

Sexual Offenses Workshop- Know your rights!

Approximately every 60 seconds in South Africa, an incidence of sexual assault is occurring. Only 1 in every 9 of these sexual offenses is reported, and of these there is only a 4-6% conviction rate. The government has stated that these shocking statistics are clearly a sign of a 'dysfunctional society', and in response to this, in November 2007; a new Sexual Offenses Act was released.

This workshop has been designed to bring knowledge of this act, and of people's rights regarding this act, to grass root levels. The aim of this workshop is to empower the South African population with knowledge regarding their rights in terms of sexual offenses, and the process of reporting these offenses and receiving medical care. It highlights critical issues surrounding the entitlement of victims to knowledge of the perpetrators HIV status, and the victims rights in terms of receiving medication and information on HIV, STD's, pregnancy etc. The hope is that with a heightened awareness of rights, more sexual offenses will be prevented and reported, and that a greater awareness of the criminal procedure may lead to a heightened sense of empowerment. It is also hoped that knowledge of basic considerations and steps to follow after an offense has been committed may lead to more evidence being able to be collected, and thus a greater conviction rate.

This workshop will be run over two days, with afternoons of both days being left open to accommodate discussion and questions regarding this highly sensitive yet critically important matter. The workshop outline is as follows:

1. What is a sexual offense?
2. What activities constitute sexual assault? (e.g. rape by a husband, any act without consent etc.)
3. Discussion of Sexual Offenses using a range of photograph scenarios
4. Discussion of definitions such as rape, child, incest etc. (as these definitions have been broadened in terms of people's rights within the new Sexual Offenses Act.)
5. Your rights
6. The Criminal procedure (What to do)
7. Forensic examination and medical treatment (Where to go and what will be done)
8. Your rights in terms of medication and information
9. Accredited Health care Professionals- What can they do for you?
10. The role of the prosecutor
11. Court preparation for the victim
12. How can you support a child/ adult victim?
13. Special measures for children
14. After the trial- What should be done?
15. Your responsibilities in the case of a sexual assault
16. Facilities in your area where you can receive assistance (This list will change per area, however provide comprehensive details for medical, support, psychological and legal assistance)

Participants will be provided with a booklet regarding Sexual offenses and a hard copy list of places to seek assistance.

**Facilitator: Ms. Naomi Holdt,
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