

Forensic Medical Services (Victims of Sexual Offences) (Scotland) Bill

[AS AMENDED AT STAGE 2]

CONTENTS

Section

Duty to provide certain forensic medical services

- 1 Provision of certain forensic medical services

The examination service

- 2 The examination service
3 Limitation on provision of forensic medical examinations
4 Information to be provided before examination
5 Health care needs

The retention service

- 6 The retention service
7 Return of certain items of evidence
8 Destruction of evidence

Transfer of evidence

- 9 Transfer of evidence to police

Provision of examination and retention services: health care principles

- 9A Trauma-informed care

Section 1 functions: conferral of related functions and co-operation

- 10 Power to confer functions on other bodies
11 Co-operation

Reports

- 11A Report on operation of Act

General provisions

- 12 Minor and consequential modifications
12A Meaning of references to “evidence”
13 Interpretation
14 Ancillary provision
15 Commencement
16 Short title

Schedule—Minor and consequential modifications

Part 1—The 1978 Act and orders made under it

Part 2—Other enactments

Amendments to the Bill since the previous version are indicated by sidelining in the right margin. Wherever possible, provisions that were in the Bill as introduced retain the original numbering.

Forensic Medical Services (Victims of Sexual Offences) (Scotland) Bill

[AS AMENDED AT STAGE 2]

An Act of the Scottish Parliament to confer on health boards functions relating to the provision of forensic medical services to victims of sexual offences; and for connected purposes.

Duty to provide certain forensic medical services

1 Provision of certain forensic medical services

- 5 (1) Every health board must, in respect of its area—
- (a) provide the examination service (see section 2), and
 - (b) provide the retention service (see section 6).
- (4) A health board's—
- 10 (a) examination service is to be available to any person falling within section 2(2), regardless of the person's place of residence,
- (b) retention service is to be available in relation to any person to whom the health board provides the examination service.

The examination service

2 The examination service

- 15 (1) The examination service consists of providing forensic medical examinations to persons falling within subsection (2) (but see section 3).
- (2) A person falls within this subsection if—
- (a) the person is referred by a constable to the health board for a forensic medical examination in connection with an incident in which—

20 (i) a sexual offence is alleged to have been committed against the person, or

(ii) the person is alleged to have been the subject of harmful sexual behaviour by a child under the age of criminal responsibility, or
 - (b) the person is aged 16 or over and requests such an examination in connection with an incident reported to the health board by the person as being of the type
- 25 mentioned in paragraph (a).

- (3) A forensic medical examination is a physical medical examination carried out for purposes including the collection of evidence for use in connection with—
- (a) any investigation of the incident which gave rise to the need for the examination, or
 - (b) any proceedings in relation to the incident.
- (3A) The Scottish Ministers may by regulations substitute a different age for the age for the time being specified in subsection (2)(b).
- (3B) The age substituted for the age for the time being specified in subsection (2)(b) in regulations under subsection (3A) must be—
- (a) no lower than 13, and
 - (b) no higher than 18.
- (3C) Regulations under subsection (3A) may make transitional, transitory or saving provision.
- (3D) Regulations under subsection (3A) are subject to the affirmative procedure.
- (4) In subsection (2)—
- “sexual offence”—
- (a) means an offence which involves—
 - (i) an element of physical, sexual contact, or
 - (ii) the ejaculation of semen, or the emission of urine or saliva sexually, onto a person, and
 - (b) includes an act done outside Scotland which, if done in Scotland, would constitute such an offence,
- “harmful sexual behaviour” means behaviour (in Scotland or elsewhere) which—
- (a) causes or risks causing harm (whether physical or not) to another person, and
 - (b) involves—
 - (i) an element of physical, sexual contact, or
 - (ii) the ejaculation of semen, or the emission of urine or saliva sexually, onto a person,
- the reference to the age of criminal responsibility is a reference to the age of criminal responsibility in Scotland (as specified in section 41 of the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995).

3 Limitation on provision of forensic medical examinations

Nothing in this Act requires—

- (a) a forensic medical examination to be carried out where a professional judgement is made that the examination should not be carried out, or
- (b) a particular action to be carried out as part of a forensic medical examination where a professional judgement is made that the action should not be carried out.

