



# **Violence Against Women and Girls Newsletter**

## **Winter 2016**

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## Foreword

I am pleased to welcome you to the winter edition of the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) newsletter.

Following on from our publication of the Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy for this Parliament on 8 March, we have made a number of further announcements to mark the 16 days of action that follow the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. The overarching theme of this year's activity is on our work to support victims and encourage early intervention.

We are pleased to be able to provide new commissioning guidance which will help local organisations and commissioners collaborate on providing the vital targeted local support upon which so many victims and survivors rely. We are also pleased to be able to provide greater clarity and support to local commissioners through the National Statement of Expectations, setting out our core expectations of provision, and enabling local partners to hold their local commissioners to account.

In the newsletter, you will find further information on our launch of the VAWG Service Transformation Fund, the National Statement of Expectations and the Tampon Tax Fund. I am pleased that we have also announced our response to the Stalking Protection Order consultation and that we have published new guidance on Domestic Homicide Reviews and a new domestic abuse statistical tool and dataset.

We have also included some pictures of the atrium event we held here at the Home Office on 6 December to promote our work and the work of our partner organisations.

However, it is important to stress that our commitment to reduce VAWG and deliver real improvements to the lives of victims and survivors could not be delivered without the efforts of voluntary and community sector organisations up and down the country.

If you have any queries on the Government's work to reduce Violence Against Women and Girls, please email us at [VAWGenquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:VAWGenquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

Christian Papaleontiou,

Head of Interpersonal Violence Team,

## VAWG Service Transformation Fund

Violence against women and girls can shatter the lives of victims, their families and those closest to them. These crimes also have a huge impact on our economy, our health services, and the justice system. Supporting women and girls who have experienced violence and abuse, and preventing it from happening in the first place, remain key priorities for the Home Office, other Government departments and our partners.

The Government has pledged £80million in funding through to 2020 to support our commitment to tackling VAWG. This will help to deliver our goal to ensure a secure future for national helplines, rape support centres, refuges and other critical services, whilst driving a major change across all services.

From 2017, this increased funding will also support the launch of a three-year, £15million **VAWG Service Transformation Fund** to aid, promote and embed the best local practice and to help deliver against the recently published National Statement of Expectation, and Commissioning Toolkit.

The Fund will be used to support local programmes which complement and add to existing services. It will encourage better collaboration between commissioners and with local and specialist organisations, support new approaches incorporating early intervention, and establish and embed the best ways to help victims, survivors and their families.

The formal application process for the Fund is likely to open in early 2017, with the intention of awarding grants to successful bidders early in the 2017/18 financial year. There will be an opportunity to submit expressions of interest prior to the formal application period. You can find detailed information on eligibility, assessment and more in the VAWG Service Transformation Fund Prospectus, which is now available to view at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/violence-against-women-and-girls-service-transformation-fund>

We're very happy to answer any questions, and are keen to hear views from commissioners and our partners - please email us on [VAWGFund@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:VAWGFund@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

Our new fund offers

**£15 million**

for local services that **prevent**  
**and address violence** against **women and girls**



Find out more at [gov.uk/url](https://www.gov.uk/url)

 Home Office

## National Statement of Expectations

On 7 December the Government published its National Statement of Expectations ([LINK](#)), which sets out what local commissioners (be they PCCs, Local Authorities or health commissioners) need to put in place to ensure their response to VAWG is collaborative, robust and effective. The expectations challenge commissioners to ensure that local strategies and services:

- put the victim at the centre;
- have a clear focus on the perpetrators in order to keep victims (and those at risk) safe;
- take a strategic, system-wide approach to commissioning, acknowledging the gendered nature of VAWG;
- are locally-led and safeguard individuals throughout;
- raise local awareness of the issues and involve, engage and empower communities to seek, design and deliver solutions to prevent VAWG.

While the NSE is directed at commissioners of services, it's important for third sector partners to engage with the National Statement of Expectations and support their local commissioners in delivering against these standards.

## Tampon Tax Fund

In the Autumn Statement on 23 November the Chancellor announced that the second year of the £15m Tampon Tax Fund will focus on tackling Violence Against Women and Girls. The fund of around £15 million, which comes from VAT raised on sanitary products, will be available for all women's charities to bid into, but bids from charities that focus on VAWG services are particularly encouraged.

