

UK FGM NETWORK NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 4

WELCOME!! To this fourth edition of our UK FGM Network Newsletter. Thanks to all of you for your contributions as always. 2008 got off to a very busy start and here at ACCM it's been especially good to see excellent work being done as we go to cities such as Bristol and Birmingham. So well done to everyone. Today there are lots of dates to note in your diary and events to check out, so do have a look to find out more and book yourself a place at these events. Keep in touch with us at info@accmsheffield.org or call 01142 750193 with any news you'd like to share. SARAH McCULLOCH, NATIONAL DIRECTOR

WHAT'S ON

Thanks to Melanie Knight of Nutricia who has forwarded us information on up and coming study days/events which you may find of interest. Click on the following links – well worth finding out more – particularly those of you involved in health/midwifery. So find out more and book these dates for your diary!

"MORE TO MIDWIFERY" 7 & 21 May

<http://www.accmsheffield.org/links/MoreToMidwiferyProg.pdf>

TUESDAY 1 JULY MANCHESTER STUDY DAY

<http://www.accmsheffield.org/links/studyinvite10708.pdf>

CONTEMPORARY MIDWIFE ISSUES 12 JUNE, WYNARD, STOCKTON ON TEES

<http://www.accmsheffield.org/links/studyinvite10708.pdf>

COMBINED CONFERENCE ON FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION, FORCED MARRIAGE AND 'HONOUR' BASED VIOLENCE - 21 MAY 2008

Comfort Momoh MBE, FGM Specialist of London St Guy's Hospital has organised this event on Wednesday 21 May in London. Please click the following link to find out more. We hope many of you will attend this event as it will have a large focus on FGM and be a great insight, as well as helping us go forward in our tackling of the issue. Thanks to Comfort for organising this.

<http://www.accmsheffield.org/links/May21event.pdf>



DORCAS AKEJU OBE has sent us this report from her travels! And it was quite a trip as you'll see..... thanks to Dorcas for sharing her experiences from Nairobi.

EAST MEETS WEST TRIP TO NAIROBI

In November 2007, I had the opportunity to attend the African Midwives Research (ARM) Network Conference. My main aim was to link up with two Kenya midwives from the village of Ortum where Female Genital Mutilation is still being practised. The midwives visited Liverpool in 2005. I also wanted to find out how my colleagues in Africa are trying to provide maternity care within limited resources.

ARM was set about few years ago with 7 core countries as members and supported by Sweden, England and United States. It was set up to share research papers and best practice.

The conference was held in Nairobi with over 350 delegates from 16 Countries for four days. The aim and objectives of the Conference were to strengthen research capacity amongst nurses and midwives, discuss challenges in giving evidenced based cost effective care and to share best practice.

There were several papers presented but they did highlight the problems faced by the nurses and midwives in providing best nursing and midwifery care. Examples of papers presented are as follows:

- High Maternity Mortality Rate (MMR) and Infant Mortality Rate (IMR)
- Antenatal care-Hospital/Maternity/Dispensary Centres
- Traditional Birth Attendants being used by mothers
- Impact of other diseases on maternal and child health such as HIV/AIDS/Malaria
- Domestic Violence
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Child Abuse/Prostitution
- Dilemma of tradition and beliefs affecting maternal perception of maternity care by mothers.
- Lack of resources by the African Governments-no free maternity care/nurses and midwives' salaries are low so most emigrate from the country.

I met the midwives (see insert) who were sponsored to attend the conference by a Maternity Hospital in Cumbria. We had opportunity of discussing how we could support the women in their district and empower them to stop Female Genital Mutilation and carry out research into the impact of FGM on the lives of the women.

The conference highlighted a collaborative work between educationists, clinicians and managers. It was very motivating but heart breaking as one felt more needed to be done to save more mothers and infants lives. Mothers in Africa are hoping for live births and the midwives want more resources to help provide effective midwifery care.

Thanks to HCP Study Events which partially funded my travelling. HCP Study Events is financially supported by a generous grant from Nestle Nutrition Institute

Dorcas Akeju OBE
Specialist Midwife, Equality and Diversity Lead
Liverpool Women's NHS Foundation Trust

16 MAY SHEFFIELD NATIONAL STRATEGY EVENT

Busy on 16 May? In the Sheffield area? We hope you'll be able to come along to this conference/event on the National FGM strategy. Organised by Comfort Momoh and ACCM, click on the following link to find out more.

<http://www.accmsheffield.org/links/ACTIONPLANEVENTSHEFFIELD.doc>



the Colour of Health

The Colour of Health is a 'free' quarterly magazine that promotes health for Black and Minority Ethnic women living in the UK.

