

Refugee Women



Digital Empowerment and Connect Project

Session 4 – Women’s Health



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Welcome!

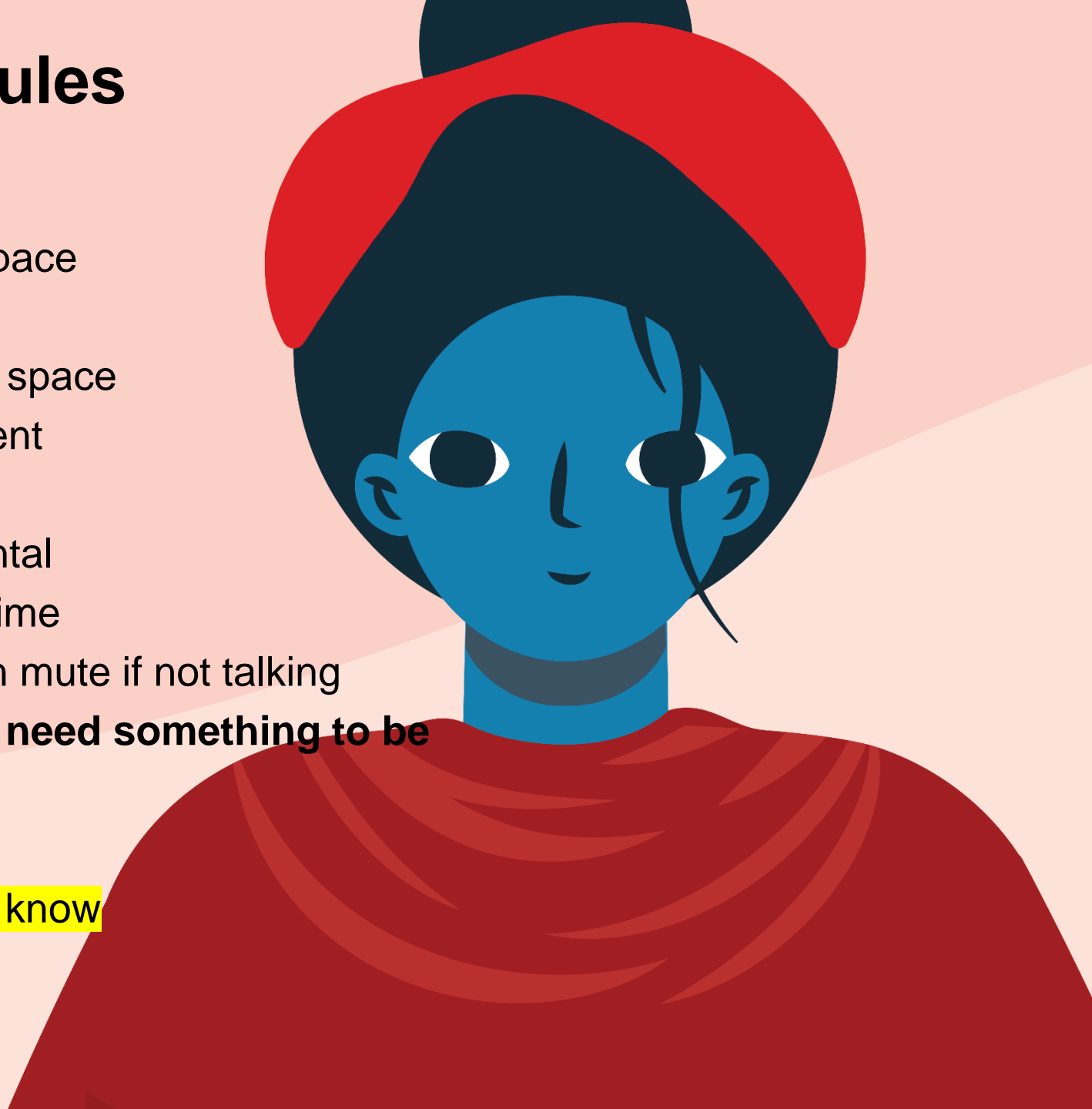
Today we will:

- Discuss accessing health services during COVID-19
- Discuss women's health services in the UK
- Discuss the COVID-19 Vaccine



Ground Rules

- Confidential space
 - Safe space
 - Women's only space
 - Phones on silent
 - Be respectful
 - Non-judgemental
 - Talk one at a time
 - Keep Zoom on mute if not talking
 - **Do ask if you need something to be repeated!**
- It is okay not to know



Health services in the UK



- GP surgeries
- Dentists
- Health assessments
- Hospital treatment
- Prescriptions and pharmacies
- Mental health services

NHS treatment is universally free at the point of treatment. However, some NHS treatment can be billed for depending on immigration status.

Refugee status provides entitlement to free NHS care.

Changes to health services

What is different during COVID-19?

- Remote appointments
- More information online
- Publicising other ways to access health information: 111
- Delays/cancellations to some health procedures, including operations
- NHS dental treatment cancelled



Where can I find online information about health services?

England	https://www.nhs.uk/ www.111.nhs.uk
Northern Ireland	http://online.hscni.net/
Scotland	https://www.nhsinform.scot/ www.nhs24.scot
Wales	www.111.wales.nhs.uk

Online access to health services

The NHS website has a list of all GP surgeries in the UK.

You can use this to check reviews of the nearest GP surgeries to you.

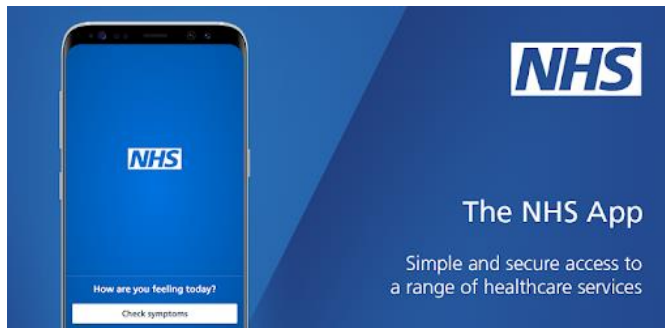
Check the GP surgery website to see if you can register online.

Find a GP

Enter a town, city or postcode in England

Search

Use your location



Via your GP website or the NHS app you can also:

- Order repeat prescriptions
- Book GP appointments

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Online access to health services

- If you have an urgent medical problem and do not know what to do, you can phone **111**.
- The service is available 24hrs a day, 7 days a week and operates across most of the UK using the same phone number. Calls to 111 are free from mobiles and landlines.
- When calling, you will be asked to answer questions about your symptoms and depending on this assessment you will be connected to a nurse, emergency dentist, pharmacist or a GP who will then give you advice on what to do next.
- **You can also ask for an interpreter or translator if you need one.**
- There is also an online tool which can be used for medical advice, but this is only available in English.

 111.nhs.uk

Health information

Health A to Z

[A](#) [B](#) [C](#) [D](#) [E](#) [F](#) [G](#) [H](#) [I](#) [J](#) [K](#) [L](#) [M](#) [N](#) [O](#) [P](#) [Q](#) [R](#) [S](#) [T](#) [U](#) [V](#) [W](#) [X](#) [Y](#) [Z](#)

Information about how the health system works, including help with Health Costs



Information about conditions, symptoms and treatment



Information about how and where to find health services near you, including: General Practice, Dentists, Urgent Care, Accident & Emergency



Women's health



What to expect in a health appointment

1. It doesn't matter if I am a few minutes late for a GP appointment – they will see me because they have to, as I am unwell.
2. My GP can only see me for one matter at a time.
3. My elderly mother also has an issue she wants to see the doctor about; I can bring her to my appointment, and we can both be seen at the same time to avoid making two trips.
4. I should take someone with me who speaks English to my appointment.
5. I will always see the same Doctor.

