

Welfare Awareness Topic: Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Overview – FGM is a procedure where the female genitals are deliberately cut, injured or changed, altering female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is sometimes called 'female circumcision' and some communities use local names for referring to FGM – like 'sunna' or 'gudniin'. In over 90% of cases, FGM is carried out under the age of 18. All women and girls have the right to control what happens to their bodies and the right to say no to FGM.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a practice used in some cultures to control female sexuality. [Equality Now](#) state that "an estimated 103,000 women and girls aged 15–49 were thought to be living with female genital mutilation (FGM) in England and Wales as of 2011". [The WHO fact sheet on FGM](#) states "FGM is recognized internationally as a violation of the human rights of girls and women. It reflects deep-rooted inequality between the sexes and constitutes an extreme form of discrimination against women. It is nearly always carried out on minors and is a violation of the rights of children. The practice also violates a person's rights to health, security and physical integrity, the right to be free from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, and the right to life when the procedure results in death."

FGM is a form of child abuse, it is a criminal offence in the UK, and it is often performed by someone with no medical training, and for no medical reason, often without anaesthetic.

Help is available if you have had FGM or you're worried that you or someone you know is at risk – please see the resources page at the end of this newsletter.

- If someone is in immediate danger, contact the police immediately by dialling 999
- If you're under pressure to have FGM performed on you, or anyone you know, ask a GP, your health visitor, or another healthcare professional for help, or contact the NSPCC helpline

If you have had FGM, you can get help from a specialist NHS gynaecologist or FGM service – ask a GP, your midwife or any other healthcare professional about services in your area

Article/Source

If you're concerned that someone may be at risk, contact the NSPCC helpline on 0808 800 5000, email help@nspcc.org.uk or fill in their [online form](#). If someone is in immediate danger, contact the police by dialling 999.

GOV.UK has more information on [what to do if you know somebody at risk](#), including what to do if you think that someone might have been taken abroad.

The NSPCC also have a range of resources on their [website](#)

The National FGM centre also have a list of services if you would like some help, support and advice in your area: <http://nationalfgmcentre.org.uk/uk-fgm-services/>

Support

If you would like to talk to the safeguarding team about anything you have just read, we will listen without judgement and signpost you to support. If you would like to talk to a member of the Safeguarding Team then please get in touch: safeguarding@bpp.com