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INVITATION to the Public defence of

Hakki DEMIRKAPU

To obtain the academic degree of

'DOCTOR OF MEDICAL SCIENCES'

Advance care planning perspectives of older adults and their family members with Turkish and Moroccan backgrounds in Belgium

The public defence will take place on

Friday, 28 June 2024 at 4 p.m.

In Auditorium Piet Brouwer
Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy, Laarbeeklaan 103, 1090 Brussel

and can be followed online, accessible through the following link:

https://gf.vub.ac.be/redirects/PhD_defense_Hakki_Demirkapu.php

Summary of the dissertation

For this dissertation, older adults with Turkish background (including those requiring palliative care), older adults with Moroccan background and their family members in Belgium were interviewed to explore their familiarity with and perspectives on advance care planning (ACP). Belgium has large Turkish and Moroccan migrant populations with inadequate healthcare access and ACP engagement, as is typical for ethnic-minority groups worldwide. ACP allows individuals to outline their end-of-life care preferences in ongoing discussion with their doctors while relatively healthy. The interviewees lacked ACP knowledge and experience with doctors, but many had discussed end-of-life preferences with family members. Their perspectives on ACP ranged from acceptance to dismissal, but most considered it to be valuable and consistent with their religious beliefs, especially after receiving detailed explanations and examples. A lack of knowledge, reliance on culturally traditional family caregiving, concern about emotional burdening, a lack of urgency and (hierarchical) family dynamics were barriers to ACP. Facilitators were participants' receipt of ACP information in their native languages, doctors' culturally sensitive initiation of ACP discussions with the involvement of family members, adult children's ACP knowledge to avoid worry and conflict during future decision making, older adults' uncertainty about their children's caregiving ability or desire to avoid burdening them, and recent family experiences of severe illness or death. These findings could inform the culturally sensitive adaptation of ACP discussions for these migrant groups in Belgium.

Curriculum Vitae

Hakki Demirkapu was born on 26 July 1984 in Ghent, Belgium. He attended high school in Ghent, graduating in Science-Mathematics in 2003. Dr Demirkapu obtained Bachelor's degrees in Biomedical Sciences (2005) and Medicine (2007), and went on to obtain a Master's degree in Medicine at Vrije Universiteit Brussel in 2010. In 2012, he completed his Master-after-Master's degree in Family Medicine. In 2013, he founded the multidisciplinary Medisina Medical and Dental Clinic, where he works as a general practitioner and tutor for general practitioners in training. In 2017, he initiated his PhD project in the Department of Family Medicine and Chronic Care of Vrije Universiteit Brussel. His research focuses on advance care planning among people of Turkish and Moroccan origin living in Belgium. The findings of his doctoral research have been published in high-impact, peer-reviewed international journals and disseminated through presentations at national and international conferences. He also has a special interest in person-centred care, which takes patients' cultural and religious values into account. Dr Demirkapu gives lectures on medical care for individuals with migration backgrounds and serves as a board member for several associations dedicated to health and education.