Female Genital Mutilation Strategy

2015-2018
**Statement of Intent**

Female genital mutilation of any type is an illegal practice, a form of child abuse and a violation of the human rights of girls and women. This strategy sets out how Rochdale Safeguarding Boards will safeguard children and protect and support adults from the abuses associated with female genital mutilation (FGM).

**Definition of Female Genital Mutilation**

The World Health Organisation (WHO) states that female genital mutilation (FGM):

“Comprises of all procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons”

FGM is also known as Female Circumcision (FC) and Female Genital Cutting (FGC).

**Our Four key strategic priorities for 2015-2018 are:**

1. Prevention
2. Provision of Services
3. Protection
4. Prosecution
Rochdale Borough Procedures in relation to Female Genital Mutilation

No single agency or statutory body can meet the multiple needs of someone affected by FGM and therefore a multi-agency response is required.

A number of procedures are in place to safeguard children and vulnerable adults who are at risk or who have been subjected to FGM. These procedures are managed across the partnership and provide clear step-by-step guidance on what to do in different circumstances and depending on the level of assessed risk.

**Greater Manchester Safeguarding Children Procedures**

This online resource provides the overarching safeguarding procedures Rochdale Borough. The [Greater Manchester Female Genital Mutilation Multi Agency protocol](http://www.rbscb.org), included within the manual, provides [a framework for protecting female children under the age of 18 and adult females including those who come under the No Secrets definition of a Vulnerable Adult](http://www.rbscb.org).

The lead for consultation on these procedures is the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Board Business Manager, Tony Philbin (tony.philbin@rochdale.gov.uk) (http://www.rbscb.org/).

A number of linked, local procedures, related to specific circumstances, are also in place.

**Multi Agency Screening Service (MASS)**

MASS screens all referrals across the Children’s Needs and Response Framework. [This includes female children at risk/child victims of FGM](http://www.rbscb.org). The MASS manages the assessment and intervention process across Rochdale Borough’s, Needs and Response Framework.

The lead for the MASS service is Sandra Bruce. ([Sandra.Bruce@rochdale.gov.uk](mailto:Sandra.Bruce@rochdale.gov.uk))

The multi-agency needs and response framework can be found at: [http://www.rbscb.org/UserFiles/Docs/Leaflets/CNRF.pdf](http://www.rbscb.org/UserFiles/Docs/Leaflets/CNRF.pdf)
**Children’s Social Care Procedure**

When information is received by Children’s Social Care a **Strategy Meeting** must be called. If a referral is received concerning one female in a family, consideration must be given to whether other females in that family are also at similar risk. There should be consideration of other females from other associated families once concerns are raised about an incident or the perpetrator of FGM.

**Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Adult Board Policy & Procedure**

This online policy and procedure provides the overarching safeguarding procedures for Adults aged 18 and above. The lead for consultation on these procedures is the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Adult Board Business Manager, Tony Philbin (tony.philbin@rochdale.gov.uk) (http://www.rbsab.org/).

**Rochdale Adult Care Safeguarding Procedures**

In response to a concern being raised this will be screened and a Safeguarding Adult Manager will convene a Section 42 safeguarding meeting. The meeting will establish whether the woman has had information about the harmful nature of FGM and the law in the UK. If not, this information will be made available. The strategy meeting will also establish the outcomes the woman wants to achieve and if she would like assistance to access a medical assessment and/or therapeutic services. Consideration must also be given to whether other females in her family are also at similar risk, as well as those from other associated families. Each woman who has been referred to Rochdale Adult Care, where the assessment identifies a continuing risk of FGM, the first priority is protection and consideration should be given to legal action and criminal prosecution. If the safeguarding enquiry determines that FGM is a risk, the category of abuse is physical abuse.

Rochdale Adult Care Monday to Friday, times between 0830 and 1645 - 0300 033 8886  Monday to Friday, out of hours 0830 1645 Police 111
**Implementation**

The FGM Working Group oversees an action plan for the strategy and reports to the RBSCB/RBSAB via the Complex Safeguarding sub group. The group will map links with other strategic groups and related issues such as domestic abuse and children missing to ensure that needs are met in a coordinated way.

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| 1.1 Enable staff to understand FGM, to recognise risk factors and respond when a child or woman that they work with is at risk of FGM. | • Clear FGM policies and pathways are reviewed and these are communicated to the workforce.  
• The Children’s Needs and Response Framework is promoted as the tool for identifying different levels of need and appropriate single or multi-agency intervention  
• Single agency safeguarding leads have the appropriate level of understanding to provide advice and support to staff within their agencies  
• FGM training, including e-learning, incorporates agreed core standards, is available to staff who work with groups or individuals within the community at risk of FGM  
• FGM included within RBSCB single agency training audit  
• Identify/develop and raise awareness of resources for professionals to enable them to engage appropriately with at risk groups.  
• Monitoring & reporting of data to raise awareness of prevalence/high risk communities in Rochdale Borough |
| 1.2 Provide the local community with information and resources about the health consequences and the law relating to FGM and a clear process to follow when they are concerned about a woman or child | • Distribution and promotion of GM-produced FGM leaflet and other campaign / awareness raising materials  
• Use effective communication tools to demonstrate to the community that organisations welcome approaches from anyone who has a concern  
• Identification & training of key players/champions within the community who can disseminate information about FGM and engage with men and women on FGM and its consequences  
• Develop a parents/community pathway to follow when there are concerns regarding FGM |
| 1.3 | Engage with children, young people and their families to raise their awareness and understanding of FGM as a form of abuse and inform them of what to do if a female child or adult is at risk or has been harmed. | • Identify and promote suitable resources for use with children and young people.  
• Work with Early Years professionals to raise awareness of the harm caused by FGM and the help available to women and children  
Identify at risk groups and communities within Rochdale |
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| 2.1 | Ensure that girls and women who have undergone FGM can access appropriate services for information, advice, support and necessary health care | • Map existing provision  
• Local pathways developed  
• Consultation with women & girls to address any barriers to services  
• Review availability/suitability of translation and interpreting services to ensure that female interpreters are available |
| 2.2 | Ensure a holistic approach towards adult women who are suffering the long term effects of FGM | • Referral pathways in place  
• FGM training, including e-learning, incorporates agreed core standards, is available to staff who work with groups or individuals within the community at risk of FGM  
• Identify gaps in service provision e.g. counselling |
| 3. Protection | **What are we going to do?** | **How are we going to do it?** |
| 3.1 | Ensure a coherent and consistent approach to the early identification of risks and planning to support long-term prevention. | • Promote guidance and resources for professionals to enable them to identify women and children at risk of FGM |
| 3.2 | Use RBSCB Quality Assurance Framework Tools to test protection arrangements | • Processes are in place to measure the impact of policy/guidance & training on practice. |
| 4. Prosecution | **What are we going to do?** | **How are we going to do it?** |
| 4.1 | Develop a coordinated approach to bring offenders to justice. | • Create robust systems of gathering evidence to improve conviction rates  
• Establish best practice approaches to protection and prosecution  
• Work with practicing communities to aid identification and prosecution |
| 4.2 | Understand and learn from local and national developments that will help inform the partnerships approach to bringing offenders to justice | • Engage with GM FGM Steering group to share learning and experiences across GM |

References
2. Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation (2016)
3. Greater Manchester Safeguarding Procedures
4. RBSCB/RBSAB Business Plans 2016-18