4 Information to be provided before examination

- (1) This section applies where a forensic medical examination is to be carried out by virtue of section 2.
- (2) Before the examination starts—
 - 5 (a) the person who is to undergo the examination must, so far as reasonably practicable, be provided with the information mentioned in subsection (3), and
 - (b) the information must, so far as reasonably practicable, be explained to the person.
- (3) The information is—
 - (a) information about—
 - 10 (i) the circumstances in which any evidence collected during the examination may be transferred to a constable, and
 - (ii) the purposes for which such evidence may then be used, and
 - (b) where the forensic medical examination is carried out by virtue of section 2(2)(b), information about—
 - 15 (i) the person's rights to request the return of certain items under section 7 and to request the destruction of evidence under section 8(1)(a), and
 - (ii) the destruction of evidence under section 8(1)(b).
- (4) Failure to comply with subsection (2) does not by itself render any evidence collected during the examination inadmissible in any proceedings in relation to the incident which gave rise to the need for the examination.

5 Health care needs

- (1) A health board must take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that, where a person is referred for or requests a forensic medical examination as mentioned in section 2(2), any health care needs of the person arising from the incident which gave rise to the need for the examination are identified and addressed by the health board.
- 25 (2) Accordingly, a health board must provide the examination service in conjunction with such other services provided by the health board under or by virtue of the National Health Service (Scotland) Act 1978 as are relevant to the identification and addressing of such health care needs.
- 30 (3) Subsection (1) applies even where the person does not proceed to undergo a forensic medical examination.
- (4) For the purposes of this section, the ways in which health care needs can be addressed include the person being referred to other services provided by the health board.

The retention service

6 The retention service

- (1) The retention service consists of storing, for the purpose mentioned in subsection (2), evidence which—
 - 35 (a) was collected during a forensic medical examination carried out by virtue of section 2, and
 - 40 (b) has not been transferred to a constable under section 9.

- (2) The purpose is the preservation of the evidence for use in connection with—
- (a) any investigation of the incident which gave rise to the need for the examination, or
 - (b) any proceedings in relation to the incident.

7 Return of certain items of evidence

(1) This section applies where evidence collected during a forensic medical examination carried out by virtue of section 2(2)(b) and stored by a health board under section 6 comprises or includes an item which was worn or otherwise present during the incident which gave rise to the need for the examination.

(2) The person who underwent the examination may request that the item be returned to the person.

(2A) Subsection (2B) applies—

(a) where the health board is not satisfied that the requested item belongs to the person who made the request,

(b) where the health board considers that the requested item should not be returned to the person on safety grounds,

(c) where a request under section 9(2) for the transfer of the requested item to a constable—

(i) was made before the making of the request under subsection (2), or

(ii) is made after the making of the request under subsection (2) but before the requested item is returned to the person.

(2B) The health board must—

(a) refuse the request, and

(b) except in a case mentioned in subsection (2A)(c), explain the reason for the refusal to the person who made the request as soon as reasonably practicable.

(3) Otherwise, the health board must comply with the request as soon as reasonably practicable.

8 Destruction of evidence

(1) A health board must ensure that any evidence collected during a forensic medical examination carried out by virtue of section 2(2)(b) and stored by the health board under section 6 is destroyed as soon as reasonably practicable after whichever of the following occurs first—

(a) the expiry of the period of 30 days beginning with the day of the making, by the person who underwent the examination, of a request that the evidence be destroyed, or

(b) the expiry of such period as may be specified by the Scottish Ministers in regulations.

(1A) But the health board must ensure that evidence is not destroyed under subsection (1)—

(a) on the basis of a request made under paragraph (a) of that subsection if the request is withdrawn by the person who made it before the expiry of the period mentioned in that paragraph, or

(b) if subsection (1B) or (1C) applies.

(1B) This subsection applies where—

(a) a request was made under section 9(2) before the expiry of the period mentioned in subsection (1)(a) or, as the case may be, (b) for evidence to be transferred to a constable, and

(b) at the time the period expires, the request has not been complied with.

(1C) This subsection applies where a request is made under section 9(2) for evidence to be transferred to a constable—

(a) after the expiry of a period mentioned in subsection (1), and

(b) before the evidence is destroyed.

(1D) But subsection (1C) does not apply where the request is made at a time when it is not reasonably practicable to stop the destruction of the evidence.

(2) Regulations under subsection (1)(b) may make—

(a) different provision for different purposes,

(b) incidental, supplementary, consequential, transitional, transitory or saving provision.

(3) Regulations under subsection (1)(b) are subject to the affirmative procedure.

