

**Female Genital  
Mutilation:**  
Standards for  
training healthcare  
professionals



**NHS England INFORMATION READER BOX****Directorate**

Medical	Operations and Information	Specialised Commissioning
<b>Nursing</b>	Trans. & Corp. Ops.	Strategy & Innovation
Finance		

**Publications Gateway Reference:****07874**

<b>Document Purpose</b>	Other (see Description)
<b>Document Name</b>	Female Genital Mutilation: Standards for training healthcare professionals
<b>Author</b>	NHSEngland / Nursing / Safeguarding
<b>Publication Date</b>	28 March 2018
<b>Target Audience</b>	CCG Clinical Leaders, Medical Directors, Directors of PH, Directors of Nursing, NHS Trust Board Chairs, NHS England Regional Directors, Directors of HR
<b>Additional Circulation List</b>	
<b>Description</b>	NHS organisations have statutory guidance and responsibilities to make sure that staff are appropriately training in relation to FGM. These training standards set out how to achieve this.
<b>Cross Reference</b>	N/A
<b>Superseded Docs</b> (if applicable)	N/A
<b>Action Required</b>	N/A
<b>Timing / Deadlines</b> (if applicable)	N/A
<b>Contact Details for further information</b>	Nicky Brownjohn Nursing / Safeguarding 5th floor, Skipton House London SE1 6LH  <a href="http://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/safeguarding/our-work/fgm/">www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/safeguarding/our-work/fgm/</a>

**Document Status**

This is a controlled document. Whilst this document may be printed, the electronic version posted on the intranet is the controlled copy. Any printed copies of this document are not controlled. As a controlled document, this document should not be saved onto local or network drives but should always be accessed from the intranet.

## Contents

1. Executive summary.....	4
2. Introduction.....	5
3. Structure.....	5
4. Alignment between FGM and safeguarding curricula.....	6
5. Training standards.....	7
LEVEL 1 – All staff working in a healthcare setting.....	7
LEVEL 2 – Staff (clinical and non-clinical) with any contact with children and young people and/or parents/carers .....	8
LEVEL 3 – All clinical staff who MAY treat patient with FGM and initiate safeguarding discussion OR receive a disclosure (prompted or unprompted).....	10
LEVEL 4 – All staff working in services supporting girls and women with FGM .....	12
LEVEL 4-1 – Clinicians undertaking de-infibulation in elective settings.....	13
LEVEL 4-2 – Clinicians undertaking genital examination of children .....	14
STRATEGIC LEVEL – Non-clinical staff involved in strategy, management or commissioning .....	16