We expect the Tampon Tax Fund to run concurrently with the VAWG Service Transformation Fund, and encourage charities to consider how any direct bids into

the Tampon Tax Fund, and partnership bids into the VAWG Service Transformation Fund, can complement and support one another.

The government has invited applications from charities from 1 December 2016 for the next round of Tampon Tax funding to support women's charities, including those running programmes that tackle violence against women and girls.

This year the fund is inviting charitable, benevolent and philanthropic organisations across the UK to bid into one of two categories. We are particularly interested in receiving bids into the first category, which seeks to support women and girls affected by or at risk of violence or abuse. The second category is open to proposals from organisations that work to improve the lives of disadvantaged women and girls more generally.

The Fund is open for applications from 1 December 2016. For further information and to obtain a copy of the Tampon Tax Fund criteria, guidance and an application form please visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/tampon-tax-fund-opens-for-new-bids>

The closing date for completed applications is Friday 27 January 2017.

## **The Mirabal sisters and International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women**

The Mirabal Sisters – the inspiration for International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women - were four Dominican sisters who opposed the dictatorship of Rafael Trujillo, the dictator of the Dominican Republic from 1930 until his assassination in May 1961.

On 25 November 1960, Patria, Minerva, María Teresa, and their driver, Rufino de la Cruz, were visiting María Teresa and Minerva's incarcerated husbands. On the way home, they were stopped by Trujillo's henchmen. The sisters and de la Cruz were separated and clubbed to death. The bodies were then gathered and put in their Jeep, which was run off the mountain road in an attempt to make their deaths look like an accident. The assassinations turned the Mirabal sisters into "symbols of both popular and feminist resistance"

On 17 December 1999, the United Nations General Assembly designated 25 November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women in honour of the sisters. It marks the beginning of a 16-day period of Activism against Gender Violence. The last day of that period, 10 December, is International Human Rights Day.

## Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance for the Conduct of Domestic Homicide Reviews

We have published updated statutory guidance on conducting Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) which can be found using the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/revised-statutory-guidance-for-the-conduct-of-domestic-homicide-reviews>

The statutory guidance was last reviewed in 2013 and since then much has advanced in our understanding of domestic violence and abuse. The revised guidance takes account of this changing landscape and makes reference to new tools that have been implemented, such as the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme and Domestic Violence Protection Orders, as well as the new coercive and controlling offence introduced in the Serious Crime Act 2015.

In terms of process, the updated guidance emphasises the importance of involving family, friends, neighbours, work colleagues and the wider community in reviews. It reiterates the need for DHR panels to have a diverse mix of statutory and voluntary sector representation, as well as relevant expertise. Local areas will also wish to be aware that the updated guidance contains improved templates to provide those who undertake reviews with examples of good practice in the structure of a DHR.

### Key Findings from Analysis of Domestic Homicide Reviews

We have also published the key findings from analysis undertaken by Home Office researchers on a sample of 40 DHRs from across England and Wales completed between 2013 and 2016. The report can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-homicide-review-lessons-learned>

The purpose of the study is to promote key learning and disseminate good practice and local areas are encouraged to reflect on the learning identified and to consider how this can be used to deliver improvements to local operational processes and services to enhance their ability to safeguard victims and prevent domestic homicide. To support publication of these documents, the Home Office is intending to roll-out further training for chairs of DHRs and organise a series of regional events to embed learning and share best practice.

If you have any questions about these publications, please contact us using: [DHREnquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:DHREnquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

## New domestic abuse statistical bulletin and data tool

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) published on 8 December, on behalf of the Home Office and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), a new statistical bulletin and data tool in relation to domestic abuse. This brings together comprehensive data on domestic abuse at a local level. The publication itself comprises two products:

- A statistical bulletin of domestic abuse in England and Wales for the year ending March 2016 which provides a national overview of domestic abuse data from occurrence to conviction;
- An interactive domestic abuse data tool designed to provide an overview of the available statistics for individual police force areas which will allow them to compare their performance to similar forces.

