

7 minute briefing: Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

- 1. What is Female Genital Mutilation?** Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) comprises all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs. It is also known by the following terms: Sunna, Khitan, Kutairi, Fanado, Bondo, Halalays, and Gudiniin. Women are led to believe that FGM will make them more appealing to men, and if they choose not to have this done, they can be ostracised from their community.
- 2. How is it abuse or neglect?** FGM is a form of abuse and violence against women and girls which has immediate and long-term health consequences including severe pain and blood loss, shock, mental health problems, complications in childbirth and/or death. Over 200 million have experienced FGM and the average age of victims is between 5-8 years old. The practice is usually performed by an older woman in the community known as the 'cutter'.
- 3. Types of FGM.**
 - Type 1 – part or all of the clitoris is removed
 - Clitoris and inner labia are removed
 - Whole genital area sewn up with a small opening for urine and menstruation
 - All other harmful procedures to the female genitalia for non-medical purposes for example pricking, piercing, pulling, incision or scraping or cauterisation.
- 4. Legal guidance.** The FGM Act (2003) made it illegal to carry out or assist with this in the UK but this just protected UK citizens and people were travelling out of the country and returning. The Serious Crime Act (2015) introduced extended extra-territorial protection, anonymity for victims, a Protection Order stopping children travelling outside the UK, and parental liability. This can now result in a 14-year prison sentence and a £10,000 fine.
- 5. Spot the signs.** FGM is a form of domestic abuse and should be treated as a safeguarding concern. Signs that someone is at risk can include family coming from a country where FGM is practiced, a family history of FGM, or parents having poor access to information on FGM.
- 6. Reporting concerns.** All cases of FGM **must** be reported to Greater Manchester Police on 101. Greater Manchester also has The Support Our Sisters NESTAC, Guardian Project for under-18's who can be contacted at guardian.project@outlook.com or 07449 651 677. NESTAC can be contacted at info@nestac.org.uk There is also the FGM clinic at St Mary's Hospital as well as their SARC services.
- 7. Further information and support.**
 - [Female Genital Mutilation \(FGM\) online procedures manual](#)
 - [Free FGM Training Online | Recognising & Preventing FGM Free Course | Virtual College \(virtual-college.co.uk\)](#)
 - [Female genital mutilation: resource pack - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)