

NATIONAL COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

NCADV



CRS™
COSMETIC & RECONSTRUCTIVE SUPPORT

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How do I know if I qualify for the Cosmetic and Reconstructive Support (CRS™) Program ?

You qualify for CRS™ by being a survivor of intimate partner violence who has sustained injuries resulting from an assault by an intimate partner. You must fill out the online application completely and supply the information requested by NCADV. A qualification does not necessarily mean your request will be met. NCADV's Advocacy Director will do her best to connect you with an appropriate provider. The providers with whom we partner require that you are out of the abusive situation for a minimum of 6 months and that you have received support from an advocate or therapist.

2. When can I expect to hear back from someone after I submit my application?

You can expect to hear from us within 5 business days unless otherwise stated (i.e., automated out-of-office response).

3. What will the next steps be after I submit my application?

It is likely some additional information will be requested and to avoid a delay in process, please give as much detail as possible when filling out the application. There will probably be some clarifying questions as each request is unique. If a statement from an advocate or therapist was not provided upon submission of the application, this will be communicated and requested. The Advocacy Director will then send a release of information to you via email for the appropriate entity or provider for you to sign and scan and return. Please do not send police or medical reports or photos as they will be destroyed to protect your confidentiality.

4. How long does the process take?

The length of the process varies depending on your needs as well as your geographic location. It may also depend on whether or not a provider is able to donate services at that time. On average, the process from start to finish takes anywhere from 2-6 months.

5. Is this program free or will I have to pay anything?

This program is free for applicants and all of the providers that are a part of our network understand that they are donating their services and there shall be no request for payment. The only instances in which you may have to pay, is if the doctor cannot get the hospital operating room, anesthesiology labs, pharmacy, etc. to also donate services.

6. How do you find the doctors?

The majority of the doctors are members of the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery (AAFPRS) and volunteer doctors for a program called FACE TO FACE (FTF). Additionally, there are several individual providers who also donate their services. NCADV has a medical advisory council who serve to help with the referral process and to rely on for their medical expertise. On occasion, we seek out support independently, if no other option is available. If, after making contact with 3 providers and a match is still not made, it is our protocol to “close” the case.

7. If travel is required, do I find my own way to get there or is their financial assistance available?

It is currently your responsibility to secure travel and lodging should it be required. We are exploring financial support options but do not have the ability to provide funding at this time.

8. How do I know if the provider will do a good job? Will I be made to look worse?

As with anything, there are no guarantees. These doctors choose to help survivors of domestic violence and donate services for free. They are all board-certified within their speciality. It is never the intention of the program or the doctors to perform any procedure unsatisfactorily.

9. If I get referred to a provider and I don't like what they have to say, can I be referred to another provider?

It is unlikely that you will be referred to a different provider if you are unhappy with the first referral, mainly because resources are limited and there are many applicants seeking support services.

10. Does applying to CRS™ guarantee that I will have my surgery or procedure?

No. This program has a very high success rate but there are occasions where a provider cannot be located or secured. In some instances, upon the recommendation of the medical professional, your application may be denied.

11. What are some reasons I may be denied?

The main reason an application is denied is simply because there isn't a provider available to perform the procedure. Another reason may be because the doctor could not secure the additional donated services such as the hospital operating room (OR) or anesthesiology. It is possible that after having been referred, the doctor does not recommend the desired procedure or indicates that your injuries are not a DIRECT result of domestic violence. While we fully understand that emotional abuse and neglect are, in fact domestic violence, unfortunately our providers cannot assist with reconstructive support if the injury isn't directly related to a physical intimate partner assault. Additionally, if after the consultation, it is the medical finding of the provider that your injuries did not result from an intimate partner assault, your case will be denied and "closed". If a provider has agreed to see you for a consultation and subsequent appointments, it is your responsibility to show up on time. There are certainly circumstance beyond your control, but if missing or showing up late to appointments becomes habit, it is then the provider's office discretion whether or not to keep seeing you as a patient. NCADV will not refer to another provider in this instance.

