing training of physician staff in terms of documentation and proficiency is in place.

The Hospital has also contracted with an outside agency, LEMS, which has certified nurse examiners to perform these examinations and collect evidence in the event that the Emergency Department acuity and activity would delay care for the sexual assault victim.

RECOMMENDATION:

4. *Hold informational meetings frequently between the office of the District Attorney, law enforcement, Rape Crisis Center advocate and all hospital personnel involved.*

RESPONSE:

The Hospital has initiated meetings, which included representatives from the Hospital, District Attorney's Office, Law Enforcement agencies and the Riverside Area Rape Crisis Center. The Hospital intends to establish regular meeting dates for this group to ensure that patients receive the highest quality of care and that law enforcement agencies are served in a reliable and professional manner.