

London maternity clinic to help rape survivors

July 29 2016

A groundbreaking maternity clinic dedicated to helping rape survivors through pregnancy opened in London on Friday.

The centre at the Royal London Hospital is the world's first maternity clinic specifically for [rape](#) survivors, according to the My Body Back project which helps women who have experienced [sexual violence](#).

The new initiative was launched a year after the hospital started offering services to women who had been sexually assaulted, some of whom said they had experienced flashbacks of attacks during labour or while undergoing [maternity](#) tests.

Pavan Amara, founder of My Body Back, said for some women pregnancy was the first time since their rape that they felt they had no control over their bodies.

"It's something that many [women](#) go through. Quite often you would have had counselling, been able to move on with your life," she told AFP.

The new clinic is currently only open to UK citizens but Amara said she planned to set up a Skype service after receiving an overwhelming global response.

"Often the requests are just saying 'is there anything you can do to help me?'," she said.

Around 20 full time staff have been brought in to work at the clinic, which offers services such as ante-natal classes.

My Body Back has already received hundreds of messages about the clinic and Amara said she will try to expand the project to elsewhere in the country.

More than 106,000 sexual offences, including nearly 36,000 rapes, were recorded by police in England and Wales in the year ending March 2016.

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