

## **Survivors of rape need matched care**

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### Background/rationale

The help for victims of rape has to be victim centered and has to provide the potential for a successful criminal justice response. In Amsterdam the Police Force, the medical forensic nurses of the Public Health Service and a group of psychotherapists, specialized in the treatment of sexual abuse victims, integrated their services in the Sexual Violence Centre Amsterdam (CSG) in order to improve the care for rape victims, providing 24/7 coordinated and integrated services (i.e. medical, forensic, and psychological) within one week post-assault.

### Objectives

For the last three years we have been providing psychological treatment to a great amount of survivors of sexual violence, who came to us in the acute phase with PTSD symptoms. They turned out to be a very heterogenous group of people. They differed not only in age, cultural background, educational level and socio-economic status, but also in level of functioning pre-assault, and in the circumstances of the sexual offense they had survived. We had to find out which kind of treatment fitted each of them best and how to prevent treatment dropout. We struggled to formulate hypotheses how the choice (eg. EMDR, TF-CBT, psychoeducation, coping enhancing and stabilizing therapy) and planning of treatment correlates with personal characteristics of the victims and/or characteristics of the sexual offense.

During this session, we will discuss our dilemma's and solutions we found in working together for the same cause: improving the care for rape victims. We will present the results of our efforts and show you the ways we tried to offer each victim the treatment that fitted best.

In our presentation we will share our lessons learned with the audience, combining theoretical notions with quantified insights based upon our experience in the last three years, illustrated with case examples from the victims we treated. In this way the audience will receive figures substantiated and practice based knowledge about the psychological impact of rape as we saw it in our clients and the (results of the) treatment we offered them.