The products demonstrate the prevalence, volume and attrition of domestic abuse at each stage of the criminal justice system and include data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales, police recorded crime and CPS outcomes data. The statistical bulletin will be published periodically and will provide the police, PCCs and other criminal justice agencies with an enhanced view of how domestic abuse is dealt with in their area.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesyearendingmarch2016>

## Updated Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme guidance

The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) – often referred to as “Clare’s Law” – sets out procedures that could be used by the police to disclose information about an individual’s previous violent and abusive offending where this may help protect their partner, or ex-partner, from violence or abuse.

Updated [DVDS guidance](#) for the police was published on 7 December. The guidance now makes clear how the scheme can be used to disclose information about former partners and spent convictions, provides greater clarity on the legal and common law powers of the police to make disclosures in order to protect the public, and updates the definition of domestic violence to include controlling and coercive behaviour.

## Family Courts

The Ministry of Justice is determined to improve support and protections for victims of domestic abuse in the family justice system. Activities include the provision of better training and guidance on domestic abuse to staff working throughout the system. Cafcass, which provides expert advice to the family courts, has just launched a tool to provide its social work practitioners with a structured framework for assessing cases where domestic abuse is a feature. This “practice pathway” can be found [here](#).



## Stalking Protection Order



“ Four years ago this government created **specific stalking offences** to ensure those responsible for this assiduous crime face justice.

These **new orders** will go even further by **offering protection at the first signs of stalking**, stopping offenders in their tracks.

**Amber Rudd**  
Home Secretary”

 Home Office

The Home Secretary announced today (7 December) that the Government will introduce a new Stalking Protection Order, to help protect victims at the earliest possible opportunity and deter perpetrators. This follows a public consultation <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/introducing-a-stalking-protection-order>

She made the announcement as part of a [package of Government measures](#) to prevent violence against women and girls (VAWG).

Stalking can affect anyone, with as many as one in five women and one in ten men becoming victims during their lifetimes.

The new order will be available to the police on application to the courts and will be able to impose both restrictions and positive requirements on the perpetrators. The order will be flexible so it can be tailored to the individual case - conditions may include requiring the perpetrator to stay away from the victim, restricting the internet use, or requiring them to attend a treatment programme.

Breach of the order will be a criminal offence with a maximum sentence of five years' imprisonment.

The new order will complement the stalking offences introduced in 2012 - there have already been over 2,000 prosecutions under the new offences, with 1,102 in 2015-16 alone. The government will legislate to introduce the order as soon as parliamentary time allows.



## Mark Sedwill, Home Office Permanent Secretary

Friday 25 November marks the International Day to Eliminate Violence against Women and 16 days of activism.

Violence against women and girls are serious crimes. These crimes have a huge human cost, not withstanding the impact on our economy, health services, and the criminal justice system. Supporting women and girls who have experienced violence and abuse, and preventing it from happening in the first place, remain key priorities for the Home Office, other Government departments and our partners.

The White Ribbon Campaign is a UK branch of a long-standing international campaign, working with men and boys to speak out about violence against women and girls.

Most men are not violent towards women, but the prevalence of these crimes cannot be underestimated; 1 in 4 women in the UK experience violence and abuse over their lifetime.

I fully support this campaign, and the role it plays in tackling attitudes that contribute towards violence and abuse. Ending violence against women and girls is everyone's business and we all need to stand up together to end it.

You can see this message at this [link](#) and one from the Home Secretary at this [link](#).

## Forced Marriage Unit

### New legislation on anonymity for victims

We remain committed to strengthening existing legal frameworks, where appropriate, to support and protect those at risk of forced marriage. The introduction of anonymity for victims, through the Policing and Crime Bill, is intended to provide them with more confidence to report this crime, ultimately enabling them to access the support they require and ensure perpetrators can be brought to justice.

The parliamentary process is ongoing and the protection will commence at the point an allegation is made and last for the victim's lifetime. It will prohibit the publication or broadcast of any information likely to result in a person's identification. Breach of the prohibition to publish/broadcast will be a summary offence in England and Wales, punishable by an unlimited fine. A court will be able to lift the restriction in limited circumstances; either to ensure the defendant receives a fair trial or to safeguard freedom of expression.