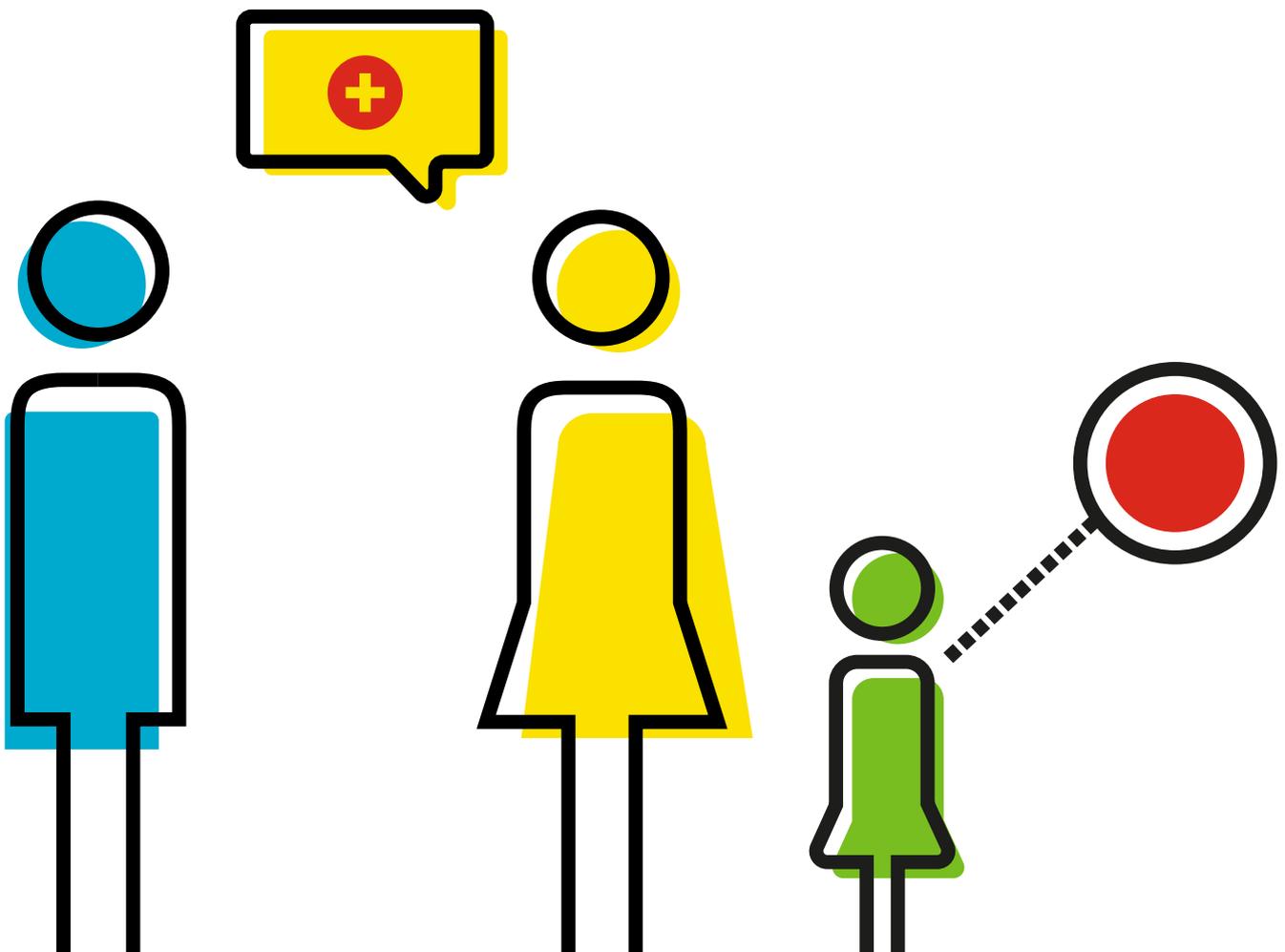
## 1. Executive summary

FGM survivors who have received treatment from NHS services have told us that one of the most important aspects of their care is that the healthcare professional supporting them understands FGM. The professionals caring for survivors also need to understand the complexities which come from the abuse, and offers them support in a non-judgemental and supportive environment.

There are statutory guidelines which require NHS organisations to ensure staff are suitably trained.

Following extensive development, these training standards build on the existing safeguarding curriculum to detail what clinical skills are required by which healthcare professionals, and when a competence is required, what knowledge and understanding constitutes meeting that competence.

All staff working in the NHS need some knowledge of FGM; a few staff need specialist skills and training. This document supports NHS organisations to understand what their staff need to know about FGM, to support the development of local training strategies as part of workforce development.



## 2. Introduction

The NHS England Female Genital Mutilation Prevention Programme (FGMPP) commissioned Middlesex University to produce an FGM national training strategy. The strategy considered the level of training required by those working in the NHS by profession. Following consultation, it was developed into training standards set out in this document. The training standards set standards on what content, quality and type of training is acceptable for different groups of staff and the various professional roles working in the NHS.

It should be noted that the clinical and or communication skills required are not uniquely relevant to FGM. The knowledge of the context and linking the situation to an understanding of FGM is what makes sure that professionals can provide high quality treatment to their patients.

## 3. Structure

### The training standards aim to:

- Expand on what content can be used to meet the curriculum requirements set out in Safeguarding children and young people: roles and competences for health care staff.
- Within existing professional capacity and registration, detail the clinical knowledge and skills needed to treat a patient where FGM is a relevant condition.

