

## Tackling Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in the West Midlands – Report by the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel

### Six-month progress update on recommendations

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In June 2015 the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel published its scrutiny report into tackling FGM in the West Midlands. The Panel found much that is going on to tackle FGM that is positive across the region but different areas and organisations were at different places in the journey to eradicate FGM – some just setting out, with others having long established multi-agency working. The report made nine recommendations. The Panel would like to invite all recipients of the report to provide a six-month update on work to progress the recommendations within their organisation.

The report and executive summary can be found at: <http://westmidlandspcp.co.uk/panels-fgm-inquiry-report-published-22-june-2015/>

Please complete the section relevant to your organisation and return to [wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:wmpcp@birmingham.gov.uk) by **12 noon Friday 4 November 2016**.

**Response prepared by:** Collated responses from BAFGM, Birmingham Children’s Social Care and BSCB by Lorna Scarlett AD People

**Organisation:** Birmingham City Council

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### Moving Forward Together in the West Midlands

**Recommendation 1:** To ensure consistency in dealing with female genital mutilation (FGM) the Preventing Violence Against Vulnerable People Board should consider establishing a time limited West Midlands Task Force on FGM to:

- develop procedures such as a clear and consistent common FGM risk assessment;
- build understanding and data on prevalence of FGM;
- develop clarity about information sharing;
- develop guidelines to ensure that when a girl is born to a mother who has undergone FGM that appropriate steps are taken to ensure the family are made aware that it is both illegal to perform FGM and causes unnecessary pain and suffering;
- explore potential for civil remedies (such as FGM protection orders); and
- develop any other key issues identified within this report, which require collective drive and consistency across the West Midlands.

#### **November 2016 Update**

Birmingham City Council Children’s Social Care revised the FGM procedures following the requirement for mandatory reporting. In the section on further information links have now been added to Gov.uk a fact sheet on the new duty for Health and Social Care Professionals and Teachers to report Female Genital Mutilation. The changes in statutory guidance have been disseminated through internal communication to all social care professionals.

Female Genital Mutilation screening has been piloted in the West Midlands region and is now used by agencies who make the referral to Birmingham Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). The screening tool seeks to support agencies in identifying the signs of FGM and those children at risk so that appropriate actions can be taken which may be education and support or those that require a referral to Police or children’s social care through the MASH.

**Operation Lime Light**

Operation Limelight is national initiative that has been running for three years, involving Border Force, the Police, and the National Crime Agency at International Airports across the UK, aimed at preventing and detecting cases of female genital mutilation (FGM). The joint operation is a proactive airside operation looking at inbound and outbound flights to ‘countries of prevalence’ for FGM.

The Border Force and Staffordshire, Warwickshire, West Mercia and West Midlands police forces co-ordinated the operation at Birmingham Airport on outbound flights on 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> August 2016 and return flights 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2016. Parents with female daughters were approached and asked about FGM and provided with information. If they indicated that they had been subject of FGM a referral was made to the relevant Children’s Social Care for consideration of information sharing with Health and Education. Approximately 10 cases were identified from the operation at Birmingham Airport. Detective Inspector Wendy Bird oversaw the West Midlands Police involvement in the operation, who will be able to provide a more detailed summary of the outcome of the operation. Solihull Children’s Social Care provided support for the operation as the Airport is located in Solihull Local Authority.

**Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC)**

**Recommendation 2:** The Police and Crime Plan seeks to increase public reporting of hidden crime such as FGM; improve awareness within the police force and “continue to do more with partners to prevent and detect hidden crimes. We expect the PCC to demonstrate leadership to progress these issues for FGM.

**November 2016 Update**

**Recommendation 3:** The PCC should encourage West Midlands Police to take all steps to work with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to maximise the opportunity for a suitable West Midlands prosecution.

**November 2016 Update**

*Recommendation 5, 7 and 8 also have specific recommendations for the PCC.*

### **Partners**

**Recommendation 4:** Councils, schools and health organisations (including NHS Trusts) need to ensure FGM is recognised as a priority by their boards and executives – and activity is not just led by determined individuals – to ensure prevention and referral is embedded in “how we do things round here”.

### **November 2016 Update**

A police officer with a specialism in FGM is located within the Birmingham MASH to support strategy discussions where there are concerns around safeguarding.

Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board (BCSB) has a website on FGM in the professional section used to provide information to assist professionals in promoting the welfare of children and safeguarding matters. The webpage includes links to particular organisations who can provide advice and support to professionals. A full outline of training is also available on the website as well as information on how to access courses.

The BSCB provides strategic oversight and support to the work of the multi-agency Birmingham Against Female Genital Mutilation (BAFGM). Hazel Pulley, Head Teacher at Parkfield Community School Chair’s BASFGM. Hazel is also engaged at a West Midlands level as Chair of the PVVP FGM Group.

Birmingham has an established partnership group to lead on FGM, which shares good practice, ensures procedures are understood and works to liaise across agencies.

### **West Midlands Preventing Violence Against Vulnerable People Board**

Hazel Pulley Chair’s the West Midlands Regional FGM Group of the Preventing Violence Against Vulnerable People Board. Which are overseeing implementation of the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel report findings.

Birmingham made an offer to Local Safeguarding Children's Boards to observe and consider the tiered approach to training adopted in Birmingham and to assess if the same approach could be adopted elsewhere in the Midlands. A number of authorities took advantage of this and this will now be taken forward in regional forums and monitored by the West Midlands FGM Taskforce.

