

PREVENTIVE COMMITMENT

FOR PRIMARY HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS



Primary Healthcare Professionals are key in the prevention of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C)



There are new challenges emerging that require **awarness-raissing interventions** and training from your teams that **focused specifically on families and communities.**

When dealing with the issue of **female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C)** it is important to avoid prosecution as the first response, as this involves challenging the perceived fundamental rights of people and may result in outcomes that end in the break-up of families.

The PREVENTIVE COMMITMENT, is a document that the Wassu Foundation has designed and implemented since 1998. It is a tool designed to support parents in their decision not to perform FGM/C on their daughters. It helps parents deal with the pressures from the extended family, especially in the country of origin, and avoiding contesting the authority of their elders.

APPLICATION GUIDE

BASIC CONCEPTS

> It is a tool to support families, in particular parents, visiting their country of origin. Acquiring the signature is not an aim in itself.





IMPLEMENTATION RULES

- > Acquiring a signature should never be the principal purpose of contact between Primary Healthcare Professionals and the families of girls at risk
- > The main intention is assessing the risk that a girl may be subjected to FGM/C whilst on a visit to her parents' country of origin



> Informing parents of the consequences of carrying out FGM/C on their daughters is a fundamental part of the prevention work carried out by Primary Healthcare Professionals.

> The agreement by parents not subject their daughters to FGM/C should be voluntary and by mutual agreement between the parties involved.

> The agreement by parents not to undertake FGM/C must be assured the same protection and confidentiality as other documentation that forms part of medical records.

> Currently, the legal framework in Spain characterises FGM/C as an injury crime, which can be prosecuted even if performed on a girl outside her country of normal residence (known as 'extra-territoriality'). Knowledge and non-avoidance of this practice may also have legal consequences for professionals.

> Awareness-raising work seeks to empower families to position themselves against FGM/C, with respect, autonomy and knowledge. Primary Healthcare Professionals must take into account the following actions:

- A. Identify a situation of risk of FGM/C being performed on a girl.
- B. Ensure a good language understanding on the part of the family.
- C. Know the family situation of the girl at risk.
- D. Address the cultural reasons for the practice with the family.
- E. Inform parents of:
 - i. Physical risks and possible outcomes.
 - ii. Psycho-affective risks and consequences.
 - iii. Legal risks and implications.
- F. Identify both the father's and mother's attitudes towards FGM/C.
- G. Plan the intervention, including paediatric examinations, before and after the trip to the country of origin.

> The signature of the commitment must be recorded in the medical record, as well as a copy kept of the document.

> In the event of a high-risk situation and the family's refusal to sign the document, other legal measures should be assessed. But awareness-raising work with the family should continue.

Link to download the document template in Spanish:
http://bit.ly/Wassu_ModeloCompromisoPreventivo