12. Is there an appeals process if I am denied?

There is not an official appeals process. We do our very best to advocate for survivors and having their needs addressed. We are always open to feedback and suggestions for improving the program but please note that we have very limited resources.

13. Will my name, picture, or other personal information be shared?

Not unless you agree to it.

14. What if, after my consultation, I decide that I do not wish to go through with the surgery? Am I penalized?

Not at all. It is entirely your decision whether or not you choose to undergo any procedure.

15. What are the steps in the process?

Please view the brief slideshow on the ncadv.org/cosmetic-support page.

16. Why can't you accept applications for dental repair?

Unfortunately we are not able to assist with dental repair at this time. The NCADV CRS Program volunteer providers are currently only facial and body plastic reconstructive surgeons. The Give Back a Smile Program specializes in dental repairs for survivors of domestic violence and they have many more resources so we gladly partner with them when addressing dental needs.

17. Are the providers trauma-informed? What if they make me feel bad about what I went through or blame me?

The providers who volunteer to be a part of the program are doing so because they want to give back to the community. They are not affiliated directly with NCADV and therefore, we cannot guarantee they will be trauma sensitive or informed. We encourage you to be your own advocate in regards to your medical treatment.

18. What if I don't have an advocate or therapist and I don't want to talk with anyone?

It is a requirement of our providers that each applicant have spoken to an advocate or therapist at least twice. The reasoning behind this is that a) your safety is of the utmost importance and we want to insure that there has been significant time between the assault(s) and when you are seeking treatment and b) undergoing a surgical procedure

can be very difficult and traumatic and they want to insure as best as possible that emotionally, you are ready to receive treatment.

19. If I am unhappy with the results, is there a grievance process or the option for corrective surgery?

Because the providers do not work with NCADV directly, your grievance would be directed towards the provider and not NCADV. We certainly welcome any feedback, positive or negative, but ultimately, we are not responsible for the surgical outcome.

20. What if my abuser was not my intimate partner? Do I still qualify for the program?

Unfortunately, no. While other forms of abuse are horrific and not your fault, we only serve survivors of intimate partner violence.

21. What if I have questions? Is there anyone I can talk with?

If you have questions as it relates to process, you can direct them to Robin Brock of NCADV. Alternatively, if your questions are in regard to treatment or scheduling, etc, you will need to be in contact with the provider's office directly.

22. Is this program confidential?

Yes and no. Your personal information is only shared with the appropriate persons such as medical staff and providers, or with administrators of partner programs. In most instances, it is required that you sign a release of information in order for NCADV to make a referral. All of the medical providers are HIPAA certified and therefore, should not share your information without your consent. If you would like to share your experience with the program after completion for the purposes of publicity for NCADV's programming, we welcome that and would only do so with express permission.

23. How many applications are being processed?

NCADV receives applications all the time so the number fluctuates but it averages at around 60 at any one given time.

24. If someone else's injuries are worse than mine, do they get priority?

There is no list of priority; it's simply a matter of locating a provider willing to donate their services. All applicants receive the same level of attention and importance but some geographical locations are more abundant in terms of providers than others.

25. What if I need several procedures? Does the same doctor do it all?

This depends on what type of treatment or repair you are seeking. Sometimes the doctors ask you to prioritize which procedures you'd like. For example, if you are seeking a facial fracture repair as well scar revision on your abdomen, you would likely have to see 2 providers as nearly 90% of the doctors are facial plastic surgeons only. In this instance, you may be asked to apply twice.

26. Can I search for a doctor on my own?

The majority of the providers that "sign up" to be part of our network are AAFPRS accredited with the FTF Program which means they are in good standing from the medical board and are already familiar with the program. From time to time a patient is able to advocate for herself with the help of NCADV staff but there is no guarantee of success.

27. What if the provider wants me to share my story in the press or media?

The purpose of the program is to support survivors by connecting them with plastic surgeons and other providers. If there is an opportunity for a media story, it is 100% up to you to decide if you feel comfortable participating in such event.