

# Reproductive coercion and the role of general practitioners

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## Background:

Reproductive coercion (RC), involves behaviours that interfere with a person's reproductive choices and autonomy. This includes contraceptive sabotage, pregnancy coercion, pressure to terminate or continue a pregnancy, and forced sterilisation. While there is growing recognition of the prevalence and harm of RC, little is known about the role of general practitioners (GPs) in identifying and addressing RC. We aimed to explore existing literature on RC in the general practice setting, with a focus on the role of GPs in identifying and managing RC.

## Method:

A narrative review was conducted by comprehensively searching five electronic databases and grey literature to identify relevant studies that examined RC in the context of general practice. Findings were synthesised using a narrative approach.

## Results:

GPs play a critical role in creating a safe environment for patients to discuss their reproductive health concerns. By maintaining a positive doctor-patient relationship, effectively communicating with patients, and being knowledgeable about the signs of RC, GPs can potentially identify and manage cases of RC. The review also highlights how GPs play a role in perpetrating RC among their own patients, and highlight the need for GPs to be mindful and take steps to prevent this. This includes providing unbiased information, obtaining informed consent, respecting patient autonomy, and addressing concerns about partner involvement in a sensitive and non-judgmental manner. The review further underscores the need for increased education and training for GPs on the identification and management of RC.

## Conclusion:

This review emphasises the important role that GPs have in identifying and managing RC, while being mindful of their potential to perpetrate it. It emphasises the need to create supportive environments that empower patients to make informed reproductive choices. Improving GPs' capacity to address RC will enhance the quality of care provided to victims of RC and promote reproductive justice.

## Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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