### The training standards assume:

- A professional already has knowledge as appropriate to their staff group, and is working at an appropriate level with suitable supervision. For example, a midwife treating a woman with FGM is expected to be fully trained in their role as a midwife. The training standards aim to outline what training the midwife needs to then adapt that skillset to meet the needs of a patient presenting with FGM.

### Each level describes the following:

<b>Staff Group</b>	<i>Who is within this level. Organisations will need to map their staff against the descriptors.</i>
<b>Core competencies</b>	<i>What skills constitute this level. In context of existing professional role, some individuals will naturally focus on certain aspects.</i>
<b>Suggested content</b>	<i>What knowledge/material must be included to achieve this level.</i>
<b>Resources</b>	<i>Lists existing materials, all free to access, which can be used to deliver this level and which are nationally quality assured. Organisations are free to use/purchase other training materials/courses which meet the same standard.</i>
<b>Delivery</b>	<i>Sets an expectation of the time commitment/method of delivery required at each level.</i>
<b>Assessment</b>	<i>Sets an expectation of how staff would be tested to demonstrate achievement at each level.</i>

## 4. Alignment between FGM training standards and safeguarding curriculum

Level/staff group	Aligns to:
1 - All staff working in a healthcare setting	Level 1 Safeguarding Children and Young People: Roles and Competences for Health Care Staff
2 - Staff (clinical and non-clinical) with any contact with children and young people and/or parents/carers	Level 2 Safeguarding Children and Young People: Roles and Competences for Health Care Staff
3 - All clinical staff who MAY treat patient with FGM and initiate safeguarding discussion OR receive a disclosure (prompted or unprompted)	<p>Similarities with: Level 2 Safeguarding Children and Young People: Roles and Competences for Health Care Staff</p> <p>Additional content to make sure clinicians at this level have the skills and knowledge to support patients with FGM within the scope of their clinical practice</p>
4 - All staff working in FGM clinics or services or those frequently treating women and girls with FGM	<p>Similarities with: Level 3 Safeguarding Children and Young People: Roles and Competences for Health Care Staff</p> <p>Additional content to make sure clinicians working in these settings have the skills and knowledge to support patients with FGM within the scope of their clinical practice</p>
4-1 Clinicians undertaking elective de-infibulation	Clinical skillset for de-infibulation
4-2 Clinicians examining children for FGM	Clinical skillset for paediatric genital examinations
Strategic - Non-clinical staff involved in strategy, management or commissioning	Similarities with: Strategic Level Safeguarding Children and Young People: Roles and Competences for Health Care Staff

## 5. Training standards

### LEVEL 1 - All staff working in a healthcare setting

<b>Core Competencies:</b>	<p>As per Level 1 Safeguarding Children and Young People: Roles and Competences for Health Care Staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals knowing what to look for which may indicate possible harm and knowing who to contact and seek advice from if they have concerns.</li> <li>• Recognising potential indicators of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).</li> <li>• Taking appropriate action if they have concerns, including appropriately reporting concerns safely and seeking advice.</li> </ul>
<b>Suggested Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FGM is child abuse.</li> <li>• FGM is illegal.</li> <li>• FGM explained in a human rights context.</li> <li>• FGM is gender-based abuse and violence against women and girls.</li> <li>• Basic details of what FGM is.</li> <li>• Broad global and UK context.</li> <li>• Instructions on how and where to get help (signposting) within staff member's own organisation and structure.</li> <li>• Context that FGM is part of safeguarding.</li> <li>• Need to share information and concerns.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 min face-to-face training package: <a href="#">Level 1 Female Genital Mutilation: Training for staff working in a healthcare setting</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">'An Introduction to FGM'</a> e-learning for Healthcare online session.</li> <li>• Locally developed or purchased training package meeting required standards.</li> </ul>
<b>Delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Should be incorporated within existing Level 1 safeguarding training.</li> <li>• No expectation that this is a separate/stand-alone delivery.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiz/multiple choice questions within safeguarding training.</li> </ul>

