

ERicar: Engaging Roma women in the co-design of an antenatal care information resource

Why was Ericar needed?

- Roma – largest ethnic minority community in Europe
- Inequalities in health and wellbeing and experiences of pregnancy and childbirth.
- Differences in the way health services work in the UK and CEE countries
- Roma suffer discrimination influencing their engagement with public services
- Other factors include language and culture, stigma and racial stereotyping
- Aimed to address these issues

What did we do?

- Recruited women from a range of ages and backgrounds through an experienced Czech community worker
- Six of the 10 women were previously involved in two workshops to explore their migration stories, which helped to establish rapport
- Found understanding of their needs through their pregnancy stories
- Noted their preferences regarding existing antenatal care information
- Obtained design considerations for a prototype of the resource
- Created a co-designed prototype – a zine with supportive information

Eight participatory workshops

1. Months 1-3 Finding out you're pregnant
2. Months 4-6: Keeping healthy and well
3. Months 7-9: Preparing for baby
4. Co-creating a common pregnancy journey
5. Exploring online antenatal resources
6. Exploring pregnancy apps
7. Exploring ideas for a new resource
8. Developing a new resource for Roma women

What did we find?

- Women's stories of their pregnancy journeys covered unplanned teen pregnancies, pregnancy loss, birth trauma, suicidal thoughts and the lack of compassionate care.
- Several women disclosed that they were embarrassed to seek help from their own mothers during this time.
- They spoke of beliefs and attitudes in their community about mental health that can discourage pregnant women from getting help.
- Fear of being judged as an unfit mother was referred to, including the involvement of social services.
- Two women described poor experiences of NHS care with no known recourse to complain.
- Surprisingly, only one woman had free prescriptions during her pregnancy.
- The women valued the role of digital technologies such as pregnancy apps endorsed by the NHS, and the range of internet sites providing information and support



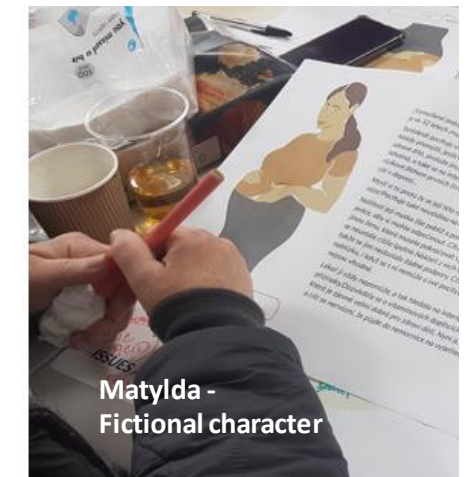
The prototype



Zine-making



Composite pregnancy journey



Matylda -
Fictional character