### My marriage My choice

My Marriage My Choice is a two-year research project that is funded by the National Institute for Health Research - School of Social Care Research (NIHR-SSCR). This work is being led by Rachael Clawson, Associate Professor at the University of Nottingham, in collaboration with colleagues at the University of Kent, in addition to third sector organisations such as Respond and the Ann Craft Trust. The project team is looking to reach out to other partner organisations that may be able to assist them in identifying individuals and/or groups they could approach and request further participation with the project. This could either be through an interview or as part of a wider focus group. Please see a link to their website providing further details about the aims of the project and how to contact them should you wish to participate: <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/research/groups/mymarriagemychoice/index.aspx>

### Outreach

We are still delivering a comprehensive outreach programme across the UK to raise awareness of forced marriage, so please do continue to alert us of upcoming events you are planning where the Forced Marriage Unit's input may be useful. If you would like us to attend your event, please fill out a [speaker request form](#) and [email it back to us](#).

## Home Office FGM Unit

The Home Office's [Female Genital Mutilation \(FGM\) Unit](#) was set up in December 2014 to coordinate efforts across Government and provide outreach support to local

areas. In addition, the Unit acts as a hub for effective practice, gathering and sharing examples across local areas and professional groups.

The FGM Unit does not handle individual cases. If you are worried that a girl or woman is at risk of FGM or is a victim of FGM, contact the [police](#) or the [NSPCC helpline](#).

## Publication of statutory guidance on FGM

On 1 April this year we published [multi-agency guidance on FGM](#), which is statutory for the first time. Guidance will increase awareness, encourage good practice, and support training.

## Updated Procedural Information for FGM Mandatory Reporting Duty

An FGM mandatory reporting duty which requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to report 'known' cases of FGM in under 18s to the police came into effect on 31 October 2015. This was accompanied by [procedural information](#) for professionals (which has recently been updated), a [factsheet](#) for communities, and additional [information for NHS staff](#) in England. If you have any queries about the duty or would like to request an electronic copy of the factsheet, contact the FGM Unit.

## FGM Online Resource Pack and materials

Our online FGM Resource Pack was developed to highlight examples from local areas where effective practice has been identified and to emphasise what works in fighting FGM. This was updated to reflect recent legislative changes, including the new mandatory reporting duty for professionals; the introduction of mandatory recording of FGM cases within the NHS in England; and the publication of new estimated prevalence data. The aim of the resource pack is to encourage local areas and commissioners to consider measures they could put in place to prevent and tackle FGM.

We also have available our FGM 'The Facts' leaflet to include details on the legislative changes and have recently updated the 'Statement opposing FGM' (health passport). To order copies, please contact the [FGM Unit](#).

## FGM Protection Orders

The introduction of FGM protection orders was fast-tracked to make sure women and girls facing the threat of FGM can be kept safe. These orders mean girls and communities know that the law is on their side and help is out there.

Data released by the Ministry of Justice on 29 September 2016 shows that 68 FGM Protection Orders have been made since their introduction up to the end of June 2016. We have recently published an [FGM Protection Order factsheet](#) to help applications from community organisations. If you would like an electronic copy of the factsheet please contact the FGM Unit.

## FGM Unit Outreach

Over the past few months, the FGM Unit has spoken at a number of events across the country, including regional conferences in Llanelli, South Wales and London. We

have also presented at safeguarding meetings and training sessions for Cedar's Pre-Departure Accommodation in West Sussex and Forward UK in London, visited community organisations, statutory agencies and SCBs in Yorkshire and Northumbria, and visited the Scottish Government to share learning and best practice. The visits and events have highlighted the good work under way across the country to tackle FGM.

## Home Office FGM Event

On 1 December, Home Secretary Amber Rudd hosted an event 'Ending FGM: A Forum to Make a Difference' in central London to reaffirm the Government's commitment to end FGM within a generation. She brought together Government ministers, frontline workers, charities, campaigners and survivors to co-ordinate efforts to safeguard women and girls from FGM both at home and overseas.



## Contact Details

We are interested in hearing about effective practice to tackle FGM across local areas and professional groups. We would also like to hear about events and initiatives.

If you would like the Unit to attend an event you are holding, would like to share best practice and resources you have developed, or for more information on the Government's work to tackle FGM, please contact us at:  
FGMEnquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk.

## Home Office Atrium Event

On Tuesday 6 December, we held an event in the Home Office to raise awareness of the support available to victims and survivors who have suffered gender-based violence and abuse, and what their friends, families, and colleagues can do to help. Many thanks to Refuge, Rape Crisis, Galop, Respect and Women's Aid who took part and provided materials for Home Office and Department for Communities and Local Government Staff. This event formed an important part of our '16 Days of Activism' to raise awareness of these crimes and what support is available.



