

Midaye – FGM Community Forum



Project summary

Midaye have been funded to deliver 3 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Community Forums across the tri borough bringing together statutory providers and members of the community. These Forums will be a unique opportunity for members of FGM-affected communities and service providers/commissioners to meet on an equal footing.

This project seeks to bring commissioners, service providers and communities together to allow discussion and information sharing, build relationships, and develop appropriate services. It will be the first of its kind in the country to be a community-led Forum working with commissioners and service providers on this culturally sensitive subject.

Background information

FGM services are at a crisis point, because of the scale of the problem (95% of Midaye's 2000 female clients have had FGM; over 137,000 women and girls in the UK are estimated to have undergone FGM) AND because FGM has been moved up the social policy agenda in terms of both service provision and legislation. Yet service providers have no way into FGM-practicing communities, and within practicing communities a culture of silence surrounds the practice and its effects.

FGM-practicing communities feel increasingly isolated and under threat from legislation, safeguarding, and even service providers.

Key aims of the forums

- Bridge the gap in communication and understanding between communities and professionals
- Dispel assumptions made about FGM
- Help commissioners and services providers to better understand clients and how to address FGM with them
- Support the identification and development of appropriate services based on the above discussions

Discussion topics will include:

- Women's experiences and needs
- Safeguarding girls
- Community involvement
- Current FGM policy and practice

Timeframes

The first forum, (Kensington and Chelsea) will be held on the 16th December. The forums for Hammersmith and Fulham and Westminster will be held in the New Year.