## LEVEL 2 – Staff (clinical and non-clinical) with any contact with children and young people and/or parents/carers

<p><b>Core Competencies</b></p>	<p><b>All competencies required at Level one</b></p> <p><b>As per Level 2 Safeguarding Children and Young People: Roles and Competences for Health Care Staff:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses professional and clinical knowledge, and understanding of FGM to identify and refer a child suspected of being at risk of FGM or having been a victim of FGM.</li> <li>• Acts as an effective advocate for the child or young person.</li> <li>• Recognises the potential impact of a parent’s/carer’s physical and mental health who has undergone FGM on the wellbeing of a child or young person.</li> <li>• Clear about personal and colleagues’ roles, responsibilities, and professional boundaries.</li> <li>• As appropriate to role, able to refer to social care if a safeguarding/child protection concern is identified.</li> <li>• Documents safeguarding/child protection concerns in order to be able to inform the relevant staff and agencies as necessary.</li> <li>• Maintains appropriate record keeping, and differentiates between fact and opinion.</li> <li>• Shares appropriate and relevant information with other teams/agencies.</li> <li>• Acts in accordance with key statutory and non-statutory guidance and legislation including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and Human Rights Act.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Suggested Content</b></p>	<p><b>All level 1 content</b></p> <p><b>Level 2 to include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Definition of FGM and types.</li> <li>• Health complications, including physical and emotional issues.</li> <li>• Risk factors (including but not limited to the relevance of travel, age, countries of prevalence, family influences).</li> <li>• Reflection upon professional curiosity.</li> <li>• How to comply with the mandatory reporting duty (to the police) and requirements to record information in personal healthcare records.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resources</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face to face training package: <u>Level 2 Female Genital Mutilation: Training for staff with any contact with child and young people and/or parents/carers.</u></li> <li>• <u>‘An Introduction to FGM’</u> e-learning for Healthcare online session’.</li> <li>• Locally developed or purchased training package meeting required standards.</li> </ul>

## LEVEL 2 – Staff (clinical and non-clinical) with any contact with children and young people and/or parents/carers

- Delivery**
- Should be incorporated within existing Level 2 safeguarding training.
  - No expectation that this is a separate/stand-alone delivery.

- Assessment**
- Quiz/multiple choice questions within safeguarding training.

## LEVEL 3 – All clinical staff who MAY treat patient with FGM and initiate safeguarding discussion OR receive a disclosure (prompted or unprompted)

To note: general practitioners, midwives, obstetricians gynaecologists, practice nurses and health visitors (without specialism) are included.

### Core Competencies

### All competencies required in Level 2 Additionally:

- Draws on child, woman and family-focused clinical and professional knowledge and expertise to identify signs of FGM and adapt the delivery of care, including onward referral to FGM services where appropriate.
- Documents and reports care needs, concerns, history taking and physical examination in relation to FGM in a manner that is appropriate for delivery of care, safeguarding/child protection and legal processes.
- Contributes to inter-agency assessments, the gathering and sharing of information and where appropriate analysis of risk.
- Undertakes regular documented reviews of own (and/or team) safeguarding/child protection practice as appropriate to role.
- Contributes to serious case reviews/case management reviews/significant case reviews as appropriate to role.
- Works with other professionals and agencies, with children, young people and their families when there are safeguarding concerns.
- Detailed understanding of the FGM mandatory reporting duty.

**LEVEL 3 – All clinical staff who MAY treat patient with FGM and initiate safeguarding discussion OR receive a disclosure (prompted or unprompted)**

To note: general practitioners, midwives, obstetricians gynaecologists, practice nurses and health visitors (without specialism) are included.

