

Guideline about FGM for healthcare professionals (DGS Guidelines no. 005/2012)

The *guideline about FGM for health professionals* (DGS Guideline no. 005/2012), issued in February 2012, *advises*^[1] to identify and guide children, young women and women that are at risk or have been subjected to FGM. According to this guideline, health professionals are advised to record the following situations:

- 1) Upon gynaecological observation, the medical doctor should register in the patient's medical record the type of FGM observed, as well as make a drawing of the appearance of the vulva in order to avoid an extra gynaecological observation;
- 2) Identification of female new-borns born to women that originate from countries where FGM is practised. Before the medical discharge, health professionals should liaise with the Hospital Support Unit for Children and Youth at Risk^[2] requesting a continued monitoring of the new-born family. Moreover, health professionals should fill in Annex II of the Practical Guide of Approach, Diagnosis and Intervention – Abuse to Children and Young People. Within section C of this document, in the referral motive, health professionals should select the option 'Others' and write 'At risk of FGM';
- 3) The same procedure applies in all cases in which a girl or a young woman is identified to be at risk of being subjected to FGM.

The procedures described above can allow collecting data about girls and women that have undergone FGM and girls and women at risk of undergoing FGM.

[1] The Directorate-General of Health issues, under its competences, different types of documents (i.e. guideline, norm and information) to inform health professionals about the normative procedures that shall guide their intervention in the National Health Service. These instruments have different types of professional bonding and compulsoriness. Therefore, the verb 'advise' is used here because we are dealing with a 'guideline'.

[2] There is a network of units of Health Action for Children and Youth at Risk nationwide. Each unit is composed by a multidisciplinary team of professionals that support health professionals in infantile and youth interventions. In each geographical area where there are Health Care Centres and Hospitals with paediatrics assistance service there shall exist a Support Unit for Children and Youth at Risk. More information in Portuguese can be found at:

<http://www.dgs.pt/ms/11/default.aspx?id=5526>.

Policy Framework

Issuer

National Health Service

Source

<http://www.dgs.pt/directrizes-da-dgs/orientacoes-e-circulares-informativ...>

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