

Abstract

Female genital cutting (FGC) is a significant public health problem affecting approximately 200 million women worldwide, with the practice concentrated in 29 countries throughout the Middle East, Africa and Asia. FGC is also found in diaspora countries hosting immigrants and refugees from these 29 countries. Despite the growing prevalence of FGC in high income countries due to immigration and increasing refugee populations, most health care providers (nurses, midwives, and physicians) and health care students, have limited or no training in the identification and care of women and girls with FGC. This one-day educational workshop focused on the care of women and girls affected by FGC and provider and student knowledge, attitudes, and practice. Curriculum was based on the WHO clinical guidelines and incorporated culturally sensitive care, management of common morbidities and risks within pediatric, obstetric, and gynecological patient populations, and the skills of the defibulation procedure through hands-on simulation. Participants were assessed using a knowledge, attitudes, and practice confidence (KAC) tool before and after the workshop. The educational workshop was attended by 101 multidisciplinary participants, matched pairs for each section of the survey resulted in the following: Knowledge: N=76, Attitudes: N = 67, Practice: N= 54. Significant changes in participant knowledge ($P = 0.002$) and confidence of practice ($P = 0.000$) occurred. No change in participant attitude was revealed ($P = 0.629$). Educational interventions can increase provider and student confidence in practice and knowledge of FGC. Better prepared providers will improve patient experiences and outcomes for this vulnerable population.

Keywords: female genital cutting, mutilation, FGC, FGM, FGM/C continuing education, simulated learning, defibulation.