**Suggested Content**

**All level 1 and 2 content  
Level 3 to include:**

- Talk directly and ask about FGM, discussing all aspects relevant to their patients including taking history.
- Identify FGM when undertaking physical exams of patients as part of the professional role. Recognise the types of FGM where appropriate, but understand complexities in diagnosing types of FGM and where to refer when appropriate.
- Ability to adapt clinical care to support women and girls who may have undergone FGM, sensitively.
- Use appropriate FGM assessment template, and decide appropriate course of action (with support from local safeguarding lead).
- Discussion of examples of serious case/case management/significant case reviews where FGM is involved exploring the role of the multidisciplinary team in referral and supporting families.
- Recognise and lead discussions when individual may not know or does not recall FGM.
- Documenting the safeguarding and aspects of care relating to FGM in line with information standards.
- Appropriate to care setting and role, understand the FGM Enhanced Dataset requirements and how to comply within own setting.
- Understand the FGM mandatory reporting duty to report to police, including how to adhere to this duty and how it relates to local processes.
- Knowledge on where to refer to local and national services and community groups.
- For midwives/obstetricians, how to manage/plan for labour according to the type of FGM/needs of woman including recognition.

**Resources**

- Face to face training package: Level 3 Female Genital Mutilation: Training for all clinical staff who MAY treat patient with FGM and initiate safeguarding discussion OR receive a disclosure.
- Completing both online sessions:
  - 'Communication Skills for FGM consultations'
  - 'Legal and Safeguarding Issues regarding FGM in the UK'
 AND completing at least one of the following online sessions (appropriate to role) would meet the requirements of this level:
  - FGM: Issues, presentation and management in children and young women
  - FGM: Issues, presentation and management in women and around pregnancy
  - The Psychological Impact of FGM
- Locally developed or purchased training package meeting required standards.

**LEVEL 3 – All clinical staff who MAY treat patient with FGM and initiate safeguarding discussion OR receive a disclosure (prompted or unprompted)**

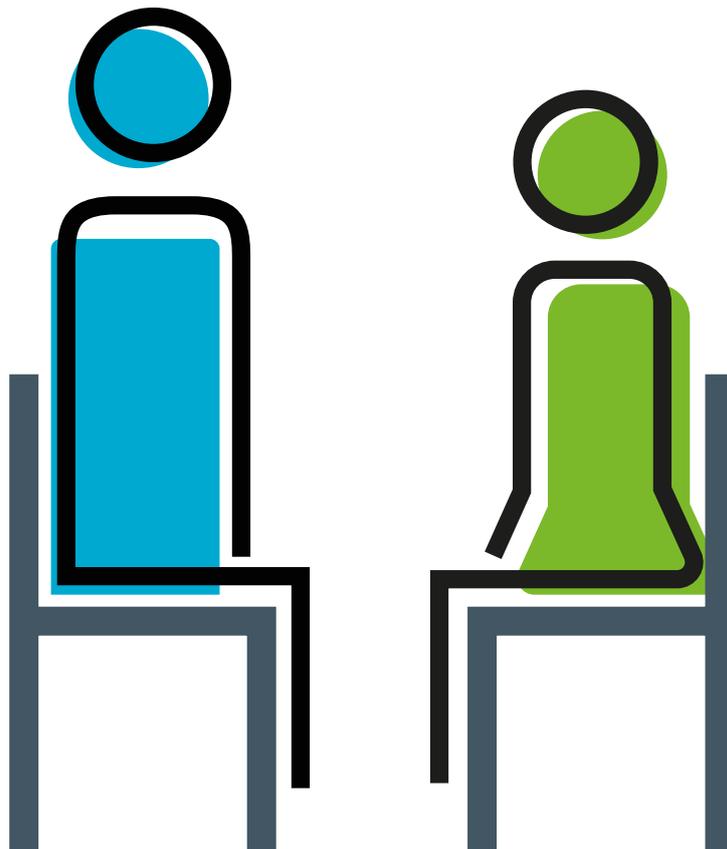
To note: general practitioners, midwives, obstetricians gynaecologists, practice nurses and health visitors (without specialism) are included.

