

# 'The Bristol Model'

**We hope this brief will give you an insight into how "The Bristol Model", developed and how we work in Bristol to combat FGM.**

## **The background**

In 2006, a school health nurse and a teacher attended training which explored faith and cultural issues and their impact on the child protection agenda. This was a turning point for the professionals.

They started to ask questions about issues that may indicate FGM had happened or a child was a risk of having FGM. They found the more they asked the more they found out, and the more cases they identified.

## **Some parents were considering FGM for their daughters but did not know about the law and health implications**

They started to refer cases to social care and the police and realised they were seen as the experts.

They questioned The Bristol Safeguarding Children Board on its policies which led to the board developing multi-agency guidelines, and later multi-agency training and an FGM safeguarding and delivery partnership.

## **All statutory agencies have been involved from the start including health, education, police and social care, voluntary sector, young people and other organisations**

The work has always focussed on safeguarding and community engagement to stop FGM. There was parallel development of community engagement and FGM self-awareness among women of affected communities around the same time. This led to short term community development (December 2007 to April 2008).

This initiated discussion with local Somali girls and women and culminated in an FGM Awareness Day in March 2008. The community's need for knowledge and information and desire for change in many quarters was clear from that day.

Public health commissioned a service to empower women from FGM affected communities to reach out to their communities and start to talk about the myths around FGM. Also the health risk especially from type 3, the law and the risk of prosecution, child protection and parents duty to safeguard and protect their daughters.

FORWARD won the contract in 2009 and they have been working with public health since.

There are also two groups of young people who have engaged in the FGM agenda. Integrate Bristol and the FORWARD project working with young people called 'EMPOWER'

Please see full details of their work at the websites: [www.integratebristol.org.uk](http://www.integratebristol.org.uk) and <http://www.forwarduk.org.uk/programmes/uk-programmes/youth>

Both these groups of young people have raised the profile and risk associated with FGM. And they were both involved in the Girls Summit 2014



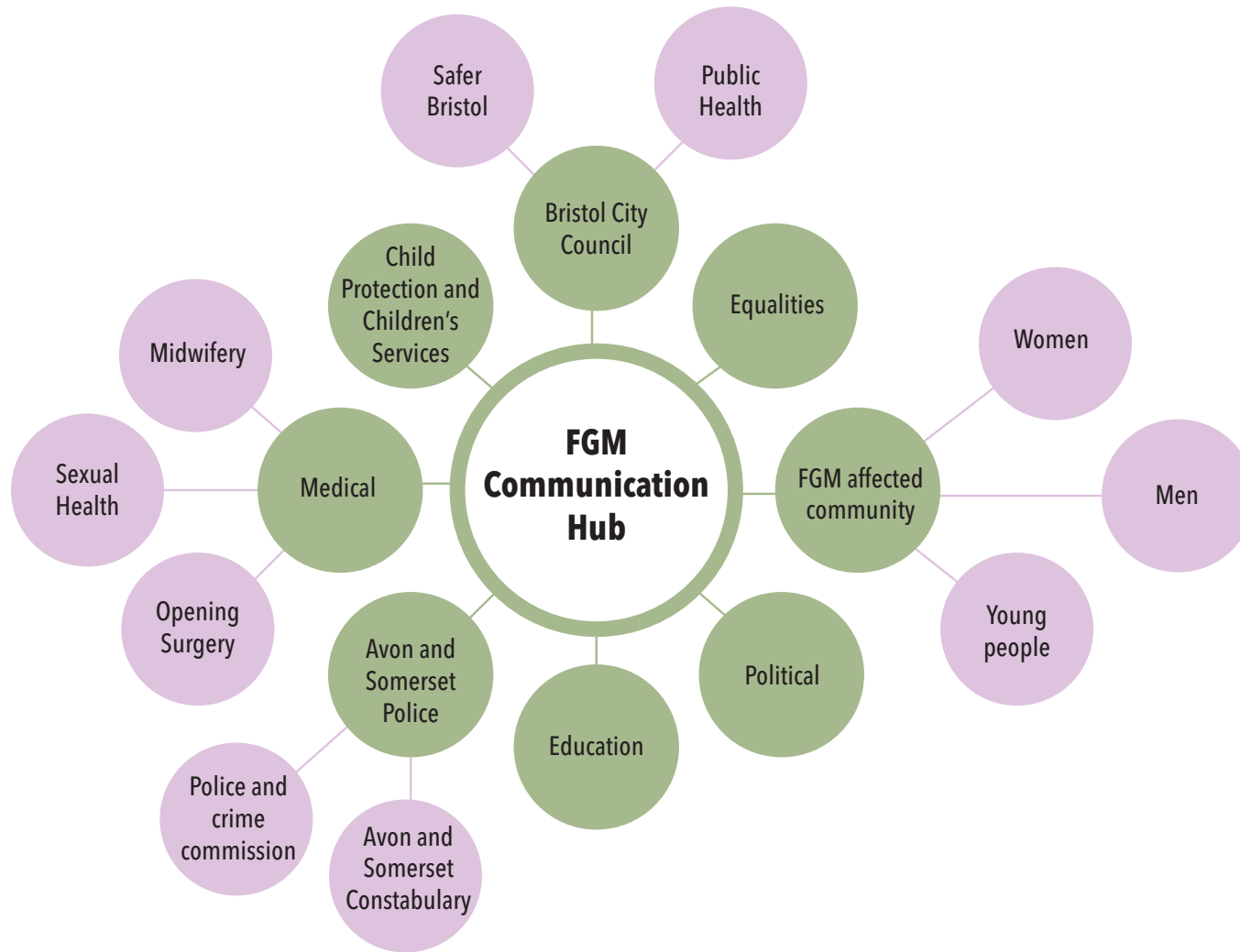
# Key Components of “The Bristol Model” of FGM work

