

**what**  
**would you do?**

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# NHS Long Term Plan

## Barnsley Asylum Seekers and Refugee Women's Group

27<sup>th</sup> March 2019

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# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 Description of the focus group/engagement activity

Women's Group

This was a drop in session for Refugee and Asylum Seeker women and children. The session is also used to do craft work and it also serves as a food distribution and clothing hub.

## 1.2 Acknowledgements

The Barnsley Refugee Council

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# 2 What was the purpose of the activity/session?

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## 2.1 Purpose

The group meet to develop friendships, language skills, and gain knowledge about services and organisations in Barnsley. Organisations approach the Refugee Council to present their work and give information about the work they do and how the women can engage with them. This is also another useful way to gain knowledge about services they might need both now and in the future for themselves and their families. The women also make use of their own skills i.e. craft sewing etc., which they use for events like the Mayors Parades. Food and clothing are specifically donated to the Refugee Council for this session to ensure families and individuals are supported. It is often fresh food and good quality clothing.

## 2.2 What did you do?

The session is based in a large room with lots of different things happening around the room for the women and children to be able to choose what they would like to get involved in. We worked with the Refugee Council staff to engage a group of 6 women whose first language was Urdu. Some of the women spoke and understood English, others used the interpreter to engage with the session. We used printed PowerPoint slides to outline the things we wanted to talk about with the group as the room was busy and we were not able to do this electronically. This made the session more intimate and friendly for the women. We used the PowerPoint information as a prompt if people were struggling to understand some of the main focus points.

## 2.3 Results of the activity/session(s)

The women were eager to tell us about how difficult it was to navigate services locally and at hospital, A&E and the Out of Hours' Service. They were very clear that communication was an issue. They often felt that they were sent to the Out of Hours' Service rather than their local GP surgery by the receptionist.

**They said an increase in doctors(GPs) would help to reduce waiting times and provide more appointments at their local surgery.**

They had difficulty with language support at the GP reception and felt they were passed from one service to another. This was then compounded as they often had to travel across Barnsley to get to the doctor, with the cost of travel this was a further issue. They also didn't feel that appointments for their children were seen as a priority. Consequently, they had to travel with sick children to an appointment away from their locality. The women would also like to have information and support in how and when to take medication as they felt they were "left to sort themselves out".

**The group felt that support in their own locality around language /interpreter provision, more appointments open for children at the G.P. surgery and information and support at the local Chemists would be the best way forward for them and cut down on travel which they find really expensive and difficult.**

The women would like to see specialist doctors from the hospitals linked to their GP surgery if possible for routine appointments.

**All the women were keen to see more amenities developed within local areas. They felt that at the moment they were not getting the access and support they needed to look after their own health.**

The women were also keen to talk about getting better Mental Health support for the children within their own locality.

**They really liked the idea of having better mental health support within schools, with information on how to look after their own mental health and to see the signs of stress and anxiety as a prevention strategy to better mental health for all.**

Last but not least the group talked about technology and how that would make a difference to their lives.

**Better use of texting services for booking and cancelling appointments. Better use of smart phones for tracking health issues. Having access to translation support linked to this would make a difference with the language barriers etc.**

### **Feedback from people who took part**

The women were very happy that they had been able to be involved in this focus group discussion. The interpreter also found it useful, as she had a better understanding of how the changes will affect her and her family and friends.

### **Feedback from staff/volunteers who took part**

It was a very lively small group of women and children who had various levels of understanding of the English language. We were impressed with how the women supported each other with the help of the interpreter to engage in the conversations. The staff were really good in helping to explain what the different areas of the work plan were about initially in order for the women to decide what they wanted to focus on.

We also took a young apprentice member of staff with us to the event. She was very interested in what the women had to say on the subjects. She was also one of our scribes on the session, which gave her the chance to develop her skills in note-taking.

The Refugee Council appreciated the chance to help the group gain information and be personally involved in the further development of hospital services.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

### Key messages

- The women were really struggling with the barriers they face on a regular basis from getting appointments at their local surgery, to getting to the hospital for outpatient's appointments or out of hours' services. This combined with the language barriers they face means that it is always an uphill struggle.

- Children's health and mental health services were really important to the women and they would like to see more local services provided within their local communities/areas.
- They saw the local chemist as a really good way of supporting them understand what the medications they had been prescribed were for, with information on how to take the medication
- They would like to be able to make better use of technology for appointments, for tracking health issues and having access to translation services linked to this.

## 2.5 Data and information summary

Please complete the table below with all the info gathered from your focus group/engagement session

Date of Focus Group/Engagement Session	27.03.19
Group name	Barnsley Refugee Council Women's Group
Description of the group or session	A drop in session for Refugee and Asylum Seeker women and children.
Life stage – (Starting Well, Living Well, Ageing Well)	Starting Well & Living Well
No. of attendees	6
Theme area (Mental Wellbeing, Choice and Control and Independence, Care near where you live)	Care near where you live. Choice and Control. Mental Wellbeing
Was it a condition specific session – if so please identify the specific condition	No
What were the key outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better use of technology</li> <li>• Access to more local services with hospital</li> </ul>

	<p>appointments etc. linked to surgeries where possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Language support, including better access to interpreting services</li><li>• To be able to make better use of all local health services including the pharmacies.</li></ul>
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