



White October

Press Release
November 2016

'Let's Talk FGM' app wins London Design Award



24 November 2016 - 24 November 2016 - An app designed to make it easier for health professionals to talk about female genital mutilation (FGM) with their clients has been voted Best in the Digital Health category in the London Design Awards, a global award series that celebrates excellence in design.

'Let's Talk FGM' is designed to prevent FGM and help survivors by facilitating discussion with health professionals about the practice. It is the brainchild of Joanne McEwan, a public health nurse at Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, who had the idea for the app after coming across many survivors of FGM in her work.

"FGM is a difficult subject to discuss," she says. "I wanted to produce something that could help health professionals enquire sensitively about this issue and be equipped to talk constructively with families and survivors from many different backgrounds and cultures."

Frances Place of White October, who led the project, says: “The most important factor was presenting content in a simple, easily digestible way, to give health professionals what they need to start the conversation about FGM. Everyone involved is proud to be part of this project, and winning such a major award is a huge vote confidence from the Design community.”

The design aim for ‘Let’s Talk FGM’ was to produce an online mobile resource that gives health professionals well-presented information to talk about FGM in the context of different cultures and languages. It needed to be visually engaging, whilst being culturally sensitive, designed with BME users as the key focus, not an afterthought.

‘Let’s Talk FGM’ is structured to allow the health visitor to dip in and out of information depending on the direction of the conversation. Its core content is soundbites in five languages about the impact of FGM, why it happens, the law, how to protect children and local support for survivors. Languages include Somali, Swahili, Arabic, Tagrinya and Mandinka. Videos interviews with survivors and experts bring the content to life even more.

Joanne McEwan is based at the Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust and developed ‘Let’s Talk FGM’ after she won a Mary Seacole Leadership Award for her project. The Award gave her the funding base she needed to build the app and, working with White October, took just 12 months to launch it on the App store.

"FGM is a form of abuse, a violation of human rights and children’s rights," she adds. "It is a form of violence against women and girls, and women and girls from communities where FGM might be practiced deserve protection, just like anyone else at risk of abuse or violence."

As well as White October, Joanne worked with campaign group Oxford Against Cutting, and staff from, Oxford Health and Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trusts to produce content for the app.

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Notes for editors

Images from the FGM app are available [here](#)

Download ‘Let’s talk FGM’ from the Apple App Store [here](#)

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