



**HONOUR BASED ABUSE
FORCED MARRIAGE
FEMALE GENITAL
MUTILATION**

ONE CHANCE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Professionals Handbook of
Definitions, Warning Signs and
Safeguarding Pathways



What is Honour Based Abuse (HBA)?

The terms 'honour crime', 'honour violence' or 'honour based abuse' are used to describe a crime or incident, which has or may have been committed, to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or community. It is a collection of practices used to control behaviour and includes Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation.

A person will be punished for actually, or allegedly undermining what the family or in some cases the community perceive to believe to be the correct way to behave.

Victims will have multiple perpetrators and can be a trigger for forced marriage. Honour based abuse can affect men women and children and it is closely associated with domestic abuse and child protection matters.

In terms of domestic abuse risk assessment, HBA is a significant risk factor for victims and must be regarded as a significant predictor of the likelihood of future harm or homicide.

Specific behaviours, attitudes and actions that may constitute as being seen as dis-honorable are wide ranging and can include:

- Reporting domestic abuse
- Smoking cigarettes
- Inappropriate make-up or dress
- Running away from home
- Existence of a secret boyfriend or girlfriend
- Pregnancy outside of marriage
- Interfaith relationships
- Rejecting a forced or arranged marriage

- Leaving a spouse or seeking divorce
- Kissing, holding hands or other intimacy in a public place
- Being in a same sex relationship
- Failing to have female genital mutilation
- Ostracism by family and community
- Economic damage to family

Individuals, families and communities may take drastic steps to preserve, protect or avenge their honour.

This can lead to substantial human rights abuses including:

- Common assault
- Domestic abuse
- Theft (e.g. passport)
- Child abduction
- Abduction of an unmarried girl under the age of 16 from parent or guardian
- Forced Marriage
- Rape
- Cruelty to persons under 16 (including neglect and abandonment)
- Aiding and abetting a criminal offence
- Kidnapping
- False imprisonment
- Murder

This list is not exhaustive

Do not underestimate that perpetrators of HBA really do kill their closest relatives and/or others for what might seem a trivial transgression.

What is Forced Marriage?

A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not consent to the marriage but are coerced into it. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure.

In cases of vulnerable adults who lack the capacity to consent to marriage, coercion is not required for a marriage to be forced.

Forcing someone to marry is a criminal offence and anyone found guilty can face up to seven years in prison. It is child abuse, domestic abuse and a form of violence against women and men; it should form part of existing child and adult protection structures, policies and procedures.

A marriage must be entered into with the free and full consent of both parties. An arranged marriage is not the same as a forced marriage as both parties are free to choose whether to enter into the marriage or not.

Key Motivations of Forced Marriage:

- Controlling unwanted behaviour and sexuality (including perceived promiscuity, or being gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender) in particular the behaviour and sexuality of women.
- Protecting “family honour”
- Responding to peer group / family pressure.
- Attempting to strengthen family links
- Ensuring land, property and wealth remain within the family.
- Protecting perceived cultural ideals.
- Ensuring care for a child or adult with special needs when parents or existing carers are unable to fulfil this role
- Protecting perceived religious ideals which are misguided.
- Preventing “unsuitable” relationships, e.g. outside the ethnic, cultural, religious or caste group.
- Assisting claims for residence and citizenship.
- Fulfilling long-standing family commitments.

While it is important to have an understanding of these motives, forced marriage should be recognised as a human rights abuse. The warning signs are as follows:

Education

- Absence and persistent absence
- Request for extended leave of absence and failure to return from visits to country of origin
- Fear about forthcoming holidays
- Surveillance by siblings or cousins at school
- Decline in behaviour, engagement, performance or attendance
- Poor exam results
- Being withdrawn from schools
- Removal from day centre of person with physical or learning disabilities
- Not allowed to attend extra curricula activities
- Sudden announcement of engagement to stranger
- Prevented from going on to further/higher education

Police Involvement

- Victim or other young people within the family reported missing
- Reports of domestic violence or breaches of the peace at the family home
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Acid attacks
- The individual reported for offences e.g. shoplifting or substance misuse
- Threats to kill and attempts to kill or harm
- Reports of other offences such as kidnapping

Family History

- Siblings forced to marry
- Early marriage of siblings
- Self-harm or suicide of siblings
- Death of a parent

- Family disputes
- Running away from home
- Unreasonable restrictions e.g. "house arrest"

Employment

- Poor performance / attendance
- Limited career choices
- Leaving and attending work accompanied
- No flexibility in working arrangements
- Not allowed to work
- Unable to attend business trips
- Unreasonable Financial control (e.g. confiscation of wages/ income)

Health

- Accompanied to the doctors or clinics
- Self-harm/attempted suicide
- Eating disorders
- Depression, isolation
- Substance misuse
- Unwanted pregnancy
- Female Genital Mutilation

What is Female Genital Mutilation?