Barriers to accessing health services

Healthcare professionals

Issues with quality of health care

Communication and language

Deciding whether to seek help or not

Women's health

- Sexual Health
- Contraception
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Unintended pregnancy and abortion
- Gynaecology
- Pregnancy, childbirth and post-pregnancy health
- Menopause
- Sexual wellbeing

“Sexual Health is a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence. For sexual health to be attained and maintained, the sexual rights of all persons must be respected, protected and fulfilled.” – World Health Organisation

Contraception

Your **GP**, a **sexual health or family planning** clinic can provide confidential information about contraception, free of charge.

Different types of contraception will suit women differently, depending on several variables. Contraceptive care should **always involve your consent**.

One particularly important factor is that most contraception options do not protect against Sexually Transmitted Infections. Condoms are the only method of contraception that help protect against both pregnancy and STIs.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/contraception/>

<https://www.contraceptionchoices.org/>

<https://theldown.com/>

<https://legacy.brook.org.uk/our-services/start-my-contraception-tool>



Sexually Transmitted Infections

- Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) are passed on from one person to another through unprotected sex or genital contact.
- STIs can have a range of unpleasant symptoms, but they can also be present without any symptoms for many years
- Most sexually transmitted infections are treatable or manageable, particularly if diagnosed early.

The NHS advises:

- If you're worried you have an STI, go for a check-up at a sexual health clinic as soon as you can.
- Don't have sex, including oral sex, without a condom until you have had a check-up.
- You can have an STI without knowing it and infect your partner during sex.

Regular sexual health screening is also recommended for people who are sexually active, regardless of whether symptoms are present.

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Cervical Screening

Cervical screening checks the health of your cervix. It is also known as a **Smear test**.

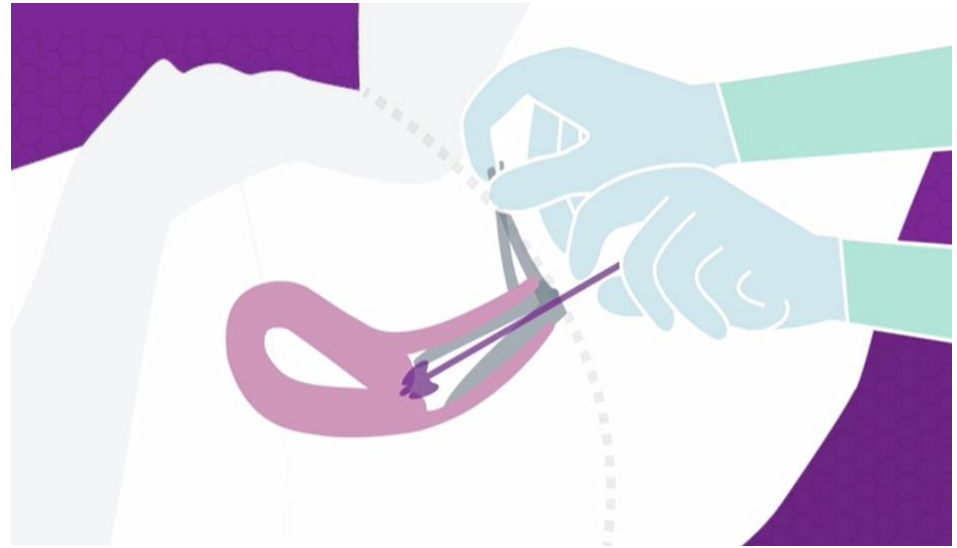
It is to check the health of the cells in the cervix for any changes and abnormalities, to prevent any abnormal cells becoming cancerous.

All women and people with a cervix aged 25 to 64 should be invited by letter, and retested every 3-5 years, depending on their age.

During the appointment, a small sample of cells will be taken from the cervix. You'll get your results by letter, usually in about 2 weeks. It will explain what happens next.

Contact your GP surgery online or by phone if you think you are due to have cervical screening but have not been sent an invite.

