

## **National FGM Centre**

### **Background**

The National FGM Centre is funded by the Department for Education, which forms part of the innovation fund programme. Ministers announced the programme on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2015; International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation. The Centre's funding was announced initially as £2m, however a break clause has been introduced after the first year (31<sup>st</sup> March 2015), and second year funding is dependent on a decision by the new Government.

The overarching vision for the Centre is to work with government departments and partners to eradicate new cases of FGM in the UK within the next 15 years.

The Centre has been established following a partnership bid between the Local Government Association and Barnardo's. Forward has been invited to work as a delivery partner, in particular delivering on community engagement but also working with the Centre's partnership to achieve its objectives and vision.

A theory of change was developed as part of the bid (attached as Appendix 1), which sets out broadly how the Centre will achieve its vision.

An advisory group has been set up with representatives from key multi-agency strategic partners. The group is chaired by Cllr Lisa Brett on behalf of the LGA.

### **Why this model**

Some local authorities and geographical areas have found it difficult to develop this expertise as they have relatively low numbers of women and girls affected by FGM. This model therefore gives those areas the opportunity to access specialist provision when need is identified.

### **What the Centre will do**

The Centre will drive a systems change for girls and women across multi-agency partners, with 4 strategic aims:

- **Prevent** new cases, by building effective strategies for the identification and support of at risk girls and creating changes in community attitudes.
- **Protect** girls and women, through proactive safeguarding and effective prosecutions.
- **Support** those who have been affected, providing long term holistic support for women and girls who have been affected by FGM.
- **Partner** with stakeholders to deliver solutions, bring together experience and learning on what works for tackling FGM to develop better solutions.

## **How we will do this – our model (please see Appendix 2 attached)**

### **1. Social Work Provision**

A continuum of intervention for local authorities to access is part of this offer - see Appendix 3 which sets out the range of provision available. This will be delivered by both qualified social workers and experienced project workers employed, managed and supported by Barnardo's. The interventions range from consultation for professionals on FGM through to full delegated authority on behalf of the local authority. The continuum includes both direct work overseen by local authority social workers and joint working on cases.

Where local authorities agree to work using a delegated authority model the DfE have given guidance on sharing risk and delegations:

- It is important for projects dealing with delegated duties to be clear what their responsibilities are and the escalation/reporting routes back into local authorities. This will be vital should anything go wrong. Local authorities remain accountable for statutory functions and must have appropriate monitoring and QA arrangements in place to ensure that any provider is discharging statutory duties properly on their behalf.
- Projects dealing with delegation issues offer an important opportunity to learn more about what keeping ownership of risk but delegating duties means for local authorities and the organisations they are working with. We should keep an eye on this as an area of useful learning.

The guidance fits well with our proposed model and all statutory duties/decisions would be made in partnership with the local authority. Should any order or proceedings be required, legal advice would be taken from the local authority legal team and as previously stated in partnership with the local authority. The local authority would have the final say on all decisions taken under delegated statutory duties.

A statement of principles, partnership agreement and an information sharing agreement will all form part of the formal agreement.

### **2. Community Outreach**

Community outreach is essential in working to eradicate FGM. Communities which reflect the racial and cultural make up of those countries where FGM is performed are key to changing attitudes and finding solutions. Organisations such as Forward and many small community-based organisations have developed excellent models of community engagement including community champions.

In the pilot areas these communities may be very small and geographically disparate therefore new and innovative models of engagement will be key to success.

### **3. Consultancy and Practice Development**

Consultancy will be available for professionals from a network of specialists within their own field, providing opportunities for e.g.gynaecologists, obstetricians, pediatricians, police officers or teachers to speak to specialists in their field.

The programme will also work to assist professionals to develop their practice through: webinars, accessing learning materials, the knowledge hub, training, e-learning and conferences.

### **4. Knowledge Hub**

The knowledge hub will collect, analyse and share data, information and resources. Feedback during the scoping period showed there was a great deal of information available but easy routes to access this were not available. The knowledge hub will include an IT solution but will be much more interactive than a standard website.

### **Sustainability**

To continue, the National FGM Centre must become self-funding and work has begun to develop costing models and seek income moving forward. Deloitte will work with the senior management team to assist in developing sustainable plans.

### **Evaluation**

The National FGM Centre will be independently evaluated by Opcit/UCLAN; a partnership between Opcit Research with the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN) Department of Social Work.

### **Links to the Innovation fund**

Before the final bid stage the team worked with an innovation coach from Spring Consortium (appointed by the delivery partner to the DfE) – the Consortium comprises Deloitte, Innovation Unit and Mutual Ventures. The coach continues to work with the team as a critical friend and also tracks progress on behalf of the DfE.

All projects funded through the innovation bid will share learning with others being funded through the programme.