

Forced marriage of adults with learning disabilities - developing knowledge, policy and practice to keep people safe



MY MARRIAGE, MY CHOICE

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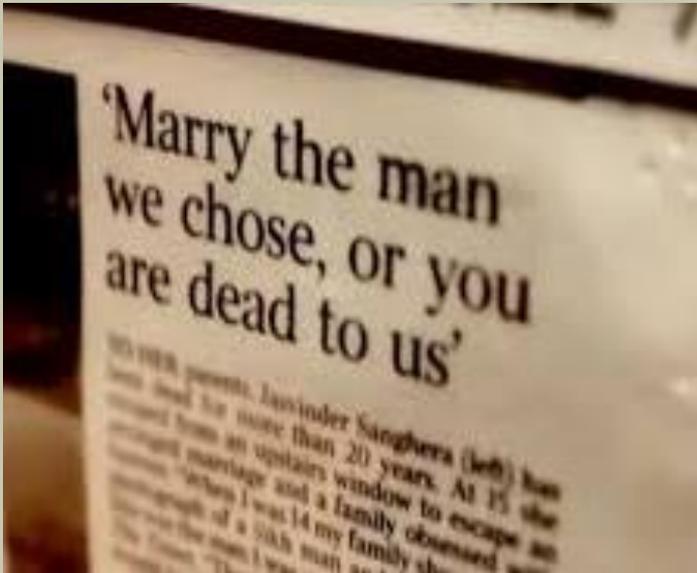


Acknowledgement & Disclaimer



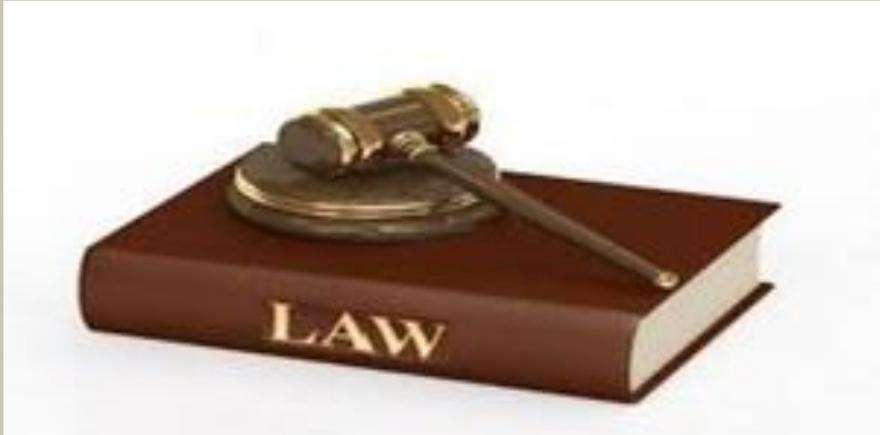
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What is forced marriage?



- **Forced Marriage Unit definition of forced marriage**
- A marriage conducted without the valid consent of one or both parties and where duress is a factor

Where the law stands on Forced Marriage



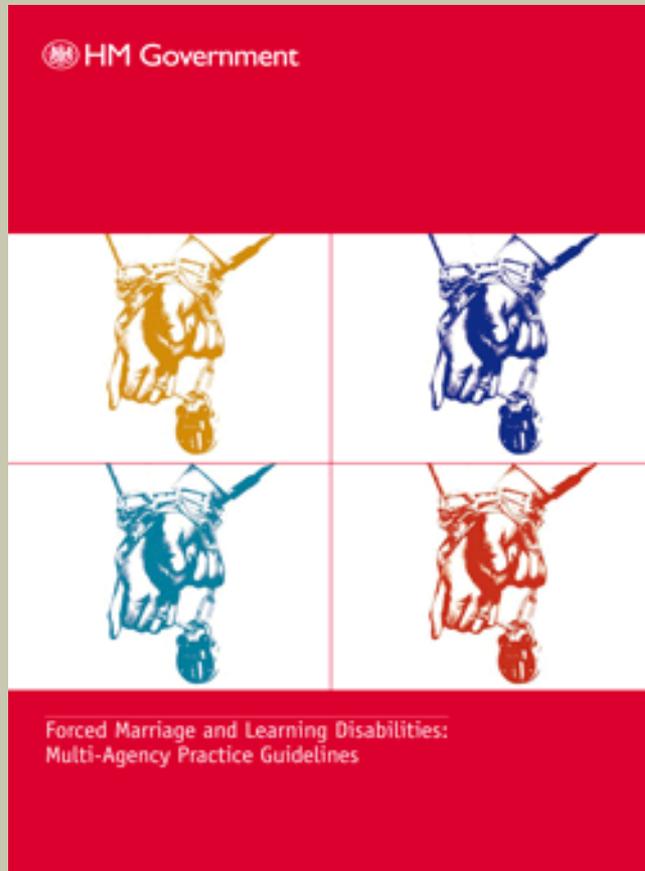
Anti-social Behaviour, Crime
and Policing Act 2014

