

**Meeting of the Board of the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Board in Public
21 March 2025**

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Syed Abrar, Client Director at Limbic

Question:

I would like to submit the following question for consideration at the ICB Board:

As the adoption of AI continues to shape the delivery of healthcare, what is the ICB's approach to leveraging these tools to enhance outcomes, improve efficiency and ensure equitable access to services?

Additionally, if you are a third-party that is able to support the ICB's strategy and priorities, who would be the best person to contact regarding this matter in the first instance?

Response from Dr Andrew Rochford, ICB Chief Medical Officer

- Thank you for this question which I am pleased to answer as the lead ICB Executive for Digital Delivery.
- The ICB supports the appropriate use of technology to support both the residents and our partners in the provision of care services.
- Our partners currently do use AI where it has been shown as a result of engagement and scoping processes to be the most suitable technology and the providers of this, and any other utilised technology, have undergone an open process to ensure fair selection.
- Potential future suppliers should continue to engage through the procurement frameworks the ICB and indeed the NHS operate within.

Amal, Somali Voices Enabled

Question:

I would like to submit the following question for consideration at the ICB Board:

We understand that the ICB's received funding for pelvic health, which FGM is part of. Can the ICB confirm what allocation they have for this and what the funding is currently used for?

Response from Sarah Stanley, ICB Chief Nurse

- Thank you for this question which I am pleased to answer as ICB Chief Nurse.
- To clarify for the Board, FGM stands for female genital mutilation. The term refers to all procedures that involve the partial or complete removal of external female genitalia or any other injury to female genital organs for non-medical purposes. The practice offers no health benefits for girls and women and can lead to serious consequences, including severe bleeding, urinary issues, cysts, menstrual complications, infections, childbirth difficulties, and an increased risk of newborn mortality.
- The total value of the contracts for Pelvic Health Services this financial year are £150,033.
 - BHFT - £86,756
 - MKUH - £63,277
- **MKUH** do not have a specific FGM pathway, however there is training with the Perinatal mental health service regarding the link between Mental Health and Pelvic Floor Dysfunction, for those in pregnancy.
- They also highlight Pelvic Floor Dysfunction in monthly midwife training regarding symptoms for referral - irrespective of due to FGM or not - and these pathways are clearly publicised for Perinatal Pelvic Health Services. A service spec is currently in development.
- **Bedford** have a small pelvic health physio team who will see patients as referred both under generic Pelvic Health and Perinatal Pelvic Health Services and are in the process of developing a FGM pathway. There has been protected time allocated for Bedford Maternity training on Pelvic Floor Dysfunction symptoms and referral over the last year.
- **Luton** have a part time Pelvic Health physio working under Perinatal Pelvic Health Service contract, the role is to support Pelvic Floor Dysfunction in the Perinatal population
- The pathway for women in Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes for FGM support is through the National FGM Support Clinics, there are no local FGM support clinics as these clinics need significant specialised clinical, multiprofessional, multidisciplinary support which has been consolidated at national centres to get the best support for women who need this. This is part of the national pathways developed to support women with FGM who need specialist support which is key.



Trust



Respect



Integrity



Accountability



Care and Compassion