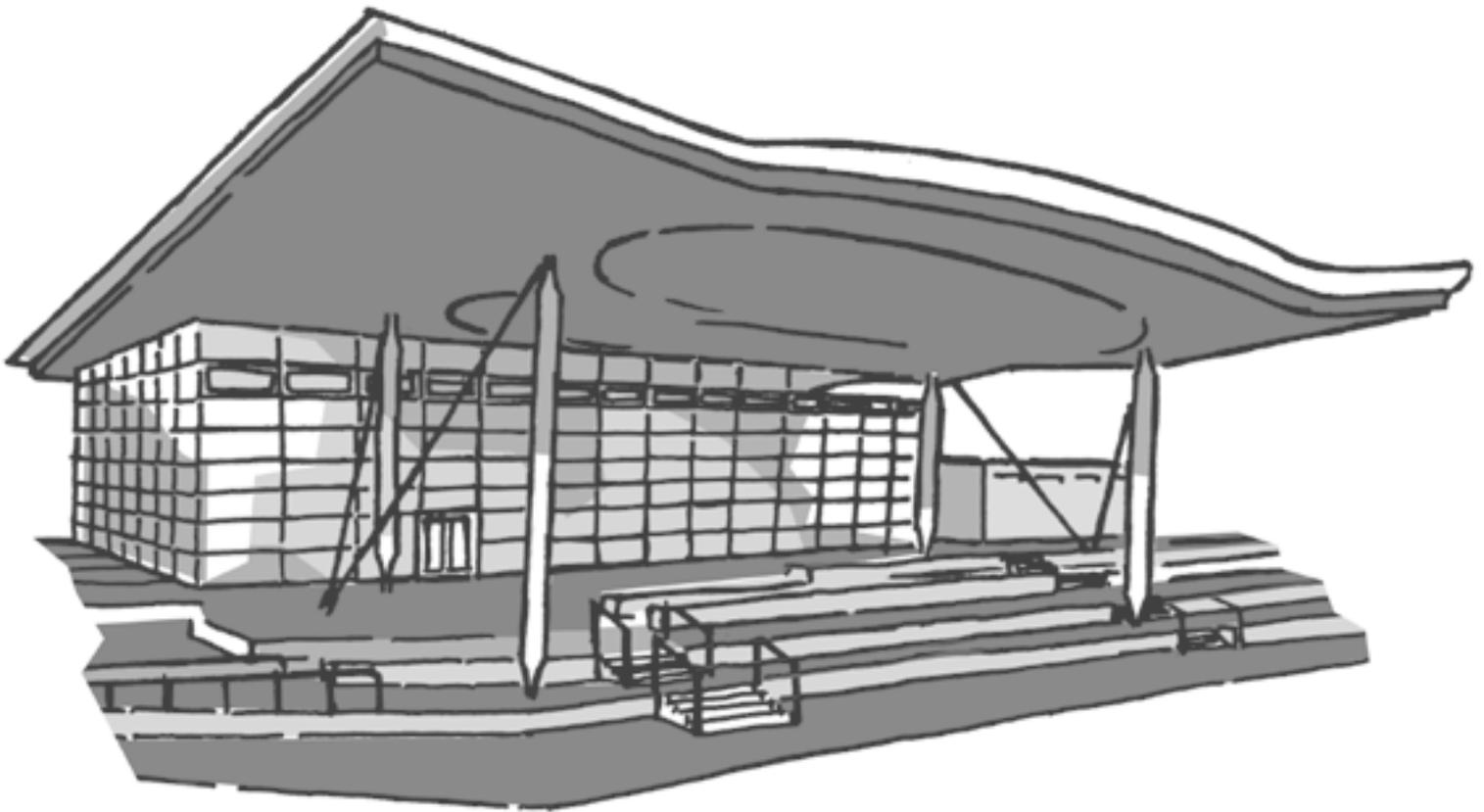




Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Travelling to Better Health



Easy Read Version

April 2017

Contents



Getting started

3



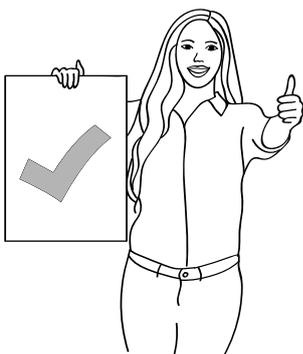
What we know about Gypsies and Travellers and their health

6



Health Rights

12



What works?

