Female Genital Mutilation – Protecting the Vulnerable Traveller

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Female genital mutilation

The extent of the problem?

What are the potential wider issues for FGM?

Legal duty

- The practice of FGM was criminalised in the UK in 1985
- The Serious Crime Act 2015 brought in mandatory reporting of FGM in England and Wales
- Success is dependent on increased knowledge of the professionals able to identify vulnerable individuals

- Lack of awareness of the travel consultation connection
- Lack of knowledge in the travel health adviser
- Resistance on the part of the GP to address the issue
- Time to undertake a good/thorough travel risk assessment
- Time is money when providing a private service
FGM and the travel health journey

- 2015/16 NICE/Travel Health Training conference: September 2015, Jennifer Bouamoo, MSc, Queen Mary, Project Manager, Department of Health/NICE Prevention Programme, as a key speaker.
- 2015/16 NICE disseminates national guidelines for travel health service development.
- 2016 Faculty of Travel Medicine annual symposium: lecture together with travel medicine colleagues: Dr. Yasmine, which is an NICE NICE campaign, a postgraduate and travel training of travel health.
- 2016 Faculty of Travel Medicine NICE/FGM developed an awareness campaign for travel health advisors to pass knowledge and confidence.

https://www.migranthealth.org

https://travelershealth.cdc.gov/en-1638563218447.html

Travel risk assessment – what do we need to know?

What alerts us to a risk of FGM?

- Family history
- Multiple births
- Infertility
- Aged above 35
- Travel to/origin from high-risk countries
- Mental health
- History of genital surgery
- History of trauma
- History of human trafficking
- History of sexual violence

Safeguarding update

- Travel health as a topic included in the latest publication.
- All clinical staff involved in seeing child travellers need to be trained in safeguarding to level 3 as a minimum.


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Developing resilience among refugees and vulnerable families

Sierra Leone - Gender specialist (WHO) and "Women fly together" partner (MDM) for designing the resilience toolkit.

Barriers and solutions for individuals

- Variability in knowledge of FGM
- Language barriers
- Concerns about causing offence
- Time within a consultation

What if the traveller's line when asked about FGM

Consultations with women, children and others present

Resources

Create an FGM file for your clinic

- Pretravel provision and guidance
- Advice on prevention and management

Click on each resource below to access

Conclusions

- The wider travel medicine community needs to have greater awareness of the impact of FGM in relation to travel
- Encourage improved knowledge and education at all times to increase confidence in tackling this issue within the pre-travel consultation, thus identifying and preventing FGM
- Never lose sight of the important work being done to stop FGM
- Raising standards of knowledge and awareness are absolutely key
Resources handout in the app!

Thank you

FGM: Protecting the Vulnerable Traveller - Jane Chodini