



Sent by email:

Baroness Butler-Sloss

butlerslosse@parliament.uk

5 March 2021

Dear Elizabeth,

Domestic Abuse Bill: Forced Marriage Guidance

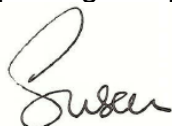
During the debate in Committee on 10 February on Baroness Greengross's amendments 165 and 166 on protecting older victims at risk from domestic abuse, you asked that any guidance on training which is provided to local authorities includes in it, that some women may be victims of forced marriage and may therefore need specialist support. I said I would investigate this.

I can confirm that in 2014, the government published [Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage](#), issued under section 63Q(1) of the Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007. This statutory guidance applies to all persons and bodies who exercise public functions in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. It outlines their responsibilities concerning developing and maintaining local procedures and practice arrangements to enable their front line professionals to handle cases of forced marriage effectively; how cases of forced marriage should be responded to using existing frameworks for safeguarding children with or without learning disabilities and covers issues such as staff training, developing inter-agency policies and procedures, raising awareness and developing prevention programmes through outreach work.

This guidance contains a full chapter on adult social care which is currently being revised to strengthen it further. In addition, through the Forced Marriage Unit, the government has also published practice guidance, [Multi-agency practice guidelines: handling cases of forced marriage](#), which provides advice for frontline workers including health professionals, educational staff, police, children's social care, adult social services and local authority housing. The Forced Marriage Unit has also developed [free e-learning](#) on the topic of forced marriage which aims to enable professionals to recognise the warning signs and ensure that appropriate action is taken to help protect and support all those at risk. It also delivers training directly to statutory agencies, including local authority safeguarding teams, on request.

I hope this reassures you that there is already extensive guidance in place on forced marriage, including on at risk vulnerable adults, and therefore no requirement for any separate guidance in this area. If I can be of any further assistance, please do let me know.

I am copying this letter to Baroness Greengross, Lord Hunt of Kings Heath, Lord Randall of Uxbridge, Baroness Meacher, Baroness Hamwee, Baroness Hodgson of Abinger, Lord Rooker, Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb; Baroness McIntosh of Pickering, Baroness Burt of Solihull and Lord Rosser; I am also placing a copy in the library of the House.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Susan".

Baroness Williams of Trafford