FGM involves the partial or total removal of the female genitalia or damage to the genital organs for cultural or other non-therapeutic reasons.

FGM is known by a number of names, but 'FGM' and 'cutting' are increasingly used at the community level although they are still not always understood by individuals from practicing communities.

FGM has no medical benefits and causes severe pain and has many immediate and long term health consequences. The age at which girls undergo FGM varies enormously according to communities. It may be carried out when a girl is newborn, during childhood or adolescence, just before marriage or during the first pregnancy.

FGM is illegal in the UK as is taking anyone out of the UK for the procedure. Any person found guilty of an offence under the FGM Act 2003 is liable to a maximum 14 years in prison or a fine or both.

It is estimated that approximately 127,000 women and girls who have migrated to England and Wales are living with the consequences of FGM, approximately 10,000 girls under the age of 15 who have migrated to England and Wales are likely to have undergone FGM and approximately 60,000 girls between the ages of 0-14 have been born in England and Wales to mothers who have FGM.

FGM is prevalent in 28 African countries as well as parts of the Middle East and Asia. It is believed FGM happens to British girls in the UK as well as overseas particularly during the school holidays periods.

FGM is a complex issue, with a variety of explanations and motives given by individuals and families who support the practice, such as:

- It brings status and respect to a girl's family
- It preserves a girl's virginity and chastity
- It is a rite of passage
- It upholds the family honour
- It perpetuates a custom or tradition

However complex the reason and motivations given by families FGM is child abuse and a form of violence against women and girls, and therefore should be dealt with as part of existing child and adult safeguarding and protection structures, procedures and policies.

Specific factors that may heighten a girl or woman's risk of being affected by FGM

- The position of the family and the level of integration within UK society – it is believed that communities less integrated into British society are more likely to carry out FGM.
- Any girl born to a woman who has been subjected to FGM must be considered to be at risk of FGM, as must other female children in the extended family.
- Any girl who has a sister who has already undergone FGM must be considered to be at risk of FGM, as must other female children in the extended family.
- Any girl withdrawn from Personal, Social and Health Education or Personal and Social Education may be at risk as a result of her parents wishing to keep her uninformed about her body and rights.

FGM Warning Signs:

- Having difficulty walking, standing or sitting
- Days off school
- Not participating in PE
- Constantly going to the bathroom and spending long periods of time in there
- The family comes from a community that is known to practice FGM
- Parents announce they will be taking the child out of the country and school for a prolonged period

Health: The potential effects of FGM include:

- Haemorrhage
- Severe pain & shock
- In pain/restricted movement
- Change in behaviour/demeanour
- Difficulties with menstruation
- Urine retention
- Problems during pregnancy
- Acute & chronic pelvic infections leading to infertility
- Infection including tetanus & HIV

- Injury to adjacent tissue
- Fracture or dislocation to limbs as a result of restraint
- Difficulty with passing urine & chronic urinary tract infections leading to renal problems or renal failure

One Chance Rule

All practitioners, agencies and charitable organisations working with victims of honour abuse, forced marriage or female genital mutilation need to be aware of the one chance rule. That is, they may only have one chance to speak to a potential victim and may only have one chance to save a life.

If a victim is allowed to walk out of the door without support being offered that one chance may be wasted.

Whatever an individual's circumstances, they have rights and should always be respected such as the right to personal safety and to be given accurate information about their rights and choices. Professionals should listen to the victim and respect their wishes wherever possible.

However, there may be times when a victim wants to take a course of action that may put them at risk – on these occasions practitioners should explain the outcomes and risks to the victim and take the necessary child or adult safeguarding protection measures.

First Steps:

Where an allegation is made the following steps should be taken.

