

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Mandatory reporting of FGM comes into effect on 31 October

Medical Protection is urging doctors to be aware of their professional obligations relating to reporting and treating victims of female genital mutilation (FGM). The national guidelines recently released by the Home Office state that reporting cases of FGM in patients under 18 years to the police will be mandatory for GPs and social care professionals as of 31 October 2015. Medical Protection is warning doctors that failure to appropriately report a case of FGM may result in proceedings being launched against them.<sup>1</sup>

### Dr Rob Hendry, Medical Director at Medical Protection said:

"FGM is a form of child abuse and those who have undergone the procedure should be treated as a victim of crime. If a doctor becomes aware that FGM has been performed on a patient under the age of 18, they have a mandatory duty to report this to the police and should also refer the patient to safeguarding.

"If the child has capacity, doctors should try to obtain their consent before disclosing information to the police, unless this puts them or others at risk of harm or may jeopardise an investigation. If consent is withheld or the child lacks capacity the doctor must still report to the authorities. Girls considered to be at risk of FGM should be referred to the appropriate local Children Services or Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub.

"If a doctor has concerns about their obligations they should contact Medical Protection, or their own defence organisation."

**ENDS**

For further information please contact Kim Watson, Media Relations Manager at Medical Protection on +44 (0) 207 399 1428 or email [kim.watson@medicalprotection.org](mailto:kim.watson@medicalprotection.org)

### Notes to editor

1. Home Office, *Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation: Procedural Information* - [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/469448/FGM-Mandatory-Reporting-procedural-info-FINAL.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/469448/FGM-Mandatory-Reporting-procedural-info-FINAL.pdf)
2. Medical Protection's factsheet on '*Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)*' can be found here: [http://www.medicalprotection.org/uk/resources/factsheets/england/england-factsheets/uk-eng-female-genital-mutilation-\(fgm\)](http://www.medicalprotection.org/uk/resources/factsheets/england/england-factsheets/uk-eng-female-genital-mutilation-(fgm))

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### About Medical Protection

Medical Protection is a trading name of The Medical Protection Society Limited ("MPS"). MPS is the world's leading protection organisation for doctors, dentists and healthcare professionals. We protect and support the professional interests of more than 300,000 members around the world. Our benefits include access to indemnity, expert advice and peace of mind. Highly qualified advisers are on hand to talk through a question or concern at any time.

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Our in-house experts assist with the wide range of legal and ethical problems that arise from professional practice. This includes clinical negligence claims, complaints, medical and dental council inquiries, legal and ethical dilemmas, disciplinary procedures, inquests and fatal accident inquiries.

Our philosophy is to support safe practice in medicine and dentistry by helping to avert problems in the first place. We do this by promoting risk management through our workshops, E-learning, clinical risk assessments, publications, conferences, lectures and presentations.

MPS is not an insurance company. All the benefits of membership of MPS are discretionary as set out in the Memorandum and Articles of Association.