

MANDATORY REPORTING OF FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION PROCEDURE

Policy Statement

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is illegal in England and Wales under the FGM Act 2003 ("the 2003 Act").

From 31 October 2015 onwards, the legislation requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to make a report to the police where, in the course of their professional duties, they either:

- Are informed by a girl under 18 that an act of FGM has been carried out on her; or
- Observe physical signs which appear to show that an act of FGM has been carried out on a girl under 18 and they have no reason to believe that the act was necessary for the girl's physical or mental health or for purposes connected with labour or birth (see section 2.1a for further information).

Procedure

Female Genital Mutilation is a form of child abuse and violence against women. FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons.

The duty is a personal duty which requires the individual professional who becomes aware of the case to make a report; the responsibility cannot be transferred. The only exception to this is if you know that another individual from your profession has already made a report; there is no requirement to make a second.

The duty applies to cases directly disclosed by the victim. If a parent, guardian, sibling or other individual discloses that a girl under 18 has had FGM, any such disclosure will be referred to children's social services (ECIRS - 020 8825 8000) in line with wider safeguarding responsibilities. In line with safeguarding best practice, we will contact the girl and/or her parents or guardians as appropriate to explain the report, why it is being made, and what it means.

Reports will be made as soon as possible after a case is discovered, and preferably by the close of the next working day.

It is recommended that reports are made orally by calling 101, the single non-emergency number.