We have introduced topics through personal stories, interviews and health professionals/organisations contributions like; lupus, fibroids, breast cancer screening, sexual health, nutrition, menopause, urinary incontinence, drugs, first aid, fitness, religion and health, stress, mental health, hair loss, FGM, forced marriages, domestic violence, organ transplants, and blood donors, etc.

Any health business, community organization or interest group involved in health campaigns, health promotion or research will find this magazine an essential and effective vehicle for communicating their health message primarily to Black and Minority Ethnic women and the wider communities.

Contact us at:

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Forthcoming major international conference in London

Genital Cutting in a Globalized Age A Forum for Interdisciplinary Debate

Friday 4th July 2008

The Royal Society of Medicine
1 Wimpole Street, London W1G 0AE

A groundbreaking event bringing together medical doctors and researchers, social and behavioural scientists, scholars in literary and cultural studies, lawyers, artists, philosophers and historians who share a critical interest in genital modification in the clinical, political and cultural spheres. The remit will be to examine practices and discourses of health, harm and sexuality in their historical and contemporary contexts. The conference will explicitly address the discursive and legislative inconsistencies relating to genital cutting, and tackle the ideological, political and ethical implications of current practices.

Topics:

- **Childhood surgery for ambiguous genitalia**
- **Sex reassignment surgery for transsexual people**
- **Female genital mutilation**
- **Male circumcision**
- **Genital cosmetic surgery**

Speakers:

- **Virginia Braun** University of Auckland, New Zealand
- **Robert Darby** Canberra, Australia
- **Milton Diamond** University of Hawaii, USA
- **Efua Dorkenoo OBE** London, UK
- **David Ralph** University College London, UK
- **Philip Ransley** Formerly Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children, UK
- **Philip Thomas** Royal Sussex Hospital, Brighton, UK
- **Stephen Whittle OBE** Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

Keynote lecture: **Cheryl Chase** Intersex Society of North America

The conference will provide a unique opportunity for practitioners, researchers and scholars to harness interdisciplinary collaboration, in order to improve the accuracy, sophistication and impact of scientific research, discursive analysis, and professional practice relating to all forms of genital cutting.

Registration fee (includes lunch): £85 before 31 March 2008; £115 thereafter
Registration enquiries: daranjohv@aol.com
Programme enquiries: morland@cardiff.ac.uk



Organisers:

Lih-Mei Liao
Iain Morland
Sarah Creighton



Sponsor:

BJU International
www.bjui.org



Chairs and discussants:

Gerry Conway
Polly Carmichael
Hera Cook
Lisa Downing
Peter Hegarty
Katrina Roen



UN Agencies Rally for End to Female Genital Mutilation Within a Generation

Thanks to TOBE LEVIN for this report.



Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro

27 February 2008 – Ten United Nations agencies have banded together to help eliminate the harmful practice of female genital mutilation within a generation, stressing the need for strong leadership and greater resources to protect the health and lives of millions of women and girls.

An estimated 3 million girls are at risk of undergoing the procedure – which involves the partial or total removal of external female genital organs – that some 140 million women, mostly in Asia, the Middle East and in Africa, have already endured.

In a [statement](#) issued today, the agencies pledged to support governments and communities to abandon female genital mutilation, which remains widespread in many parts of the world, highlighting the damaging effects of the practice on the health of women, girls and newborn babies.

The agencies expressed their concern about the “medicalization” of the practice, whereby it is performed by health professionals in health facilities, and the belief that it enhances a girl’s chastity and chances of marriage by controlling her sexuality.

“We recognize that traditions are often stronger than law, and legal action by itself is not enough,” they said. “Change must also come from within. This is why it is critical for us to join hands and work closely with communities and their leaders so that they can bring about sustainable social change.”

The aim is to have a major reduction in female genital mutilation in many countries by 2015, the target date for the achievement of the global anti-poverty objectives known as the Millennium Development Goals ([MDGs](#)).

“If we can come together for a sustained push, female genital mutilation can vanish within a generation,” said Deputy Secretary General Asha-Rose Migiro, adding her voice to the pledge made today. “But this goal demands both increased resources and strengthened coordination and cooperation among all of us.”

She called on countries to join the UN as full partners in the fight against female genital mutilation, which “clashes with our core universal values and constitutes a challenge to human dignity and health.” Pledging their commitment to end the practice are the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS ([UNAIDS](#)), the UN Development Programme ([UNDP](#)), The UN Economic Commission for Africa ([UNECA](#)), the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations ([UNESCO](#)), the UN Population Fund ([UNFPA](#)), the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights ([OHCHR](#)), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees ([UNHCR](#)), the UN Children’s Fund ([UNICEF](#)), the UN Development Fund for Women ([UNIFEM](#)) and the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)).