**Delivery**

- Either e-learning or face to face training. If achieved through following the e-learning, to confirm achievement an individual should have a discussion with a peer, supervisor or mentor.
- The discussion element of training should be either reflecting on a clinical experience or based on a relevant scenario.
- Discussion can be used for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and as part of a professional's revalidation process.

**Assessment**

- Quiz/multiple choice questions following formal training aspect.
- This could be done by means of a group case study discussion and include elements of the learning outcomes including a plan of care and referral.
- Anonymised cases can be used for group discussion or may be provided by the facilitator.
- For regulated professionals, this could be used as part of the reflective element of revalidation.



## LEVEL 4 - All staff working in services specifically girls and women with FGM

To note: will include non-regulated professionals for example support workers/health advocates

<b>Core Competencies</b>	<b>All competencies required in Level 3</b> <b>Additionally:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss, support and plan treatment for FGM and associated conditions drawing on clinical and professional knowledge and expertise to identify FGM and deliver care.</li> <li>• Making safeguarding referrals.</li> <li>• Work effectively with colleagues from other organisations, providing advice as appropriate.</li> <li>• Support other staff in the development of these skills.</li> </ul>
<b>Suggested Content</b>	<b>All level 1, 2, &amp; 3 content</b> <b>Level 4 to include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding health and mental health needs and treatment options of girls and women who have undergone FGM.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face to face training package: Level 4 Female Genital Mutilation: Training for all staff working in services specifically supporting girls and women with FGM.</li> <li>• Completing all e-learning for Healthcare online sessions will deliver the vast majority of content. To meet this level, there should be a face to face component of training, potentially building on completion of e-learning content.</li> <li>• Locally developed or purchased training package meeting required standards.</li> </ul>
<b>Delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-course reading to cover and test earlier learning and previously completed levels are suitable.</li> <li>• This should include face to face training including discussion with a peer.</li> <li>• The discussion element of training should be either reflecting on a clinical experience or based on a relevant scenario.</li> <li>• Discussion can be used for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and as part of a professional's revalidation process.</li> </ul>

## LEVEL 4 - All staff working in services specifically girls and women with FGM

To note: will include non-regulated professionals for example support workers/health advocates

### Assessment

- Quiz/multiple choice questions following formal training aspect.
- This could be done by means of a group case study discussion and include elements of the learning outcomes including a plan of care and referral.
- Anonymised cases can be used for group discussion or may be provided by the facilitator.
- For regulated professionals, this could be used as part of the reflective element of revalidation.
- To fully demonstrate competence, individuals should complete a learning log which evidences observing two consultations in the clinic/department and carrying out three consultations under supervision from a professional who has the competence.

## LEVEL 4-1 Clinicians undertaking de-infibulation in elective settings

### Core Competencies

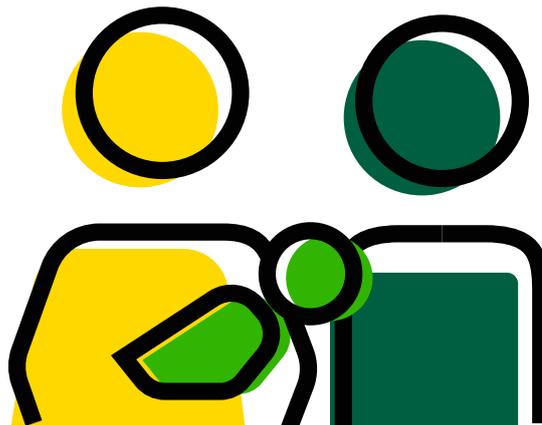
All competencies required in Level 4  
Additionally:

- The ability to undertake the procedure of de-infibulation, including planning, preparation, and follow-up care.

### Suggested Content

All level 1-4 content  
Level 4-1 to include:

- De-infibulation DVD from the FGM National Clinical Group.



## LEVEL 4-1 Clinicians undertaking de-infibulation in elective settings

### Resources

- Face to face training package: Level 4-2 Female Genital Mutilation: Training for clinicians undertaking de-infibulation in elective settings.
- Locally developed or purchased training package meeting required standards.