34

Getting started



Everyone in Wales should get good health care. Everyone should be treated with respect.



Wales has a new policy that says everyone gets more say about what is best for them and their health.



We have written this guidance so that Gypsies and Travellers get good health care too.



Romani Gypsies and Irish Travellers have different cultures. Both groups are ethnic groups. This means they are protected by the Equality Act 2010.



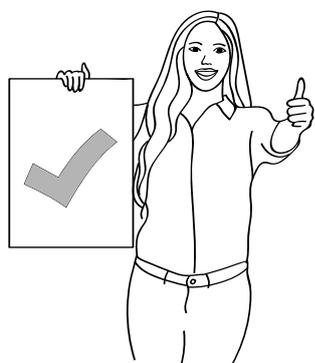
Compared to country folk, Gypsies and Travellers are more likely to die younger, have poorer health and poorer health care.

Who is this booklet for?



This booklet is for Gypsies and Travellers to know what we have told staff in the NHS about how to improve health care for these communities.

This booklet has:



- advice for anyone who works with Gypsies and Travellers
- examples of what works
- ways to check if Gypsies and Travellers are getting healthier.



The full Guidance has a list of research and other policies you may want to read. The list is **not** in this Easy Read version.

We want:

- NHS staff to know more about Gypsy and Traveller culture and traditions.



- NHS staff to know more about the health of Gypsies and Travellers.
- NHS staff to be more confident about working with Gypsies and Travellers.

**We think this will:**

- make it easier for Gypsies and Travellers and NHS staff to work together



- give Gypsies and Travellers more confidence to look after their own health.



What we know about Gypsies and Travellers and their health

People are proud of their culture.



But they may also want to hide being a Gypsy or Traveller from country folk.

This is to stop other people treating them badly.



Gypsies and Travellers do more caring for their family.



Gypsies and Travellers have more children aged under 18.



Many sites are not good. This makes it harder to be healthy.

Many Gypsies and Travellers have had a lot of losses in their lives.



They may have to give up travelling.

They may lose some of their culture and way of life. This is bad for their mental health.

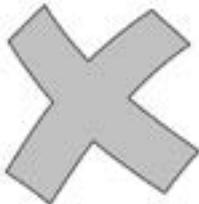
What stops people getting better health and better health care?



Here are some of the barriers to being healthy and using health care:



- no settled address and being evicted from unauthorised sites



- past experience of being treated badly by services



- being proud to rely on yourself and look after your own family



- not knowing enough about how the NHS works

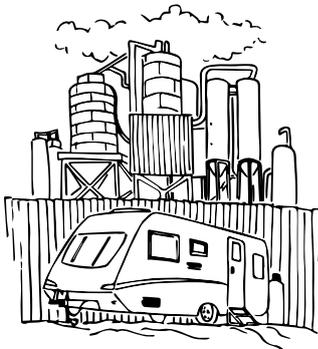


- hard to get a bus from a site.



Some health workers think Gypsies and Travellers are difficult to work with.

They may blame people for not turning up for appointments.



Even settled Gypsies and Travellers have poorer health care than house people.



They may not talk about disease or medicines. “Cancer” is a dirty word, so most Gypsies and Travellers will not use it. People may call it “that bad complaint” or “that bad condition” or “that dirty thing”.



They may think doctors have little to offer. They may think doctors are bad for their health if doctors tell them bad news.