Try not to put off cervical screening. It's one of the best ways to protect yourself from cervical cancer.

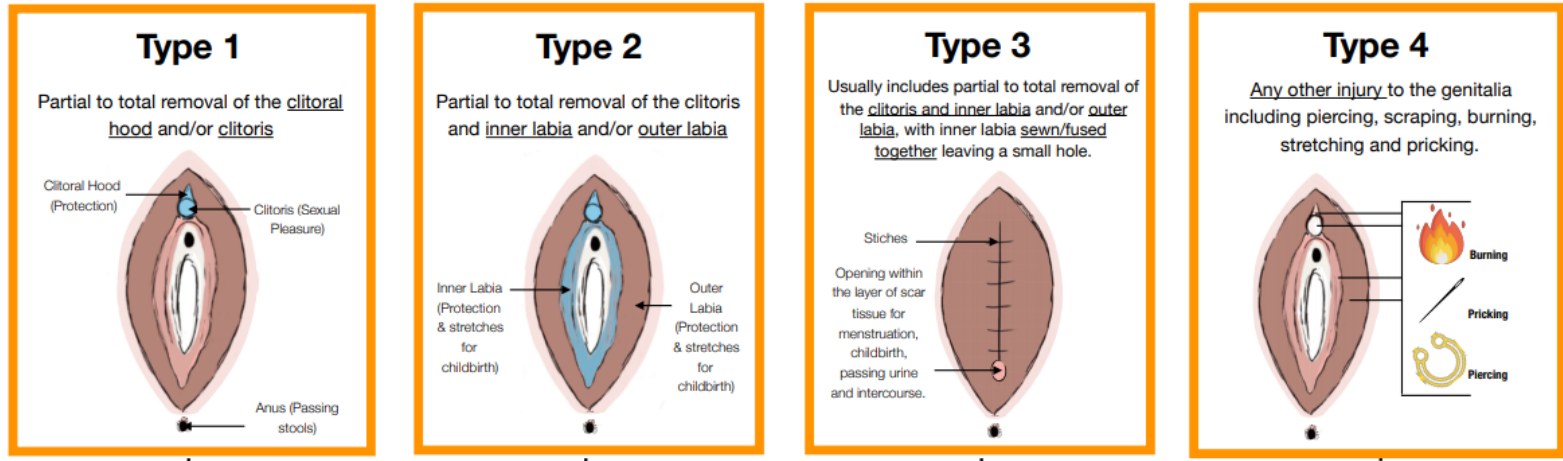


True or False?

1. Contraceptives are not free in the UK
2. The “Morning After Pill” is a myth
3. Abortion is illegal in the UK.
4. You are free to choose to be in a relationship with a partner of your same sex.



Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)



What are the health consequences of FGM?

- Death
- Severe pain and shock
- Broken limbs from being held down
- Injury to adjacent tissues
- Urine retention
- Increased risk of HIV and AIDS
- Uterus, vaginal and pelvic infections
- Psychosexual problems
- Pregnancy and childbirth
- Sexual dysfunction
- Trauma and flashbacks
- Infertility
- Difficulties in menstruation

What is the Law?

FGM Act 2003

Excise, infibulate or otherwise mutilate

- A person is guilty of an offence if they the whole or any part of a girl's or woman's labia majora, labia minora or clitoris for non-medical reasons.
- It is illegal to perform/arrange for FGM to be carried out on a girl in the UK or to take a girl abroad.

Serious Crime Act 2015

- Extend the extra-territorial powers of the law to further protect victims
- Victim anonymity to victims
- Protection Orders
- Mandatory reporting duty to report known cases of FGM that applies to all regulated professionals.
- if an offence of FGM is committed against a girl under the age of 16, each person who is responsible for the girl at the time of FGM occurred will be liable under this new offence. The maximum penalty for the new offence is seven years' imprisonment or a fine or both.

