

Headwaters Health Care Centre

The Domestic and Sexual Assault Treatment Program (DASA)

“Our mission is to institute a program of care within the Emergency Department and Sexual Assault Treatment Program [SATP]...We review, evaluate and modify the plan of care with a view to achieving excellence in the care of abused women/children. We utilize a collaborative approach between the emergency department staff, SATP members, in patient staff, police, community agencies and crown attorneys to ensure comprehensive care. We participate in research initiatives in order to further understand abused women and their care.”

Address:	100 Rolling Hills Drive Orangeville, ON L9W 4X9
Area served:	County of Dufferin and Town of Caledon
Accessibility:	Walk-in emergency service provided. Fully accessible.
Hours:	Hospital hours: 24 hours/day, 365 days/year
Telephone:	(519) 941-2410 Ext. 2214 (emergency extension)

Services

Headwaters Health Care Centre will provide the following services within the DASA Treatment Program¹:

1. Emergency Department (ED)

- Standardized universal screening of all emergency patients as to victimization by domestic violence, child exposure to domestic violence or sexual assault.
- Referral to specially trained nurses and other medical personnel, when available.²

2. Sunrise Centre

- Located within, but separate and distinct from, the ED at the Headwaters Orangeville site.
- Used for patients accessing the DASA Treatment Program.
- Provides a separate entrance to ensure privacy and a quiet, non-threatening, non-clinical environment to be examined, treated and, if the patient wishes, provide a videotaped statement to Police.
- Used by Police and Dufferin Child and Family Services, Child Protection, for interviewing victims (without ED admission).

¹ Adapted from the Dufferin-Caledon Health Care Corporation Sexual Assault Treatment Program Personnel Manual, revised September 2002.

² Due to staffing pressures, specially trained medical personnel may not be available. It will be assumed throughout this document that should this occur, the Hospital will determine alternate coverage according to its internal protocol, described in the “Assessment and Examination” section.

- Hospital volunteers, 9 am – 4 pm, are sometimes available to supervise children.³

3. Domestic Violence Treatment Program

- Identification, assessment, medical examination, medical treatment, safety planning and referral to community services for females over the age of 12, who disclose domestic violence.
- Screening and reporting of children under the age of 16, who are in need of protection due to exposure to domestic violence.
- Staffing by specially trained Domestic Violence Team management, nurses and physicians.

4. Sexual Assault Treatment Program (SATP)

- Prompt, confidential and individualized care for female or male victims of recent sexual assault (less than 72 hours).
- Crisis counselling and emotional care provided by a specially trained nurse.
- Medical care - including an examination, treatment of physical injury, preventative treatment of sexually transmitted disease and possible prevention of pregnancy, if deemed appropriate.
- Collection of forensic evidence (Sexual Assault Evidence Kit), if the patient is considering legal action and it is within 72 hours of the assault. If the Police are not already involved, SATP will:
 - Retain the evidence for up to 6 months and contact the patient prior to the deadline.
 - Assist the patient in deciding whether or not to use this evidence to report to the Police and prosecute.
- Sexual assault records are located in a confidential site, separate from the rest of hospital records.
- Report to Dufferin Child and Family Services or appropriate Children's Aid Society if a child under the age of 16 is suspected of experiencing sexual abuse.

5. Pediatric Sexual Assault Treatment Program (PSATP)

- Medical care and treatment of child victims of sexual abuse and assault.
- Crisis support and counselling to the child victim, family members and significant others.
- Medical evaluation to guide decision-making in regard to:
 - The ordering of tests.
 - A physical examination.
 - Treatment options.
 - Completion of a Sexual Assault Evidence Kit.
 - Medication for injuries, sexually transmitted diseases and other occurrences resulting from sexual abuse and assault.
- Choice of the child (or parent if the child is incapable of giving consent) as to:
 - Collection of forensic evidence (Sexual Assault Evidence Kit), if the incident took place less than 24 hours prior for a prepubescent child or less than 72 hours prior for a pubescent child or if the time could not be determined.

³ Caledon\Dufferin Victim Services volunteers, accompanying the police, may also supervise children.

- Disclosure to the Police of information related to the sexual assault, examination and treatment of the child.
- Report to Dufferin Child and Family Services or appropriate Children's Aid Society if the child victim is under the age of 16 and is suspected of experiencing sexual abuse.
- Referral to needed community resources.