Transfer of evidence

9 Transfer of evidence to police

(1) This section applies—

(a) where a forensic medical examination has been carried out following a person being referred for such an examination as mentioned in section 2(2)(a), or

(b) where—

(i) a forensic medical examination has been carried out following a person requesting such an examination as mentioned in section 2(2)(b), and

(ii) the person has subsequently reported the incident in connection with which the examination took place to a constable.

(2) A constable may request the transfer to the constable of any evidence collected during the examination and stored or otherwise held by a health board which is required for the purposes of—

(a) investigation of the incident which gave rise to the need for the examination, or

(b) proceedings in relation to the incident.

(3) The health board must comply with the request as soon as reasonably practicable.

Provision of examination and retention services: health care principles

9A Trauma-informed care

(1) The Patient Rights (Scotland) Act 2011 is amended as follows (see also paragraph 3 of the schedule).

(2) In the schedule (health care principles), after paragraph 7, insert—

“7A(1) Regard is to be had to the importance of providing health care in a way that seeks to avoid re-traumatisation and is otherwise trauma-informed.

(2) Sub-paragraph (1) applies only in relation to the exercise of functions conferred by section 1 of the 2020 Act.”.

5 *Section 1 functions: conferral of related functions and co-operation*

10 Power to confer functions on other bodies

(1) The Scottish Ministers may by regulations confer on the bodies listed in subsection (2) functions relating to the services mentioned in section 1.

(2) The bodies are—

10 (a) a special health board,

(b) the Agency,

(c) HIS.

(3) Regulations under subsection (1) may—

(a) modify any enactment (including this Act),

15 (b) make different provision for different purposes,

(c) make incidental, supplementary, consequential, transitional, transitory or saving provision.

(4) Regulations under subsection (1)—

20 (a) are subject to the affirmative procedure if they add to, replace or omit any part of the text of an Act,

(b) otherwise, are subject to the negative procedure.

11 Co-operation

(1) Health boards must co-operate with one another, and with the bodies listed in subsection (2), in relation to the planning and provision of the services mentioned in section 1, with a view to securing, across Scotland, adequate provision and continuous improvement in the delivery of those services.

(2) The bodies are—

(a) any special health board with functions relating to the provision of those services,

(b) the Agency,

30 (c) HIS.

(3) Subsections (2) to (4) of section 12J of the 1978 Act apply for the purposes of subsection (1) as they apply for the purposes of subsection (1) of that section, subject to the modification that subsection (3)(a) has effect as if for “or the Agency” there was substituted “, the Agency or HIS”.

35 *Reports*

11A Report on operation of Act

(1) Public Health Scotland must—

- (a) as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each reporting period, prepare a report on the operation of this Act during the reporting period, and
- (b) no later than 2 months after the end of the reporting period to which the report relates—
 - (i) lay the report before the Scottish Parliament, and
 - (ii) publish the report in such ways as Public Health Scotland considers appropriate.

(2) In this section, “reporting period” means—

- (a) the period beginning with the day on which section 1 comes into force and ending on 31 March in the following year,
- (b) each of the subsequent 9 periods of one year ending on 31 March.

General provisions

12 Minor and consequential modifications

The schedule makes minor and consequential modifications of other enactments.

12A Meaning of references to “evidence”

- (1) References in this Act (however expressed) to evidence collected during a forensic medical examination include reference to—
 - (a) images created,
 - (b) samples (for example, samples of blood, semen, urine, or hair and samples taken by swabbing a person’s genitals or bodily orifices) collected,
 - (c) any notes or other records (including notes or records about matters other than the physical condition of the person undergoing the examination) created,
 - (d) items worn or otherwise present during the incident which gave rise to the need for such an examination and collected,during or in connection with the examination.
- (2) But such references do not include reference to anything collected or created during or in connection with the examination if the thing was collected or created for use other than use as is mentioned in section 2(3) (for example, for use in identifying, recording and addressing the health care needs of the person undergoing the examination).
- (3) Anything created or collected in anticipation of a forensic medical examination being carried out under this Act is to be regarded as having been created or collected in connection with such an examination whether or not the examination is carried out.
- (4) References in this section to images, notes and other records include reference to those things in all forms that the things exist (for example, digital or physical form).

