

Report reveals 6,500 hospital sexual assaults in England and Wales over four years

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More than 6,500 rapes and sexual assaults have been recorded in hospitals in England and Wales, over nearly four years, with only 4.1% of suspects known to have been charged.

A [Women's Rights Network report](#), authored by University of Reading Professor of Criminology, Jo Phoenix, found that one in seven of these crimes occurred on [hospital](#) wards.

Shocking crimes, including the rapes of several children under 13, have been disclosed by 35 [police forces](#), responding to Freedom of Information requests sent to 43 forces across the U.K.

Professor Phoenix said, "The figures are shocking and prove that NHS Trusts are failing in their duty to protect both patients and staff. Further, the fact that 95.9% of all reports were either no-further-actioned or not recorded is also truly appalling. Although there are no reasons given within the research for this alarmingly low figure, what is clear is that there appears to be ingrained inertia in dealing with this safeguarding and policing failure."

Heather Binning, founder of the Women's Rights Network said "The volume of [sexual assaults](#) and rapes is even more horrific when you consider that this data covers the pandemic, when much of the country was in lockdown and hospitals were supposedly even more vigilant.

"Hospitals are places where everyone—patients, staff and visitors—should feel completely safe. But rapes and violent assaults are taking place every week in hospitals. To add to the horror, those men committing the crimes are getting away with it."

The Women's Rights Network is calling on NHS authorities, the Care Quality Commission and police constabularies to formally acknowledge that hospitals are a hidden domain of sexual violence. They are seeking full reporting of data; signposting routes for staff to report safeguarding concerns; application of single sex exemptions for wards; protection for staff; and a review of safety measures, including installation of additional CCTV and/or door-entry systems.

Provided by University of Reading

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