Women may have poorer health because they always put other people first.

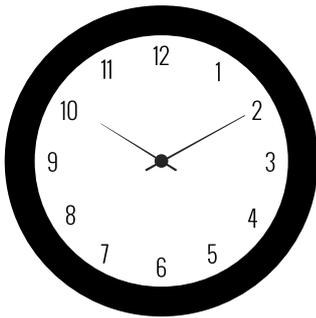


Most men do not look after their health. They do not like to use health services.

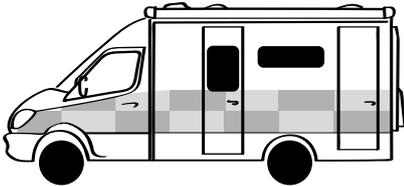


Gypsies and Travellers are very private people. If they find a doctor they trust, they will try hard to keep that doctor.

Gypsies and Travellers may want to see a doctor straight away.



If they have to wait for an appointment, they may think the doctor does not want to help them. They may just go to the hospital.

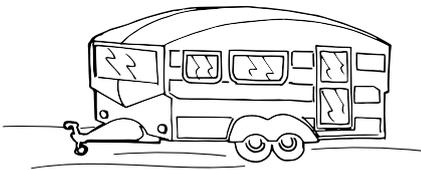


Gypsies and Travellers may put off going to the doctor until it is an emergency.

Health Rights



Anyone can register with a doctor. You do not need an address.



We must make sure travelling Gypsies and Travellers know this.

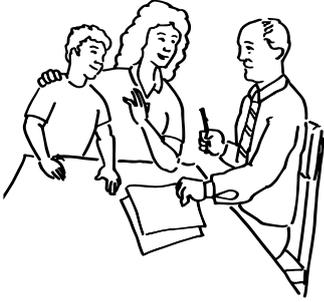


You can complain to the surgery or the health board if a doctor will not register you.

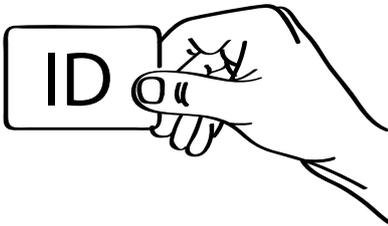


Doctors need to train their staff.

Doctors and their staff need to know:



- Gypsies and Travellers can register with the doctor
- some Gypsies and Travellers need help to fill in forms. There might be a local group who can help

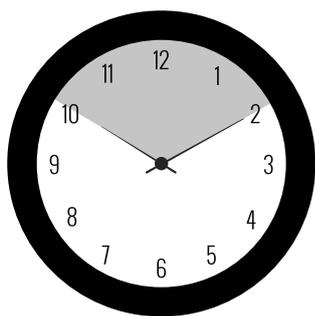


- some Gypsies and Travellers find it hard to prove who they are



- sending letters does not work. Phoning is better. Meeting someone face to face is best.

Doctors need to be flexible. This means:



- letting people have longer appointments



- letting more than one person or a different person come

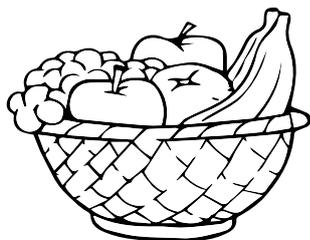


- saying if the GP will be a man or a woman.



How Gypsies and Travellers can get healthier

We need to help Gypsies and Travellers:



- eat healthily



- feed their children healthily



- be active



- cut down on drinking alcohol



- smoke less.

We asked Gypsies and Travellers about this.



Many of them had not been given good information to help them and their families to be healthier.

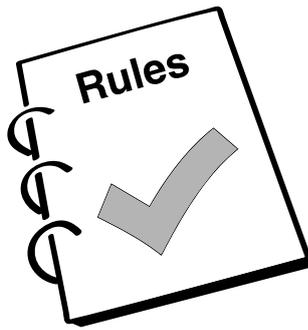
We need to give information to Gypsies and Travellers. The information must make sense to them.



