



Welcome to the *Maternity Media*

***Hotspot*, a resource media space focused on providing you with access to new and existing content published online, including posters, infographics, videos and animations relating to midwifery, maternity, obstetric and neonatal care.**

These resources are aimed to support women and families, midwives and other healthcare professionals in the provision of knowledge in a format which is easy to understand and which helps signpost to other sources of more detailed information. All the resources will be carefully moderated to ensure they are, at the time of publishing, relevant and evidence based.



I am passionate about understanding how technology can be utilised powerfully within healthcare, believing that strategies to improve health literacy, connectivity and the empowerment of women and families are vital to the future sustainability of services. I am currently learning about the complexities of social and cultural anthropology and how this is woven into and underpins emerging trends. I will endeavour to share these with you as I learn. Digital media have the potential to transform services but can also be confusing, as families try to navigate complex and conflicting information, something which I will go on to discuss in my second blog.

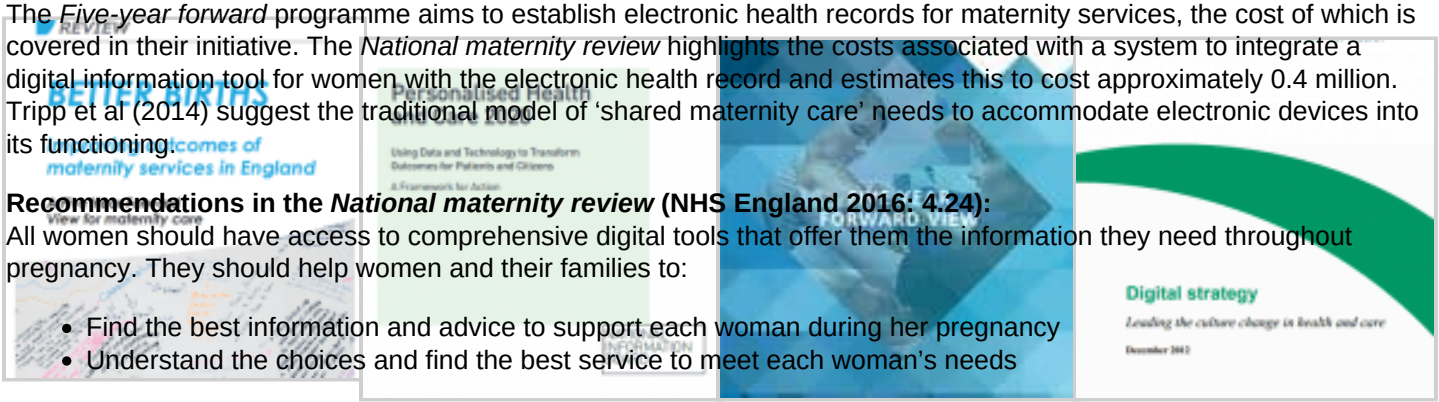
Scope

In 2016, 70 per cent of all citizens in the UK had a smartphone and 90 per cent of adults used the Internet. Between 90-100 per cent of females aged between 15-44 accessed the Internet, variation dependent on social grade, the lowest accessibility of 90 per cent being the lower social grades (Jain and Koray 2016). Statistics show that accessibility improves year-on-year and the opportunity to use the Internet and social media to engage with childbearing groups is exponential.

Background and political context
Use of data and technology to disperse information and enable wide accessibility is discussed in several healthcare ambitions identified in a number of government reports:

- *The National maternity review* (NHS England 2016)
- *The personalised health and care 2020 report* (National Information Board [NIB] 2014)
- NHS's *Five-year forward* view (NHS England 2014)
- Department of Health's (DH) *Digital strategy: leading the culture change in health and care* (DH 2012).

The *Five-year forward* programme aims to establish electronic health records for maternity services, the cost of which is covered in their initiative. The *National maternity review* highlights the costs associated with a system to integrate a digital information tool for women with the electronic health record and estimates this to cost approximately 0.4 million. Tripp et al (2014) suggest the traditional model of 'shared maternity care' needs to accommodate electronic devices into its functioning.



Recommendations in the *National maternity review* (NHS England 2016: 4.24):
All women should have access to comprehensive digital tools that offer them the information they need throughout pregnancy. They should help women and their families to:

- Find the best information and advice to support each woman during her pregnancy
- Understand the choices and find the best service to meet each woman's needs

Here we can already see that policy makers are aware of the potential of digital media in enhancing maternity care experiences and improving health-seeking behaviour of future generations.

Types of media



Van de Belt et al (2012) discuss the place of social media in healthcare, reporting that frequent use of social media not only increases patient access to information, but also improves communication, facilitating collaborative decision-making and better relationships – the focus on patient-centred care.

Social media are reported to reduce health inequalities by giving direct access to patients who might otherwise have reduced engagement in healthcare (Fooks 2011).

