



making
all the **difference**

Family and Reproductive Rights Education Program: Why it Matters



**WOMEN'S HEALTH
IN THE NORTH**



FARREP: Why it Matters

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About WHIN

- Regional women's health service for NMR and one of 11 specialist services in Victoria.
- Underpinned by the 'dual strategy': National Women's Health Policy (1989).
- Catchment: Banyule, Darebin, Hume, Moreland, Nillumbik, Whittlesea and Yarra.
- 18 years' experience in providing services (established in 1992).

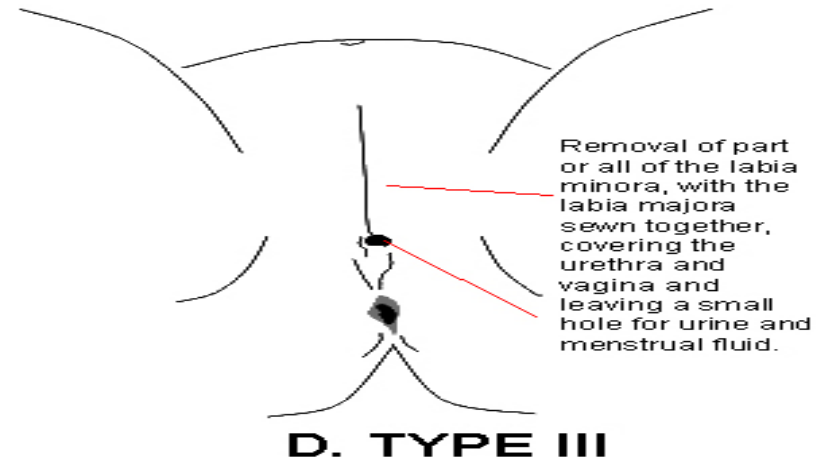
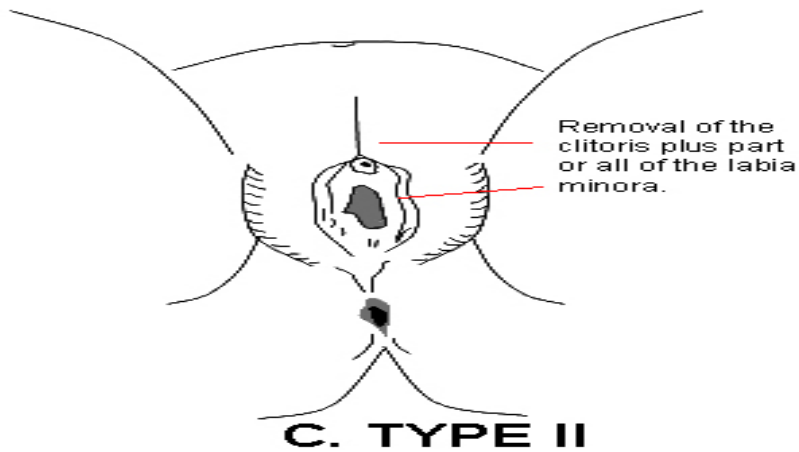
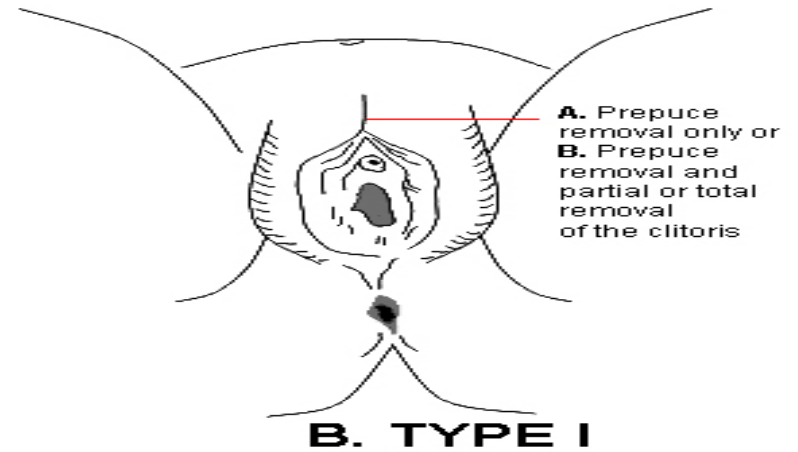
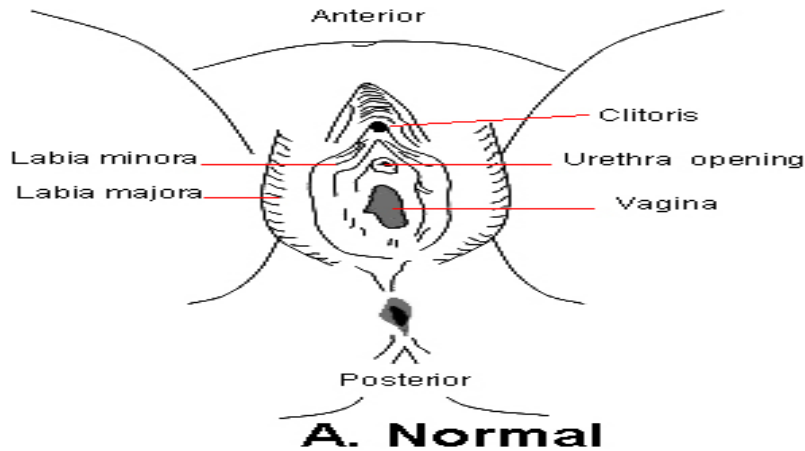