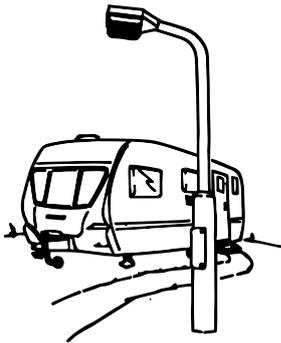
We offer screening to check people are healthy. Gypsies and Travellers may need screening **younger** than other people.



We offer vaccinations to keep children safe from diseases. A lot of Gypsies and Travellers do not use these services.



Rules about health and moving people on



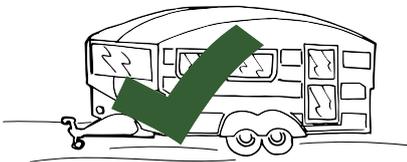
Some Gypsies and Travellers stay where they are not allowed.

This may be by the roadside, or on land where they do not have permission.

The local council may want to move them on.



First, the council must check people's health and welfare. They may ask the NHS to do the check.



If someone needs urgent health care, the Court should not make them move on.

Understanding people's culture



Staff should be trained about Gypsy culture and Traveller culture.

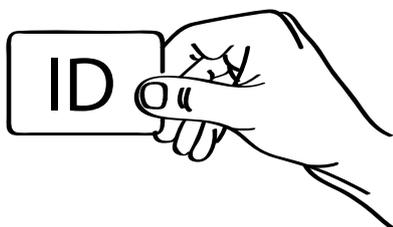
This will help them talk to people more easily about health and health care.



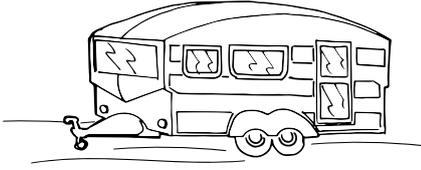
Gypsies and Travellers are often happy to tell people about their culture.



Asking questions will stop country folk from making mistakes.



When health staff go to people's homes, they need to say why they are there.



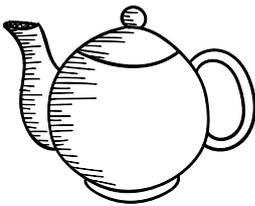
Here are some things to remember when you go into someone's home:



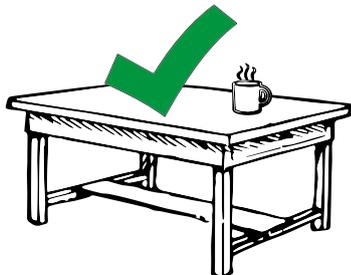
- ask if you should take off your shoes



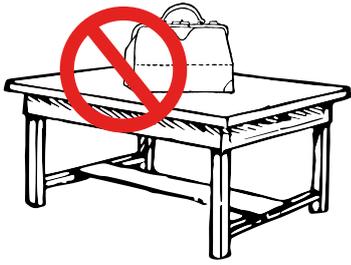
- check which sink to use



- try to say yes if you are offered a drink or something to eat. Saying no could look like you do not think the offer is good enough for you



- do not put cups or plates on the floor



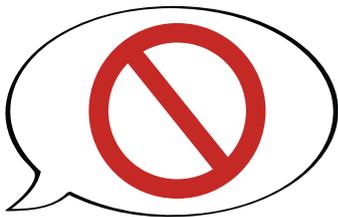
- do not put bags on tables



- Gypsies and Travellers have clear rules about hygiene. They may be uncomfortable about you using their toilet. There may not be a toilet in the home



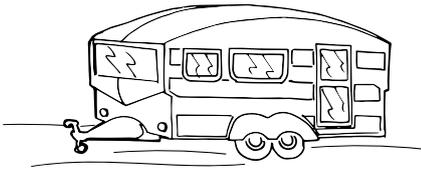
- it may be best if male and female staff visit a site together



- remember that some subjects are forbidden in front of the other sex. Do not talk about women's health in front of men



- some Gypsies and Travellers may be offended if you pat a dog and then use the same hand to shake hands with someone



- only go to a site if you have a job to do. Do not go just to look round the site.