Infographics
Thompson (2015) explains that complicated, jargon-filled research can be easily and clearly understood through the use of well-designed infographics, which in today's fast-paced, digital age are appreciated for their ease of understanding and usability.

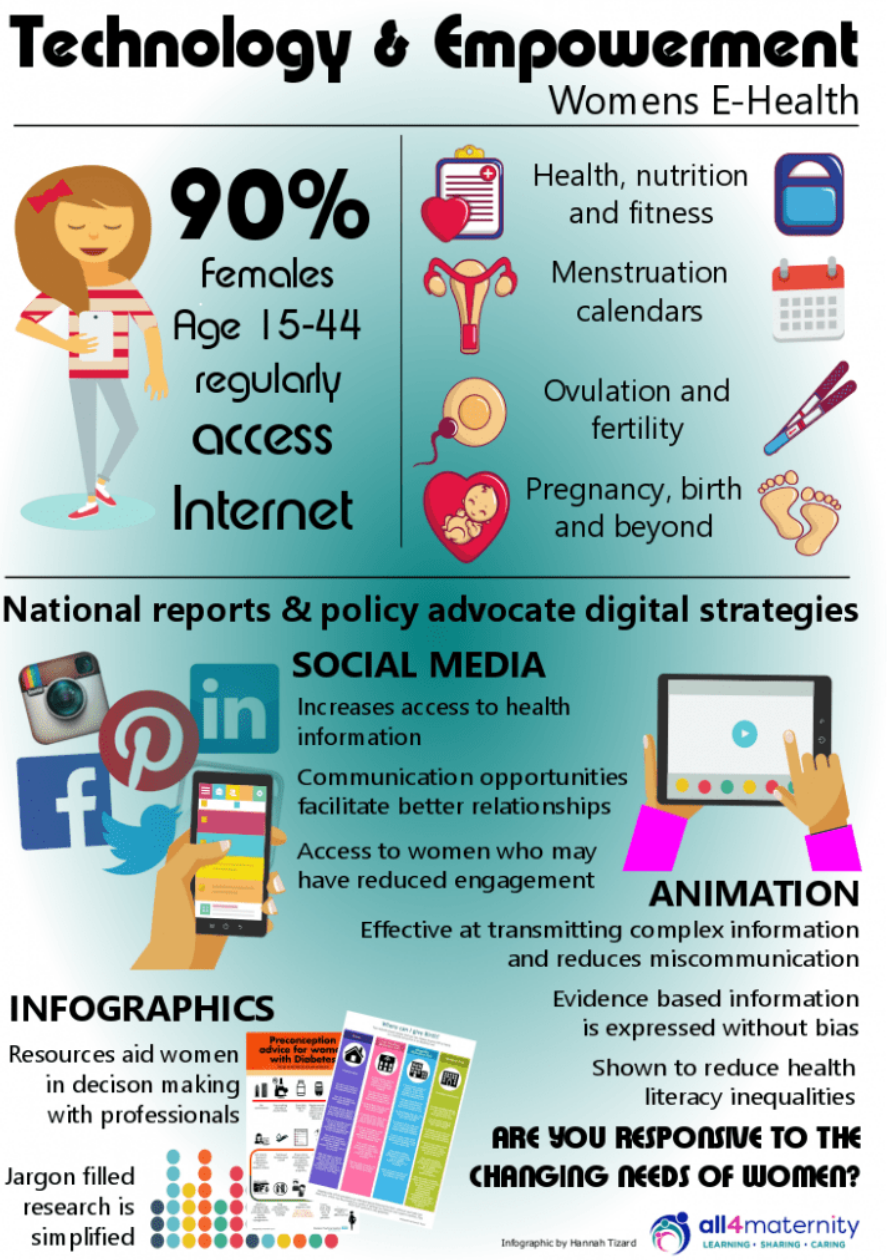
Videos and animation
The use of animation has been shown to be effective in transmitting complex healthcare information to the viewer over printed material alone (Leiner 2004). Further to this, animation with a spoken voiceover can convey a larger amount of information in a lesser time frame, with greater impact and recall ability. It is known to reduce miscommunication and allows detailed evidence based information to be expressed in such a way as to eliminate professional bias or persuasion.

Meppelink et al (2015) have found that spoken animation has the ability to reduce health literacy inequality by bridging information processing gaps, in addition animations are not shown to negatively impact on those with high health literacy concluding that well-designed animations can be suitable to both.

For healthcare professionals, the use of animation can alleviate the complexity in memory recall and the possibility of error. The use of short animations may also benefit midwifery time management with the potential for animation and infographics to be provided on patient electronic health records. It could also be offered to women for viewing on a television or tablet within midwifery waiting areas. Well-resourced tools could be signposted by all members of the multidisciplinary team, including GPs, children's centres and birthing support groups.

Next time…
The following blogs and resources have been selected to enhance information provision and your care; they cover various themes in maternity care. They are also used to support and signpost to more detailed information.

Please download PDF of the Technology and Empowerment Infographic



References

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Category

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Tags

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