### Delivery

- Pre-course reading to cover and test earlier learning and previously completed levels are suitable.
- This should be face to face training including discussion with a peer.
- The discussion element of training should be either reflecting on a clinical experience or based on a relevant scenario.
- The training must include practical skills in de-infibulation and suturing.

### Assessment

- To fully demonstrate competence, individuals should complete a learning log which evidence observing three de-infibulations, and carrying out three de-infibulations under supervision from a professional who has the competence.

## LEVEL 4-2 - Clinicians undertaking genital examination of children

### Core Competencies

#### All competencies required in Level 4 Additionally:

- How to conduct a thorough paediatric examination that allows for the maximum opportunity to confirm diagnosis of FGM and related injuries, agree a treatment or support plan, and take appropriate safeguarding measures.
- Ability to assess context of examination, and ensure that this meets the needs of the child/wider safeguarding or other requirements.

## LEVEL 4-2 - Clinicians undertaking genital examination of children

### Suggested Content

### All level 1 - 4 content Level 4-2 to include:

- Identifying the different types of FGM with specialist knowledge relating to paediatrics and variance.
- Understand what constitutes an appropriate paediatric designed environment and what access to colposcopy with digital imaging facility is required.
- Understands what constitutes an appropriate multi-disciplinary team with access to psychological support for the child and her family whether or not FGM is confirmed, and knowledge of signposting to available local community based VCS support.
- Understand the importance and reasons for having a second practitioner present as chaperone e.g. trainee paediatrician, paediatric nurse, sexual offences examiner.
- Understanding the need for protected time for the preparation of statements and reports for child protection enquiries, criminal investigations and the courts; have protected time for court attendance; and undergo case supervision and regular peer review.

### Resources

- Face to face training package: Level 4-2 Female Genital Mutilation: [Training for clinicians undertaking genital examination of children.](#)
- Locally developed or purchased training package meeting required standards.

### Delivery

- Pre-course reading to understand early levels suitable.
- This should be face to face training including discussion with a peer.
- The discussion element of training should be either reflecting on a clinical experience or based on a relevant scenario.
- Discussion can be used for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and as part of a professional's revalidation process.

### Assessment

- Quiz/multiple choice questions following formal training aspect.
- This could be done by means of a group case study discussion and include elements of the learning outcomes including a plan of care and referral.
- Anonymised cases can be used for group discussion or may be provided by the facilitator.
- To fully demonstrate competence, individuals should complete a learning log which evidences observing two consultations in the clinic/ department and carrying out three consultations under supervision from a professional who has the competence.

## STRATEGIC LEVEL – Non-clinical staff involved in strategy, management or commissioning

<b>Core Competencies</b>	<p><b>All competencies required in Level 2</b>  <b>Additionally:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop, implement, and review local policy, training and provision of services for FGM in line with local safeguarding policies, research, and legal frameworks.</li> <li>• Working together in multiagency settings, with a focus on prevention.</li> <li>• To contribute, produce or evaluate current local frameworks or guidelines.</li> </ul>
<b>Suggested Content</b>	<p><b>All level 1 and 2 content</b>  <b>Strategic Level to include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of national and local prevalence data, understanding the sources of information (external and NHS sources).</li> <li>• Third Sector support and engagement.</li> <li>• Knowledge of current policy and direction in relation to provision of services/service quality standards/research priorities, relating to physical and mental health and safeguarding.</li> <li>• In-depth understanding of UK legislation/regulation relating to FGM (including mandatory reporting duty).</li> <li>• Knowledge of all major national initiatives and systems including requirements on organisations in relation to the FGM Enhanced Dataset, and the FGM Information Sharing system.</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face to face training package: Strategic Level Female Genital Mutilation: <u>Training for non-clinical staff involved in strategy, management or commissioning.</u></li> <li>• Locally developed or purchased training package meeting required standards.</li> </ul>
<b>Delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This should be undertaken face to face.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiz/multiple choice questions.</li> <li>• Learning log/supervision.</li> </ul>