- **Co-ordination and communication** is needed between agencies and with communities.
- **Empowerment** of FGM affected communities. Recognition that the FGM affected communities are part of the solution in ending FGM and not the problem. The work should not be led by professionals but a collective effort where professionals work alongside the FGM community (including women, men and young people).
- **Differences of opinion** There are common aims but there are different ideas on how to achieve these aims. Differences are respected but mutually trusted partners need to defuse conflicts.
- **Collective ownership** The Bristol model is a sum of its parts and can only exist and flourish with respect and co-ordination between individuals and agencies.
- **The Chair and project support** The work needs to be co-ordinated and have a strategic overview. This helps to facilitate but the Chair is not a manager or decision maker individually. There is also behind-the-scenes admin type work.
- **Collective decision making**
- **Involve everyone** FGM is recognised locally as a safeguarding, legal, public health, human rights and a feminist issue.
- **Develop services** Through good engagement both with professionals at many levels and with FGM affected communities we can help develop services e.g. the Community Rose clinic.
- **Develop a model** This requires community engagement and community development expertise to support organisations, institutions and groups to engage constructively and form a unified vision and common goal.
- **Develop training** Professionals need help to understand FGM and affected communities, how they can safeguard children and support adult women. Affected communities including women, men and young people need to be empowered to explore the issue of FGM to end the practice.
- **Develop resources** Websites, guidelines, research, activities, lesson plans, leaflets and posters all help to support learning and campaigns.

See our diagrams to demonstrate the structure in Bristol.

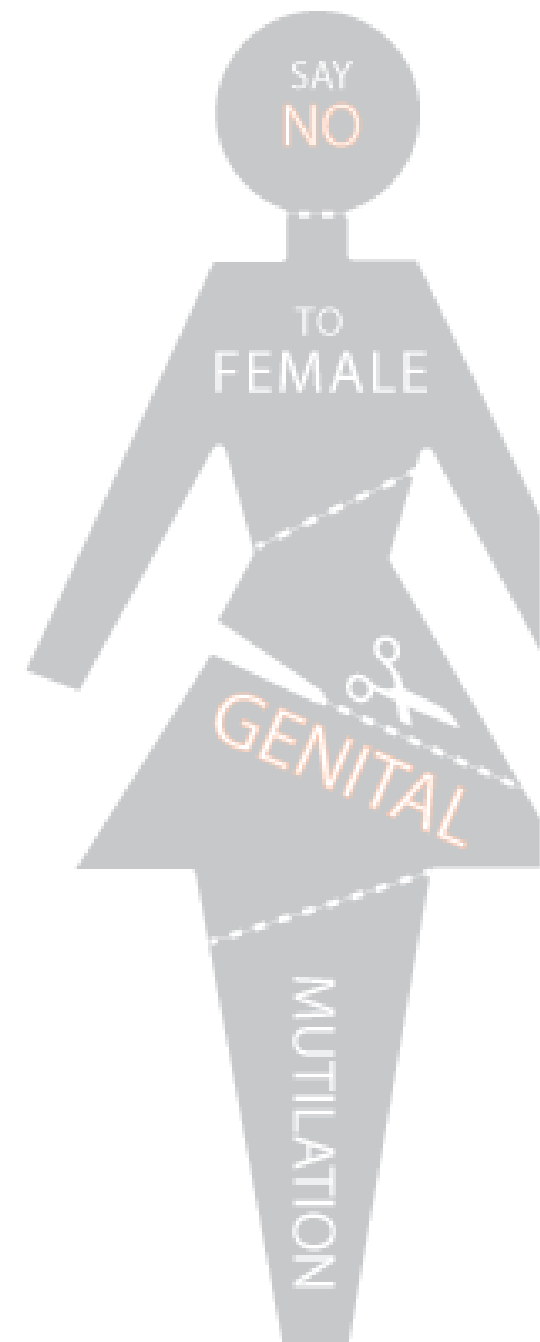


# The Bristol Model of FGM work - who is involved



## The Bristol FGM timeline

- Developed BSCB guidelines on FGM in 2006, revised in 2009, 2011 and 2014
- Delivered multi-agency training for FGM since 2007 offering over 1700 places on BSCB training courses.
- Organised a summer campaign and an 'international FGM zero tolerance day' events every year since 2009.
- Ensured young people are integral to the whole work on FGM
- Commissioned a service in 2010 to work with women from FGM affected communities. To empower them as advocates in ending FGM.
- In 2010 supported the women advocates in the summer campaign when they 'Marched to end FGM'
- Integrate raised national awareness of the FGM issue with their radio play called 'Why', they continued with an international conference, a play and several songs about FGM.
- Supported the development of the FGM story line in BBC TV's Casualty
- Engaged in developing national and professional guidelines related to FGM.
- Supported the debates, discussions and Parliamentary events related to FGM.
- Currently, working with men to sign a declaration to end FGM.
- Bristol Clinical Commissioning Group commissioned the Bristol Community Rose Clinic (BCRC) named by the community and young people. It provides a safe and efficient service for women with type 3 FGM to be opened. The CCG responded to the community need for this clinic.
- Ensured FGM is integrated into the wider violence against women and girls agenda.
- Fahma Mohamed's is currently the face of integrate and their campaign to ensure teachers understand the risks of FGM.



# The Bristol Model of FGM work - what we do