13 Interpretation

In this Act—

“1978 Act” means the National Health Service (Scotland) Act 1978,

“the Agency” means the Common Services Agency for the Scottish Health Service,

“constable” has the same meaning as in section 99(1) of the Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012,

“forensic medical examination” has the meaning given by section 2(3),

“health board” means a board constituted under section 2(1)(a) of the 1978 Act,

“HIS” means Healthcare Improvement Scotland,

“investigation” means—

- (a) a criminal investigation, or
- (b) a police investigation of behaviour by a child under the age of criminal responsibility,

“proceedings” means—

- (a) criminal proceedings, or
- (b) proceedings under the Children’s Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011,

“special health board” means a board constituted under section 2(1)(b) of the 1978 Act.

14 Ancillary provision

- (1) The Scottish Ministers may by regulations make any incidental, supplementary, consequential, transitional, transitory or saving provision that they consider appropriate for the purposes of, in connection with or for giving full effect to this Act.
- (2) Regulations under subsection (1) may—
 - (a) modify any enactment (including this Act),
 - (b) make different provision for different purposes.
- (3) Regulations under subsection (1)—
 - (a) are subject to the affirmative procedure if they add to, replace or omit any part of the text of an Act,
 - (b) otherwise, are subject to the negative procedure.

15 Commencement

- (1) This section and sections 13, 14 and 16 come into force on the day after Royal Assent.
- (2) The other provisions of this Act come into force on such day as the Scottish Ministers may by regulations appoint.
- (3) Regulations under subsection (2) may—
 - (a) make transitional, transitory or saving provision,
 - (b) make—
 - (i) different provision for different purposes,
 - (ii) different provision for different areas.

16 Short title

The short title of this Act is the Forensic Medical Services (Victims of Sexual Offences) (Scotland) Act 2020.

SCHEDULE
(introduced by section 12)

MINOR AND CONSEQUENTIAL MODIFICATIONS

PART 1

THE 1978 ACT AND ORDERS MADE UNDER IT

The 1978 Act

- 1 (1) The 1978 Act is amended as follows.
- (2) In section 36(1) (accommodation and services), in paragraph (b), after “under this Act” insert “or under the 2020 Act”.
- 10 (2A) In section 76(1) (inquiries), after “this Act” insert “or under the 2020 Act”.
- (2B) In section 77(1) (default powers), after “this Act” insert “or by or under the 2020 Act”.
- (2C) In section 78 (emergency powers)—
- (a) after “this Act” where it first occurs, insert “or under the 2020 Act”,
- (b) after “this Act” where it second occurs, insert “, or by or under the 2020 Act,”.
- 15 (2D) In section 78A (powers in case of service failures)—
- (a) in subsection (1)(a), after “this Act” insert “, or under or by virtue of the 2020 Act,”,
- (b) in subsection (2), after “this Act” insert “or, as the case may be, under or by virtue of the 2020 Act”.
- 20 (3) In section 79 (purchase of land and moveable property)—
- (a) in subsection (1), after “under this Act” where it first occurs, insert “or under the 2020 Act”,
- (b) in subsection (1A), after “under this Act” insert “or under the 2020 Act”.
- (4) In section 108(1) (interpretation), before the definition of “the Agency” insert—
- 25 ““the 2020 Act” means the Forensic Medical Services (Victims of Sexual Offences) (Scotland) Act 2020;”.

The Functions of Health Boards (Scotland) Order 1991 (S.I. 1991/570)

- 2 (1) The Functions of Health Boards (Scotland) Order 1991 is amended as follows.
- (1A) In article 1(2) (interpretation), after the definition of “the Act” insert—
- 30 ““the 2020 Act” means the Forensic Medical Services (Victims of Sexual Offences) (Scotland) Act 2020;”.
- (1B) In article 3 (duty of health boards to exercise functions)—
- (a) in paragraph (1), for the words “those persons for whose health care each Health Board is responsible” substitute “the persons mentioned in paragraph (1A)”, and
- 35 (b) after paragraph (1) insert—
- “(1A) The persons referred to in paragraph (1) are—

(a) in so far as a function specified in article 4 relates to functions conferred on the Health Board by the 2020 Act, those persons in relation to whom the functions conferred by that Act are exercisable by each Health Board;

5 (b) otherwise, those persons for whose health care each Health Board is responsible.”.

(2) In article 4(c) (duty of Scottish Ministers under section 36 of the 1978 Act to be exercised by health boards), after “under the Act” insert “or under the 2020 Act”.

The National Health Service (Clinical Negligence and Other Risks Indemnity Scheme) (Scotland) Regulations 2000

10

2A(1) The National Health Service (Clinical Negligence and Other Risks Indemnity Scheme) (Scotland) Regulations 2000 (S.S.I. 2000/54) are amended as follows.