Maternity Care

If you are pregnant you are entitled to **FREE NHS maternity care** if at the time you receive that care you have been granted refugee status, or humanitarian protection or temporary protection.

- Antenatal
- Labour
- Post-natal



Mental health services

Mental health services are free on the NHS, but in some cases you'll need a referral from your GP to access them.

There are some mental health services that allow people to refer themselves.

The five main warning signs of mental illness are:

- Excessive paranoia, worry, or anxiety.
- Long-lasting sadness or irritability.
- Extreme changes in moods.
- Social withdrawal.
- Dramatic changes in eating or sleeping pattern

COVID-19 Vaccination



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COVID-19 Vaccination

About the vaccine



The Coronavirus vaccine is an injection



You will need 2 injections of the vaccine, which will be up to 3 to 12 weeks apart



The vaccine has been tested to make sure it is safe

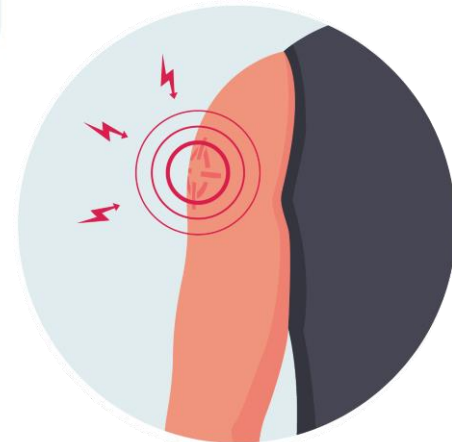
Side effects:

Slight pain in the arm at the site of injection.

Tenderness in the arm which usually lasts 1-2 days.

Some people will experience tiredness, headaches, general aches and mild flu like symptoms.

Even if you have symptoms after the first dose you still need to have the second dose which will give you the best protection against the virus.



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After the vaccines

The more people getting vaccinated the greater the success. There is a chance you might still **spread coronavirus** even if you have the vaccine.

This means it is **important to:**

- Continue to follow **social distancing guidance**
- Wear a **mask** in places where it's hard to observe social distance
- Continue to follow **shielding guidance** if you have been asked to.



Learn more [here](#)

Covid-19 Vaccine first phase priority groups

The **priority** will be, as listed:

1. Residents in a care home and staff working in care homes.
 2. 80 years old and over and frontline health and social care workers.
 3. All those who are 75 years and over.
 4. Clinically extremely vulnerable individuals.
 5. Adult's age 16-65 years old and at risk of clinical conditions.
 6. All those 55/60 years and over.
 7. The rest of the populations (to be determined)
 8. If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, please tell your doctor before taking the vaccine.
- ✓ When more vaccine becomes available, the vaccines will be offered to other people at risk as soon as possible.

Scams and Frauds



BE AWARE!

Example of scam:

To be offered an appointment to **receive a vaccine at a cost** or **sending a text** that directs the recipient to a convincing fake NHS website with a booking link.

The COVID-19 vaccine will always be free in the UK and delivered by the NHS.

A real NHS COVID-19 vaccination booking will never:

- **Ask** you for your **bank account** or **card details**.
- **Ask** you for your **PIN** or **banking password**.
- **Ask** you to press a **button** on your **keypad** when on the phone
- Ask you to **send a text** to **confirm** the booking
- The NHS will **never arrive unannounced at your home** to **administer** the vaccine.
- The NHS will **never ask you to prove your identity** by sending copies of personal documents such as your passport, driving licence, bills or pay slips.

Learn more [here](#) from Action Fraud.

Key words

Contraception – prevents pregnancy by interfering with the normal process of ovulation, fertilization, and implantation.

General Practitioner (GP) - a GP is a family medical doctor and main point of contact to access general healthcare

Public Health - the health of the population, including prevention of infectious diseases.

Sexual Health - a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence. It is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity.

Sexually Transmitted Infection – infection or disease passed on from one person to another through unprotected sex or genital contact.

Vaccination – treatment to produce immunity against a disease