New offences created:

- Forcing someone to marry against their will
- Using deception to cause someone to leave the UK for the purpose of forcing them to marry

If a person lacks the capacity to consent, the offence of forcing someone to marry is committed *whether or not violence, threats or any other form of coercion are used*

Building on previous work



2009-10: **Research:** the motivators for and consequences of forced marriage of people with learning disabilities (PWLD)

2011 – **Practice development:** training programme for frontline practitioners

2012-13 – **Research:** Forced Marriage and Safeguarding Policy

2014-15 – **Awareness-raising:** 'Hidden Trust' seminar series

All projects were funded by the Forced Marriage Unit Domestic Programme Fund

Current research aims and objectives



To increase understanding and awareness of forced marriage of people with learning disabilities and develop resources to support effective adult safeguarding practice in this area by:

1. Identifying the individual and cultural characteristics of people with a learning disability who have been subject to forced marriage.
2. Generating knowledge about how key stakeholders, including people with learning disabilities, their families, community/faith leaders and frontline professionals, understand issues of consent, capacity and forced marriage.
3. Produce materials for people with learning disabilities, family carers and professionals to raise awareness, understanding and capacity to prevent forced marriage.

Phases of project



- **Phase 1** – analysis of case records held by UK Government Forced Marriage Unit
- **Phase 2** – interviewing of stakeholder groups: people with learning disabilities; parents/family carers; faith leaders; frontline practitioners
- **Phase 3** – development of outputs aimed at stakeholder groups



Outputs – resources to improve safeguarding



Will include:

- Guidance and tool kit to support practitioners assessing capacity to consent to marry
- Film aimed at people with learning disabilities and families to raise awareness of forced marriage
- Detailed case study report which will explain forced marriage from the perspective of people with learning disabilities, family members and community/faith to help improve understanding of social care staff
- http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/research/groups/my_marriagemychoice/ for further details

Phase 1 - findings from FMU data



- Analysis of 554 cases records of people with learning disabilities referred to the Forced Marriage Unit between August 2009 (when records began) and 2015 (last available full year of data at time of data collection).
- Findings indicate that forced marriage of people with learning disabilities is different to those without in relation to:
 - ✦ Gender of victim
 - ✦ Age of victim

Recorded cases of forced marriage of people with learning disabilities



Year	Number of recorded cases
2009 (from August)	15
2010	51
2011	58
2012	54
2013	100
2014	135
2015	141
Total (all years)	554

Gender of people with learning disabilities forced to marry



No. of cases and % of cases by gender for each year 2009-2015

Year	Female	Male	Missing data
2009	7 (46.7%)	8 (53.3%)	0 (0.0%)
2010	32 (62.7%)	18 (35.3%)	1 (2.0%)
2011	31 (53.4%)	27 (46.6%)	0 (0.0%)
2012	30 (55.6%)	23 (42.6%)	1 (1.9%)
2013	50 (50.0%)	49 (49.0%)	1 (1.0%)
2014	61 (45.2%)	74 (54.8%)	0 (0.0%)
2015	54 (38.3%)	87 (61.7%)	0 (0.0%)
All years	265 (47.8%)	286 (51.6%)	3 (0.5%)