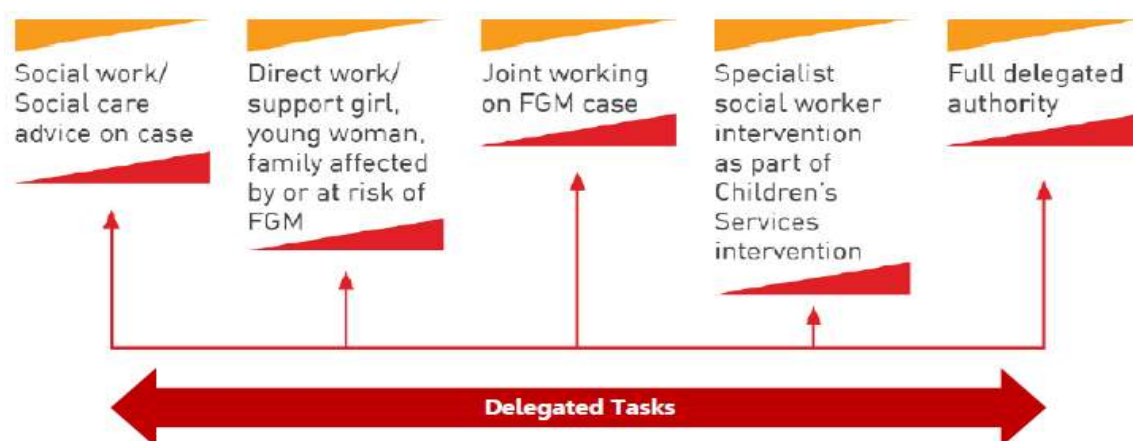


## National FGM Centre

The National FGM Centre, recipient of the 2016 Children and Young People Now Safeguarding Award, is a partnership between Barnardo's and the Local Government Association (LGA).

The Centre was set up to achieve a systems change in the provision of services for girls and women affected by female genital mutilation (FGM). Funded initially by the Department of Education as part of its Children's Social Care Innovation Programme, the Centre works closely with key partners from Local Authorities, Health, Education, Police, and the voluntary sector to achieve its vision- to contribute to ending new cases of FGM for women and girls living in England within the next 15 years.

The Centre offers a flexible, responsive continuum of intervention, which may include delegated responsibility to the Centre for children's social care as it relates to FGM. This intervention will be provided by qualified social workers or experienced project workers. To date, the Centre has worked with 134 families, whereby when an FGM case is referred to social services, the Centre's social/project worker is able to provide the following:



As a result of working with professionals in the pilot sites, the Centre recognised that there was a need to develop an FGM risk assessment tool specifically for social workers. The Centre then developed the FGM risk assessment matrix (RAM), an easy tool that complements current assessment methods. It enhances professional judgment by enabling holistic thinking of safety and risk factors, and recommendations take into account the mandatory duty to report to the police known cases of FGM for girls under 18yrs. The RAM can also be used retrospectively, to reflect on previous assessments. The final evaluation of the RAM is expected in the first quarter of 2017.

The Centre, in partnership with FORWARD, carried out a peer research in Norfolk and Essex to understand the current perspectives of communities regarding FGM and to embed this learning into the work of the Centre. Community engagement also occurs on a wider level, through partnership with local authorities, school and children's centres.



To date, over 900 delegates have attended the multi-disciplinary CPD advance accredited training that the Centre provides. All those who completed the training would recommend it and quotes include:

“ Really developed my knowledge and increased my confidence for managing staff though FGM and reporting”

“Excellent training, easy to follow and really enjoyable and insightful”

“I had no idea about FGM ... I wasn't looking forward to the course but I am so glad I came. Feel I know so much now”.

Further information about the Centre can be found at [www.nationalfgmcentre.org.uk](http://www.nationalfgmcentre.org.uk), which includes a dedicated FGM knowledge hub where quality assured FGM resources and documents have been collated to make it easier to find information about FGM online. The Centre can be contacted at [nationalfgmcentre@barnardos.org.uk](mailto:nationalfgmcentre@barnardos.org.uk)

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