



MEDIA STATEMENT

Date: 10 September 2016

Sarah Champion MP opens the South Yorkshire Sexual Adult Referral Centre

The South Yorkshire Sexual Adult Referral Centre was officially opened on Friday, 9 September by Sarah Champion MP and Dr Alan Billings, South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) is for adult victims of sexual assault from the whole of South Yorkshire. It is managed by Mountain Healthcare and is part of a new Yorkshire and the Humber regional SARC service, where each region has its own centre.

The building is based in Sheffield and provides a range of services including facilities for forensic medical examination and crisis support. The building also houses facilities where vulnerable witness video interviews can take place.

The South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner in partnership with NHS England funded the redevelopment of the facility putting victim's health and support needs at the forefront. Dr Billings is the contract holder for the regional service.

Dr Alan Billings said: "This facility in South Yorkshire will provide as welcoming an environment as is possible for individuals who have been subject to a terrible ordeal. It is important that the building is easy for them to access day or night and has the appropriate facilities to meet their needs.

"I made it clear that we must have a 24/7 facility that could provide forensic and support services to victims at a time and location to suit them. Mountain Healthcare offer excellent support and advice and make this difficult but necessary process as comfortable as possible.

"The SARC started to receive clients in April 2016 and we have received some reassuring feedback from victims and officers on the quality of the building's facilities.

"As part of a regional contract, this SARC in Sheffield is open to anyone in the Yorkshire Region and also offers victims the opportunity to self-refer, should they not feel ready to report any incidents to the police."

This regional contract, co-commissioned with NHS England, is one of the first in the country and it provides the victim with choices on where they can be seen, convenient to where they may live and available 24/7 - 7 days a week, 365 days a year.



Sarah Champion MP said: "I am honoured to have been asked to open this facility here in South Yorkshire and have a look around at the excellent facilities.

"As this is one of the first regional contracts within the country, I am encouraged that this building demonstrates a commitment to getting things right for victims in South Yorkshire during a very difficult time."

The services are not just available for victims who have reported a crime to the police; members of the public are able to refer themselves. They also offer sign-posting to support groups to help victims of sexual abuse deal with the crime committed against them.

This facility replaces the former adult SARC at Rotherham General Hospital.

Ends

Notes to Editors

Photograph shows Dr Alan Billings and Sarah Champion MP

For more information please contact:

Samantha Mawson, Communications Officer

Tel: 0114 296 4154 **Mobile:** 07833 483511

Email: smawson@southyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk

Or Fiona Topliss, Community Engagement & Communications Manager

Tel: 0114 296 4155 **Mobile:** 07468 472975

Email: ftopliss@southyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk

**Office of the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner, Carbrook House,
Carbrook Hall Road, Sheffield, S9 2EH**