Age of people with learning disabilities forced to marry



FMU statistics for age for LEARNING DISABILITY cases and for **ALL cases**

Year	Age range (years)						
	Up to 15	16-17	18-21	22-25	26-30	31-40	41+
2010*	0%	14%	48%	14%	14%	5%	5%
2011	12% (10%)	12% (19%)	21% (27%)	12% (17%)	21% (14%)	12% (3%)	9% (5%)
2012	0% (13%)	19% (22%)	31% (30%)	25% (19%)	6% (8%)	19% (8%)	0% (**)
2013	13% (15%)	4% (25%)	26% (33%)	35% (15%)	13% (7%)	9% (3%)	0% (**)
2014	3% (11%)	3% (11%)	23% (17%)	22% (14%)	22% (8%)	22% (5%)	4% (2%)
2015	<1% (14%)	5% (13%)	19% (20%)	33% (15%)	16% (9%)	16% (6%)	9% (2%)

*No age range breakdown available for **ALL cases** this year

**This age band was not used in these years

Reporting by region of England



- Recorded cases of people with learning disabilities are particularly high in number in the London, West Midlands, North West and South East regions (same as for all cases).
- Figures for the Yorkshire and Humberside region also look to have increased in 2014 and 2015. This is in line with the general trend of more recorded cases generally in those two years.



Focus country



- Across all years highest number of cases have Pakistan as their focus country (45.8% of all recorded cases across all years). In 2015 Pakistan was the focus country for 58.9% of recorded cases.
- Across all years three other countries are focus countries in high number of cases. Bangladesh - 13.4% of recorded cases across all years; India - 12.8% of recorded cases across all years; UK - 11.6% of all recorded cases across all years with a 'peak' of 20% of all recorded cases in 2014.
- Number of Other/Unknown recorded cases - almost 20% in 2010, and over 6% across all years.
- Reporting follows trend for all reported cases

Who reports forced marriages?



	2013	2014	2015
Social services / adult safeguarding	35%	28%	33%
UK Border Agency /UK Visas and Immigration Department	37%	44%	45%
Other*	28%	28%	22%

* Other includes GPs, family members, friends and the victims themselves

Some preliminary findings from phase 2



Phase 2 is generating some interesting data relating to understandings in all stakeholder groups about capacity to consent and how this is determined.

Strong themes emerging around the reasons why families decide upon marriage for a son or daughter and the real/perceived consequences of not doing so.

Focus on Practitioners as stakeholders



- Frontline practitioners were largest of four groups we consulted
- 5 focus groups and 6 individual interviews (37 practitioners in all)
- Varied range of professionals (social workers, health practitioners, police service, learning disability service professionals including support workers)
- Also working with a group of 8 practitioners to develop guidance and tool-kit to support other practitioners

Preliminary findings among Practitioners (1)



- Awareness and knowledge of FM very varied
 - Ranged from no/very little knowledge to highly developed systems for recognising and reporting
 - Awareness of law relating to FM was very varied
 - Awareness of agencies who can assist in FM cases was quite varied
 - Depended largely on incidence of FM cases in community ‘patch’ and features of community (demographics, whether unitary authority etc.)
- Challenges and issues in recognising and reporting
 - Recognising FM – picking up on potential ‘alerts’
 - Recognising collusive activities (within families and in practice)
 - Maintaining relationship with families in potential FM cases
 - To intervene or not to intervene – could intervention make situation worse?

Preliminary findings among Practitioners (2)



- **Challenges of Assessing Capacity**
 - process of assessment – lack of standardisation
 - working with families when assessment suggests no capacity to consent
- **Practitioners perceptions of:**
 - carers' understandings of FM and of capacity and consent
 - what life like for PWLD, life expectations, marriage expectations
 - motivations of carers to consider marriage for PWLD
 - generational differences in attitudes to the above
- **Reported lack of engagement and mistrust of services**

Preliminary findings among Practitioners (3)



- Reported barriers to handling FM cases
 - Resourcing and Training
 - Personal Barriers and Agency delineation
 - Cultural sensitivities
- How to overcome reported barriers
 - Dedicated training and resources
 - Engagement with communities – in particular to raise awareness
 - Harness opinions of ‘younger’ generations to influence



Project outputs can help with these – Awareness DVD being filmed; Tool-kit for Capacity Assessment being produced; Dedicated conferences reporting findings; as well as final findings from all stakeholders freely available

An important reminder



This project is about forced marriage and how to prevent it, but people with learning disabilities who have the capacity to consent and who freely choose to marry have the right to do so

Contact details for further information



My Marriage My Choice Project website:

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