Headwaters Health Care Centre will provide the following accountability measures:

1. Confidentiality

All staff of the DASA Treatment Program will adhere to the confidentiality and consent policies of the Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA), the Health Care Consent Act (HCCA) and internal policies and procedures. Patients will be informed prior to any service intervention of their rights regarding examination, investigation, treatment and disclosure.

2. Complaints resolution

Concerns regarding the quality or nature of service can be directed to the Program Coordinator. All complaints will be investigated and responded to in accordance with the hospital's policies and procedures.

**Responsibilities Re: DART Agencies:
Domestic Violence Intervention**

Identification

1. On arrival to the ED, all female patients over the age of 12 will be triaged in privacy and screened for risk of domestic violence.
2. The Triage Nurse will:
 - In a private and confidential setting ask one question in an empathic and non-judgmental way regarding domestic violence or abuse.
 - If the patient discloses domestic violence, explain the role of and offer DASA nursing service.
 - Take the patient to a quiet room or the Sunrise Centre, alone if possible, refer to the ED Nurse and pull the patient's chart.

3. For the patient who has not yet disclosed, the ED Nurse will:
 - Screen all patients for physical injury, pregnancy pain or bleeding, post-partum complaints, psychiatric issues and substance abuse.
 - Ask again about abuse and offer a specially trained DASA Nurse.
 - Stabilize intoxicated, hallucinating or seriously ill patients prior to interviewing.
 - Access translation services (not a relative or friend) for a patient who does not speak English.
 - Ensure screening of women who may be overlooked – those who are elderly, pregnant, disabled, with HIV/Aids or in same sex relationships.
 - Provide appropriate literature to those who disclose but do not wish DASA service or those who are suspected as victims but do not disclose.

Assessment and Examination

1. For the patient who discloses and agrees to DASA nursing service, the ED nurse will:
 - Page a DASA nurse. If the nurse is unavailable, the ED nurse will consider the needs of the patient and an established protocol in deciding whether to:
 - Hold the patient over to the next shift.
 - Have the patient return to the hospital.
 - Have the patient cleared medically and transferred to another hospital with DASA expertise.
 - Collect any forensic evidence on sheets and clothes for possible photographs and Police investigation.
 - Ensure the treatment of any life threatening injuries in order of priority.
 - Discuss concerns around the case with the DASA Nurse.
2. The ED Physician will provide medical care and clearance to patients that have been physically abused.

Investigation, Evidence Gathering and Documentation

1. In obtaining consent to gather information or evidence, the Nurse will inform the patient of its implications. For example, while the patient may give and at any time withdraw consent to any form of hospital involvement (examination, treatment or the disclosure of records), if the Police are already involved, they may access the records with a warrant or subpoena.
2. The DASA Nurse will complete the hospital chart, Domestic Violence Record, including:
 - Appropriate consent forms.
 - The location and severity of each injury, using a body map if indicated.
 - Physical symptoms, emotional symptoms and indications of abuse (e.g., torn clothing).
 - The abuser's name and current location (e.g., in the ED).
 - The nature/dates/times of the current abuse and history of abuse.
 - Telephone and other contact information.
 - Police involvement and information.
 - Children's Aid involvement and the age, whereabouts and safety of the patient's children (e.g., whether exposed to or actually experiencing physical abuse).

- Hospital interventions.
3. The DASA Nurse will, with the patient's consent, take photographs of the injuries.

Safety Planning and Other Interventions

1. After the physician clears the patient medically, the DASA Nurse will:
 - Provide emotional care, safety planning and a list of appropriate community agencies.
 - If not already involved and with the patient's consent, offer to contact the Police for attendance at the ED.⁴ The Police will take photos or use videotapes/DVD's to document the statement and other evidence.
 - Advise the patient of the obligation to report to Dufferin Child and Family Services, Child Protection, children in the family who are under the age of 16 and exposed to domestic violence.
 - Refer to Family Transition Place Legal Support Counsellor and community legal services regarding any legal repercussions (e.g., for immigrant women).
 - Provide vouchers for the patient's transportation to the Family Transition Place shelter or other locations.
 - Set a follow-up appointment as necessary for further documentation and photographs of injuries that may not have been visible previously.
 - Refer to the DASA program social worker for short-term follow up.

We are committed to collaboration within the Domestic Assault Review Team

⁴ A gunshot wound is the only injury that requires a mandatory report to police.