

*Bill 10: Health Professions (Protecting Women and Girls) Amendment Act, 2022* received royal assent and came into force on May 31, 2022. The amendments introduced by this Bill require health profession regulators to develop standards of practice respecting **female genital mutilation (FGM)\***. These standards of practice must be adopted by all health colleges no later than May 31, 2023.

Although procuring\*\* or providing FGM is a criminal act under the *Criminal Code of Canada* and would be considered unprofessional conduct under many existing ACSLPA *Standards of Practice*, the Government of Alberta has emphasized that this is an unacceptable activity for any health professional to engage in by requiring all health colleges to have specific standard in place addressing these practices.

The Government of Alberta expects that, at a minimum, Standards of Practice developed by regulatory colleges are to:

- 1) reiterate that regulated members cannot procure or perform FGM, and
- 2) should outline the requirement for mandatory reporting where the regulated member believes another health professional has performed or procured FGM.

Health professionals who perform or facilitate FGM will be removed from practice if convicted. Those convicted of this crime in other jurisdictions will not be allowed to practice in Alberta.

ACSLPA is revising Standard Area 5.0 *Sexual Abuse and Sexual Misconduct* to include FGM. Specifically Standard 5.7 *Mandatory Duty to Report* will include the duty to report the procurement or performance of FGM.

The revised draft *Standard Area 5.0 Sexual Abuse, Sexual Misconduct and FGM*, will be circulated in December for member feedback.



\*As per s.1(1) (m.1) of the *Health Professions Act (HPA)*, FGM is defined as “the excision, infibulation or mutilation, in whole or in part, of the labia majora, labia minora, clitoral hood or clitoris of a person, except where valid consent is given, and (i) a surgical or other procedure is performed by a regulated member of a College under the HPA for the benefit of the physical health of the person or for the purpose of that person having normal reproductive functions or sexual appearance or function, or (ii) the person is at least 18 years of age and there is no resulting bodily harm”.

\*\***Procure** meaning “to obtain or get, to persuade or cause someone to do something, or to bring about by indirect means”.

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