

# Female Genital Cosmetic Surgery (FGCS)

A resource for general practitioners and other health professionals

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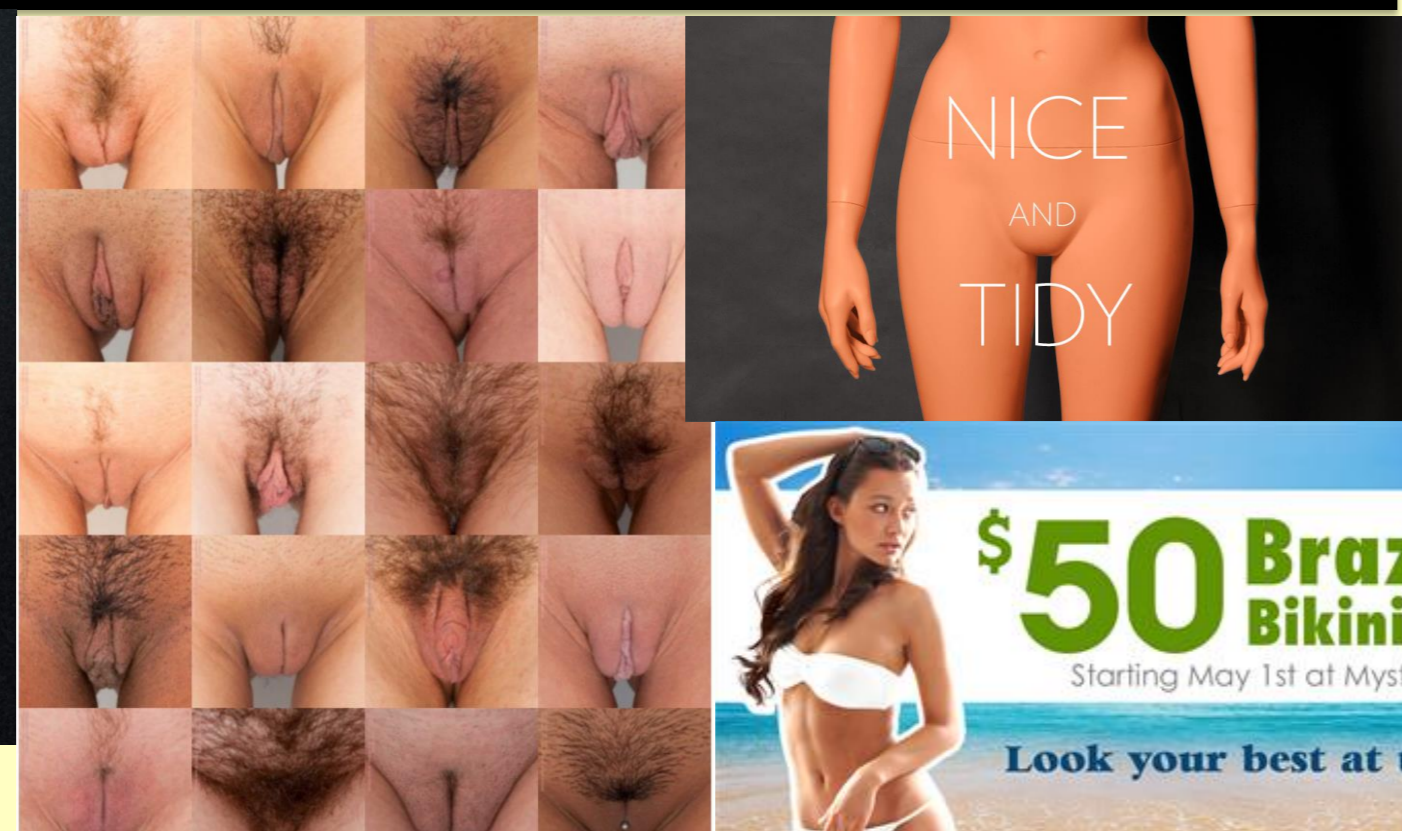
# RACGP