First steps in all cases:

- See the individual immediately in a secure and private place which cannot be overheard.
- See the individual on their own – even if they attend with others.
- Explain all the options to them and recognise and respect the individual's wishes.
- Use only accredited interpreter services.
- Complete a DASH Risk Identification/Assessment by a trained member of staff and gain full contact details.
- Contact MASH, to speak to a trained specialist as soon as possible.
- If under 18 years of age refer to the person responsible for safeguarding children and activate local safeguarding procedures
- If the person is an adult with support needs, refer them to the person responsible for safeguarding vulnerable adults and activate local safeguarding procedures
- Reassure the victim about confidentiality where appropriate i.e. practitioners will not inform the victim's family or attempt mediation

Do not:

- Send the individual away in the belief that it is not a matter for your agency to assist the victim
- Use family or community members as interpreters.
- Approach members of the family or community leaders unless the individual expressly asks you to do so.
- Share information with anyone without the express consent of the individual.
- Breach confidentiality.
- Attempt to be a mediator.

All information should be gathered by a trained specialist, Police or Social Services. However, there

may be occasions where it is an emergency and you as the professional have only one chance to gather the following information.

Key information required in all cases:

- Obtain details of the individual under threat including date of report, name of individual under threat, nationality, age, date and place of birth, passport, school and employment details, full details of the allegation, name and address of parents or those with parental responsibility, national insurance number, NHS number and driving license number.
- Obtain details of the person making the report, their contact details, and their relationship with the individual under threat.
- Establish a way of contacting them discreetly in the future that will not put them at risk of harm such as a code word to ensure you are speaking to the right person
- Obtain any background information including schools attended, involvement by social services, doctors or other health services etc.
- Record details about any threats, abuse or other hostile action against the individual, whether reported by the victim or a third party.
- Obtain a recent photograph and other identifying documents.
- Document any other distinguishing features such as birthmarks and tattoos etc. Establish the nature and level of risk to the safety of the individual (e.g. are they pregnant, do they have a secret boyfriend/girlfriend, are they already secretly married).
- Establish if there are any other family members at risk of honour abuse, forced marriage or female genital mutilation or if there is a family history of this abuse.
- Establish if there are any immediate or imminent travel plans arranged.



Contact and Help

Contact the Police on 101.
Always dial 999 in an emergency.

Contact Social Services on 0344 0800 8020 if you have a safeguarding concern about a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

Freedom Charity (24 hour Helpline)

www.freedomcharity.org.uk | 0845 607 0133
Text "4freedom" 88802

Imkaan

www.imkaan.org.uk | 0207 250 3933

IKRWO

www.ikrwo.org.uk | 0207 920 6460

Ashiana Network (London)

www.ashiana.org | 0208 539 0427

Karma Nirvana Honour Network

www.karmanirvana.org.uk | 0800 5999 247

Southall Black Sisters

www.southallblacksisters.org.uk | 0208 571 0800

Victim Support

www.victimsupport.org.uk | 0845 3030 900

UK Border Agency

www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk | 0870 606 7766

Forward

www.forwarduk.org.uk | 0208 960 4000

Asian Family Victim Support

0845 3030900

Child Abduction Centre admin line

0116 2556370

Childline

www.childline.org.uk | 0800 1111

Forced Marriage Unit

fm@fco.gov.uk | 0207 008 0151

Henna Foundation

www.hennafoundation.org | 029 20496920

Home Office advice

www.gov.uk/stop-forced-marriage | 0207 008 0151

Karma Nirvana

www.karmanirvana.org.uk | 0800 5999 247

MIND

0208 519 2122

Muslim Women's Helpline

0208 904 8193

NSPCC

0808 800 5000

Shelterline Helpline

0808 800 4444

Domestic Violence Helpline

www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk

0808 200 0247

FGM support groups/further information

NSPCC FGM Helpline

fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk | 0800 028 3550

28 too many

www.28toomany.org

Daughters of Eve

www.dofeve.org

Desert Flower

www.desertflowerfoundation.org

Equality Now

www.equalitynow.org

FGM Network

www.fgmnetwork.org

Foundation for Women's Health

www.forwarduk.org.uk | 0208 960 4000

Home Office

FGMenquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

The Orchid Project

www.orchidproject.org



NORFOLK
CONSTABULARY

Our Priority is You