

# Review of: "Discussing Female Genital Mutilation by youth health care professionals in the Netherlands: facilitators and barriers"

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**Potential competing interests:** The author(s) declared that no potential competing interests exist.

## Reviewers comments

Discussing Female Genital Mutilation by youth health care professionals in the Netherlands: facilitators and barriers

‘Female genital mutilation or cutting (FGM/C) is a serious health problem’ doesn’t sound correct because FGM/C is an issue of public health concern because it causes health complications.

‘With an increase in migration, FGM/C has become an issue of serious concern in West-European countries<sup>[7]</sup>. A study shows that an estimated 500.000 first generation girls and women in the EU, Norway and Switzerland had undergone FGM/C before their migration<sup>[8]</sup>. Since the nineties, FGM/C has been prohibited and policies have been developed to prevent it by encouraging detection and taking cases to criminal court. This task of detection and prevention has been delegated to health care professionals. However, this prevention policy leads to a dilemma for health care professionals as they seem not equipped to discuss the practice with their clients<sup>[9]</sup>.’

This paragraph seems quite disjointed. It is raising a number of things including prevalence of FGM/C, policies, surveillance and detection, the responsibility of detection and prevention to health professionals and the health communication gaps mentioned. It is very loaded and confusing.

‘.....regularly examine all girls from birth until the age of 18,’ – This sentence raises ethical issues. It is important to explain the context around how this is done and whether ethical considerations are put in place so that the reader understands this.

‘Youth health care professionals (YHCPs) play a central role in the prevention of FGM/C ‘ – the reason why it is only young health professionals doing this may need to be explained and why it is not all health providers. The concept of YHCPs needs to be described as this paper makes an assumption that people know who these are; are they only young? How old is young? Youth? etc

Dutch policy towards FGM/C prevention. This policy has not been described in the background

This study was carried out to explore factors that can shed light on the difficulty of effective implementation of the Dutch policy towards FGM/C prevention. – This aim needs to be specified to YHCPs and not the general factors but those that link with YHCPs

There is no mention of ethical approval to conduct this study

Participants characteristics is not complete; their age, sex/gender, geographical area of work etc

The flow of the discussion section and the linking with other existing evidence is missing. It feels like one is just reading

bits and pieces of sentences and one is left to figure out what they mean in the context of the objective of the paper. There needs to be a clear flow of ideas from the beginning to the end of the paper.