## Background issue

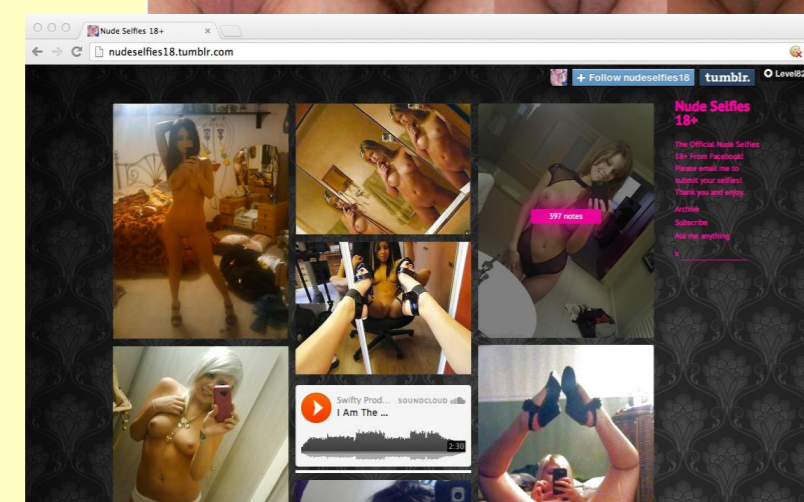
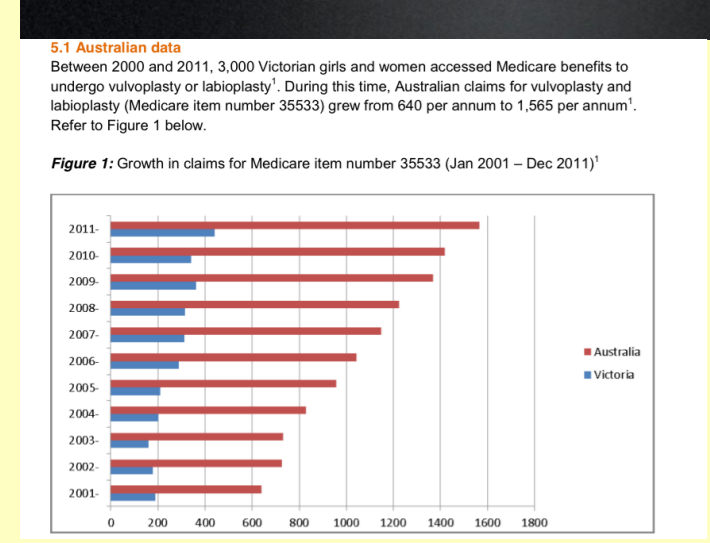
ADDRESSING YOUNG WOMEN'S DESIRE FOR GENITAL BEAUTY

Australian Sexual Health Conference, Darwin  
October 24, 2013

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NICE AND TIDY



CAMEL TOE

- Female Genital Cosmetic Surgery (FGCS) is any procedure not medically indicated which aims to achieve aesthetic or functional aspects a woman's genitalia(1).
- Medicare Australia figures indicate the number of women undergoing FGCS has increased 140 percent in the past ten years (2), with out rise in the incidence of disease conditions that warrant surgery(3). The fastest increase is in women aged 15-25 years.
- General Practitioners are increasingly seeing patients presenting with concerns about the appearance of their genitalia and or seeking surgery.
- The RACGP guide (4) aims to help inform GPs and health professionals about FGCS; factors influencing demand, and provide a set of recommendations on how to manage women requesting referral for FGCS or expressing concern regarding their genitalia.
- Exploration of issues revealed: **gaps in research, policy, education, practice and training for all parties concerned in the care of women.**

## Research

Current research: 'Female genital cosmetic surgery and the role of the General Practitioner in its management', Alfred Hospital project number 348/15, M Simonis, J Ong, R Manocha.

**METHOD:** Medline and PubMed were searched for relevant articles until saturation was achieved in 2015. These were then hand searched. Time frame restrictions were not applied.

**RESEARCH FINDINGS:** There is a paucity of high quality evidence in the area of FGCS therefore all recommendations in this document should be considered at National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) practice point level until further research is conducted.

**CONCLUSION:** Climbing demand for FGCS has resulted in an urgent need to provide guidance to the profession. Rate of increase for FGCS in the UK, USA, Western Europe, Australia are similar. As research continues, it will serve to expand and broaden our understanding of the issues raised.

2013/4

## Education & Practice



- FGCS incidence is climbing. Informed GPs can reduce unnecessary anxiety regarding vulval / genital anatomy
- Patient examination.....is an opportunity to educate female patients about genital anatomy
- Mental health and relationship abuse issues should be considered and referred accordingly.
- Educate patients about genital diversity e.g. *Labia Library* and the publication *Femalia*; complications of surgery.
- Refer patients for a gynaecological assessment initially.

2015

## New Frontier

- advocacy
- continuing education and training of health professionals and people at frontline of women's health- beauty industry including beauty therapists
- policy

Younger than 18, they should be referred to a specialist adolescent gynaecologist  
Disclosure: University of Melbourne, Victorian Primary Care Practice-Based Research Network (VicReN), Melbourne Medical School, committee member. Women's Health Victoria, board member

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References: 1. Bramwell 2007 2. Australian Government Department of Human Services. Medicare Item Reports. Available at [http://medicarestatistics.humanservices.gov.au/statistics/mbs\\_item.jsp](http://medicarestatistics.humanservices.gov.au/statistics/mbs_item.jsp) [Accessed 20 January 2015].3.Australian Government Department of Health. MBS Reviews: Vulvoplasty Report, 2014 [www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/0C64684BA76544CCCA257BF0001E0243/\\$File/Vulvoplasty\\_Review\\_Report.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/0C64684BA76544CCCA257BF0001E0243/$File/Vulvoplasty_Review_Report.pdf) [Accessed January 2015].4.Racgp website link to the racgp fgcs guide 5. Women's health Victoria 6. www.labialibrary.com.au

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