RESOURCE GUIDANCE

Advice from women about how to design information for women

Speech bubbles in illustration:

"Let's go together, your health is important too"

"There never seems time to go to the Doctors"

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

Women involved in this research were clear about needing access to consistent, good quality mental health support. Head over to the last page of this resource to see how women decided to offer guidance to other women about their mental health.
You can also watch and share our animation about mental health here: https://bit.ly/postnatal-resources

HOW TO MAKE INFORMATION ACCESSIBLE

The following pages share guidance on how to design and share information for women about postnatal health and well-being

Here you will get tips on:

- the type of language to use
- what resources should look like
- how to distribute resources to reach women

You will find out what *always event** women have said is key to improving their experience of care.

* An *always event* is an event which service users say should always happen as it is key to improving their experience of care.

If a woman is not listened to, trust is broken and she will disengage

THE TOP TAKE-AWAYS

There's a lot of things we can learn from women who have experience of facing challenges to accessing healthcare.

1 Information makes women feel in control

2 Information supports self-advocacy

3 Real experiences of other women builds trust

4 Talking and sharing is good

5 Don't assume there is family around

6 Continuity is the key to trust

Support women in knowing their rights

Make resources with people who have lived experience

Think about the message
What do women need to know? What do women want to know?
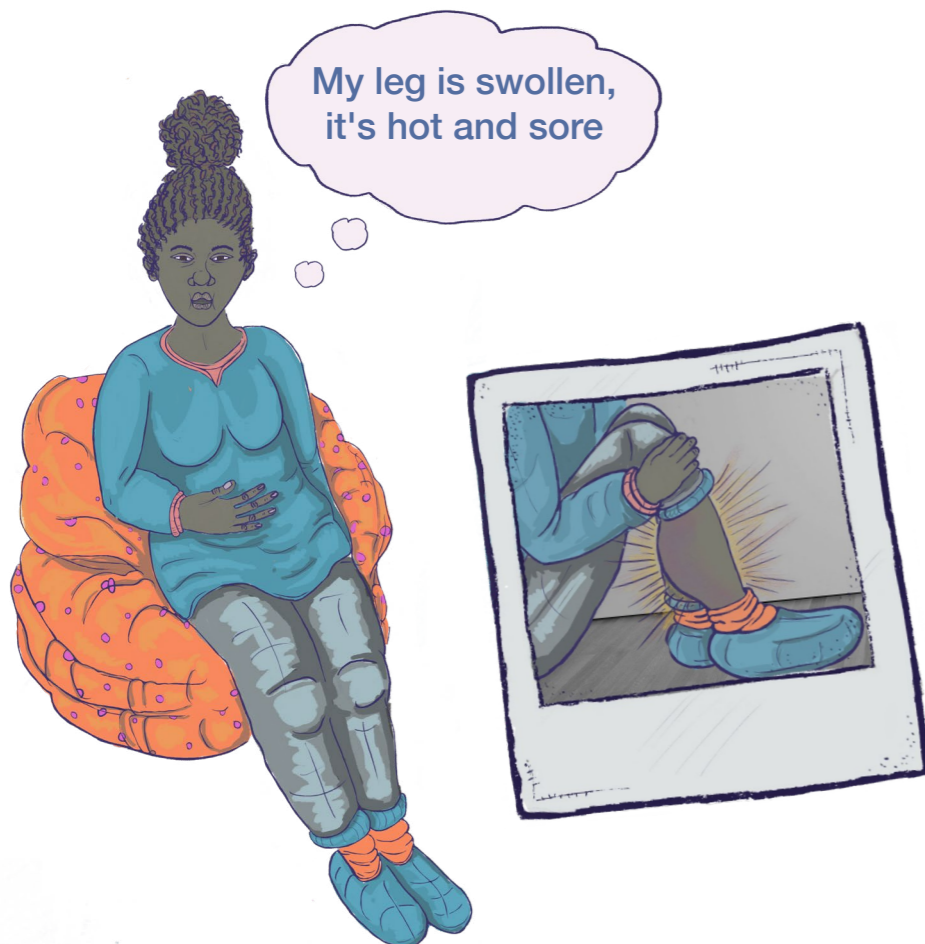
Use simple language
If you need to use any medical words always add a short description to explain what it means in simple language.

Be clear about symptoms
Give examples to describe symptoms. Make it clear what is 'okay' and when to seek help.

Keep it short
Have a title with bullet points and link through to more detailed information.

Use key words
Be consistent with the words you use. Repeat key messages and words.

Share real life experiences
Real life experiences build trust.

Give reassurance and signpost
What should women do now? Where can women find more information, or get help?

Make friends and family visible
Show and talk about friends and family as part of women's support network.

My leg is swollen, it's hot and sore

Be an advocate
Include advocacy messages, such as
"Bring a friend to support you"

Share information about women's rights
"It's your right to choose what is best for you"

Be culturally respectful
In use of images, language and understanding. For example, in images show limited blood and body parts with a warning and click through options for more information.

Respect cultural differences around birth and the early days of parenthood.

Make it 'real' and colourful
Design and images are important in making the information accessible to women:

- Women should look like real women, and if using illustrations, women should have faces.
- Women featuring in resources should reflect the diversity of the communities we support
- Use real bodies in diagrams.
- Simple tables or charts can be very useful.
- Make sure key words or messages stand out.
- Use speech bubbles to show women talking together as a way to reassure that they are not alone.
- Make it colourful.

Be adaptable
Resources should be mindful of different literacy and language needs. For example, audio options should be in available in languages which will best reach women, as well as in English.

Create resources which can be shared across different channels to engage with women where they are — whether, for example, on instagram, or in Community Centres. As well as digital resources, also think about printed material which fit into a diary/ book/ phone case.

THINK ABOUT:
Reflect on opportunities to get health messages out to the women who need them.

I ask other new mums for their advice