What is Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

‘All procedures involving partial or total removal of the female external genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs, whether for cultural or other non-medical reasons.’

WHO 1996

FGM Procedures: World Health Organization categorization





Legal Status of FGM in Victoria

- Crimes (Female Genital Mutilation) Act 1996.
- It is an offence to take a person from the State with the intention of having FGM performed, this includes if the person was subjected to FGM while outside the State.
- FGM is covered under the Children, Youth and Families Act (2005). Health professionals are mandated to report to Child Protection with any concerns regarding children.



Demographics for FGM

Amnesty International estimates that over 130 million women and girls worldwide have been affected by some form of FGM, over 3 million girls are at risk of undergoing FGM every year.

FGM is mainly practiced in:

- 28 different African countries spanning from Senegal in West Africa to Ethiopia in the East coast, as well as Egypt in the north to Tanzania in the south
- Some communities in the Arabian Peninsula such as Yemen, Oman, Saudi Arabia & United Arab Emirates
- India, Indonesia, Malaysia & Pakistan

The age at which FGM is preformed varies from infant to adolescent depending on the country, tribe and circumstances.



What is Family And Reproductive Rights Education Program (FARREP)

FARREP aims to work with communities that practice FGM in order to:

- strengthen knowledge about FGM and support changes to community attitudes about the practice to prevent the occurrence of FGM;
- Increase access to timely and appropriate sexual and reproductive health services for women and girls from communities that could FGM;
- build the capacity and expertise of mainstream and specialist sexual and reproductive health services to work with women and girls affected by or at risk of being affected by FGM .

FARREP at Women's Health In the North

FARREP at WHIN works in secondary schools with young women who come from countries in the Horn of Africa where FGM is practiced.

Group sessions include:

- Knowing your body & FGM
- Relationships
- Contraception and STI'S
- Pregnancy and birthing

As part of school program there is also a tour of the local maternity hospital to consolidate what was covered during group sessions.



FARREP Network in the North

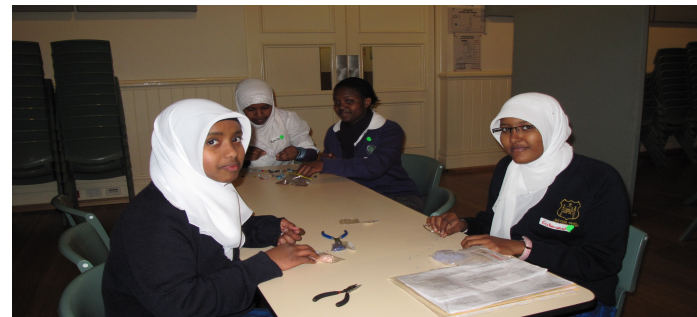
The network is a collaborative partnership of FARREP in the north working to meet gaps that exist in services.

Work done so far as a network:

Training staff at local hospitals

African Youth Health Day

Developing a pamphlet





Challenges & Limitations

- FGM is a cultural practice.
- There can be misconceptions about the role of the FARREP worker, whether they are community leaders, social workers or bilingual workers.
- High demand for more services and programs.
- Large number of FARREP workers are part-time.
- There are limited resources and funding for FARREP.
- Growing number of women and girls from FGM affected communities settling to Australia.



Why FARREP Matters

- FGM is internationally recognized as a violation of the human rights of girls and women.
- FGM affects the quality of life for women and girls.
- It is mostly carried out on young girls sometime between infancy and age 15 years.
- An estimated 130 million women and girls are currently living with the consequences of FGM.
- In Africa an estimated 92 million girls from 10 years of age and above have undergone FGM.



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