**Recommendation 5:** The PCC (as a commissioner for victims' services), the Victims' Commission, Health and Well-being Boards and Clinical Commissioning Groups should recognise the need for support and therapy for children and women who have undergone FGM and commission appropriately to meet that need. Where possible, opportunities for collaborative commissioning should be sought.

#### **November 2016 Update**

**Recommendation 6:** Given the importance of understanding the risks and effects of FGM in preventing the continuation of the practice, practitioners need access to training. All Safeguarding Children Boards should co-ordinate training and organisations should ensure that front-line staff are trained to spot the signs / risks of FGM and understand referral pathways.

#### **November 2016 Update**

##### **FGM Learning Lesson Review**

The Quality, Impact and Outcomes Sub-Group have overseen a Learning Lesson Review into case of FGM in Birmingham. The report findings are currently being drafted and considerable further work is required before the report is suitable for presentation to the Sub-Group on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2016. In the interim a draft Executive Summary of the key learning to be prepared by Mary Spencer for wider dissemination the children's workforce for ratification by the review lead Hazel Pulley.

## **FGM Training**

The Board supports and promotes use of BAFGM/Virtual College e-learning package as an introduction to FGM. The e-learning package is prerequisite for face to face FGM training.

The Board endorses the e-learning programme for health care professionals referred to in the Home Office document Annex A: *Draft Multi-agency Statutory Guidance on Female Genital*

*Mutilation (for consultation)* and can be found at [www.e-lfh.org.uk](http://www.e-lfh.org.uk)

The BSCB Have commissioned 12 FGM (half day) Training Modules for 2016/17. Details of the Target Group and Course Aims and Learning Outcomes are set out below. The Training is fully evaluated by the BSCB Learning and Development Sub-Group.

### **Target Group**

Social workers, paediatricians, GPs, youth workers, those working in the early years sector, family support workers, residential staff, midwives, school nurses, health visitors, sexual health staff, teachers, probation staff, police officers, sports club welfare officers, those working with adults in, for example, learning disability, mental health, alcohol and drug misuse services, those working in community play schemes.

### **Aim**

This training aims to raise the awareness of multi-agency practitioners to enable them to identify and act upon concerns about children and young people who may be or have been affected by Female Genital Mutilation.

### **Learning Outcomes**

#### **By the end of the day participants will be able to:**

- Describe what is meant by Female Genital Mutilation and the short and long term consequences of this practice.
- Identify the prevalence of FGM and the communities where it is more likely to be practised
- Explain the cultural context for FGM and the underpinning motivations for its use
- Name the legislation and guidance regarding FGM including mandatory reporting requirements

- Identify factors, signs and symptoms which indicate that children and young people may be at risk of, or have been subjected to FGM.
- Respond sensitively and positively to children and families where there are concerns about FGM
- Act promptly to ensure the safety and welfare of children and young people affected by FGM
- Name and access further relevant resources and information about FGM for professionals and the public

**Recommendation 7:** The PCC should work with West Midlands Police, local authorities, health organisations, and the third sector to ensure that pro-active community empowerment work is being undertaken with communities from FGM practising countries (whilst recognising the value of broader engagement with such communities too), including appropriate men and women’s groups.

**November 2016 Update**

**Recommendation 8:** The PCC and local authorities recognise the crucial role that schools can play in engaging with parents and therefore, encourage schools where there are children from FGM practising countries, to play an active role in educating, preventing and referring. FGM should be included within school safeguarding policies and all staff and governing bodies should receive training.

Further education colleges and universities also provide opportunities to engage with young people and staff should be able to spot the signs / risks of FGM and have knowledge of referral pathways.

## **BAFGM**

Awareness of FGM has been raised through the diligent and continuous work of BAFGM. The publication of the website has enabled a multi-agency approach to grow whilst providing information and instant updates for all. The website is well publicised and so far has received 2500 hits.

One of our main aims is to protect children from the child abuse of FGM. The Chair, Hazel Pulley, has raised awareness prolifically within Birmingham at 2 LA safeguarding conferences and at 15 child protection training sessions for DSLs.

BAFGM agreed the core elements that are required in all Level 2/3 training sessions and with the support of BSCB, (where funding was provided), has facilitated opportunities half day training sessions to frontline staff since March 2016. A lesson pack design for KS2 pupils and training for staff around the delivery of this pack has been provided for all schools in Birmingham with 100 so far attending these sessions. The aim of these packs is to ensure that children are safeguarded through being educated about FGM. Designed by Hazel Pulley, Chair of BAFGM and Headteacher of Parkfield Community School these lessons were extremely well received and the pre-parent meeting encompassed within the lesson pack were well attended. At Parkfield where the pack was first trialled.

To support all agencies BAFGM have designed a Screening Tool and Risk Assessment. This is available via the website at [www.bafgm.org](http://www.bafgm.org) and has been gratefully received by all agencies.

One area we are finding extremely challenging is that of data collection and information sharing. Often data appears to be duplicated in outcome figures and this needs further investigation and guidance for all.

The 2016/17 plans are focused around the design and presentation of our BAFGM conference on the International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2017, the development of a men's group against FGM and a feasibility study into the use of the REPLACE Approach: Supporting Communities to End FGM, written by Prof. Hazel Barret at Coventry University.

**Recommendation 9:** The PCC and the Strategic Lead of the Preventing Violence Against Vulnerable People Board to report to the West Midlands Police and Crime Panel on outcomes in six months' time and thereafter to be agreed on progress implementing these recommendations.

## **November 2016 Update**

The West Midlands Police and Crime Panel will consider progress updates at its meeting on 21 November 2016 and decide whether further update reports are required.