(2) In regulation 1(2) (interpretation), in the definition of “relevant function”, after subparagraph (i) of paragraph (a) insert—

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“(ia) a function conferred by the Forensic Medical Services (Victims of Sexual Offences) (Scotland) Act 2020,”.

PART 2

OTHER ENACTMENTS

Patient Rights (Scotland) Act 2011

20

3 (1) The Patient Rights (Scotland) Act 2011 is amended as follows.

(2) In section 3 (patient rights)—

(a) in subsection (2)(c), after “wellbeing” insert “(including, where the health care being provided includes a service mentioned in section 1 of the 2020 Act, decisions mentioned in subsection (3A))”,

25

(b) after subsection (3), insert—

“(3A) The decisions referred to in subsection (2)(c) are—

(a) a decision about whether to undergo a forensic medical examination (and whether any such examination should take place without the incident in connection with which the examination would be carried out having been reported to a constable),

30

(b) a decision about whether to make a request under section 8(1)(a) of the 2020 Act.”.

(3) In section 18 (patient advice and support service), after subsection (6), insert—

“(7) In this section and section 19, references to the health service include reference to the services provided under section 1 of the 2020 Act.”.

35

(4) In section 23(1) (interpretation)—

(a) after the definition of “the 1978 Act”, insert—

““the 2020 Act” means the Forensic Medical Services (Victims of Sexual Offences) (Scotland) Act 2020;”,

(b) in the definition of “health care”, after “health service” insert “or under section 1 of the 2020 Act”,

(c) in the definition of “health service function”—

(i) the words from “any” to the end become paragraph (a),

(ii) after that paragraph, insert—

“(b) the functions conferred by section 1 of the 2020 Act;”,

(d) after the definition of “health service function”, insert—

““patient” includes (except in sections 8 to 13) a person in relation to whom a Health Board is exercising the functions conferred by section 1 of the 2020 Act;”.

(5) In the schedule (health care principles)—

(a) in paragraph 7—

(i) the existing words become sub-paragraph (1),

(ii) after that sub-paragraph, insert—

“(2) Sub-paragraph (1) does not apply in relation to the exercise of functions conferred by section 1 of the 2020 Act.”,

(c) in paragraph 12, after “wellbeing” insert “(including, where the health care being provided includes a service mentioned in section 1 of the 2020 Act, decisions mentioned in section 3(3A))”,

(d) in paragraph 15, after “wellbeing” insert “or, where the health care being provided includes a service mentioned in section 1 of the 2020 Act, about matters relevant to the provision of that service”.

Victims and Witnesses (Scotland) Act 2014

4 (1) The Victims and Witnesses (Scotland) Act 2014 is amended as follows.

(2) In section 3C (victims’ right to receive information), after subsection (7), insert—

“(8) In this section, reference to a competent authority includes reference to a health board carrying out the functions conferred by section 1 of the Forensic Medical Services (Victims of Sexual Offences) (Scotland) Act 2020.”.

(3) In section 3D (referral to providers of victim support services), after subsection (4), insert—

“(4A) In this section, reference to a competent authority includes reference to a health board carrying out the functions conferred by section 1 of the Forensic Medical Services (Victims of Sexual Offences) (Scotland) Act 2020.”.

(4) In section 9 (requests as to medical examiner in relation to certain medical examinations)—

(a) for subsection (1), substitute—

“(1) This section applies where a forensic medical examination is to be carried out by virtue of section 2 of the Forensic Medical Services (Victims of Sexual Offences) (Scotland) Act 2020.”,

- 5
- (b) in subsection (2)—
 - (i) the words “in relation to the complaint” are repealed,
 - (ii) for the words from “in pursuance of” to “the person”, where it second occurs, substitute “, the person must be given”,
 - (c) in subsection (3)—
 - (i) the words “the constable must ensure that” are repealed,
 - (ii) after “is”, where it second occurs, insert “to be”.

Forensic Medical Services (Victims of Sexual Offences) (Scotland) Bill

[AS AMENDED AT STAGE 2]

An Act of the Scottish Parliament to confer on health boards functions relating to the provision of forensic medical services to victims of sexual offences; and for connected purposes.

Introduced by: Jeane Freeman
Supported by: Humza Yousaf
On: 26 November 2019
Bill type: Government Bill

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