Gypsy and Traveller women and girls know a lot about bringing up children:



- don't tell them what to do
- do find out what they know
- do be sensitive when you talk about breastfeeding.



Do not say anything about pregnancy in front of men.

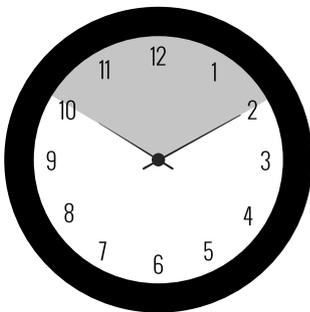
Ways to encourage Gypsies and Travellers to use health services



You need to build trust.



You need to make sure people understand information.



You need to be flexible.

You need to give people time.

You may need to explain how the NHS works.



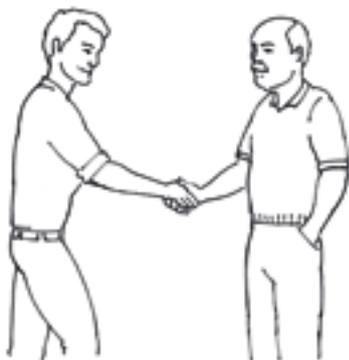
Gypsies and Travellers value someone they can trust. If they trust a doctor, they will travel a long way just to see that doctor.

Treat people with respect. Then they are more likely to take your advice.



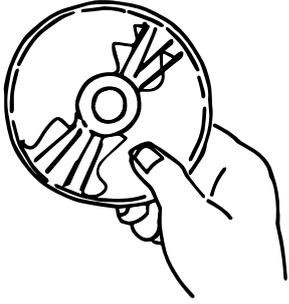
Communication

Helping people understand information about their health can be hard.

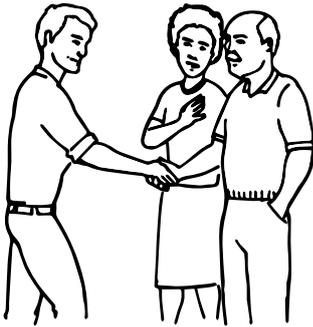


It is better if you work with Gypsies and Travellers on how to do this well.

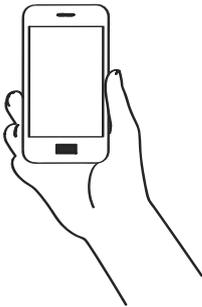
Here are some ideas:



- give health information in DVDs and audio



- meet people



- give advice over the phone



- try to run drop-in health sessions on sites or even in someone's home



- check people understand what you have said.

Develop easy read information about:



- how the NHS works



- healthy eating and being active



- stopping smoking



- drinking safely



- getting your health checked,
and having jabs.

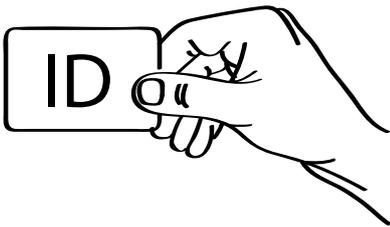


Trust

Here are some ideas:



- always go to a site with someone that people on the site know and trust



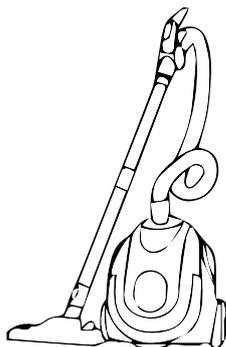
- say if someone different is going to come



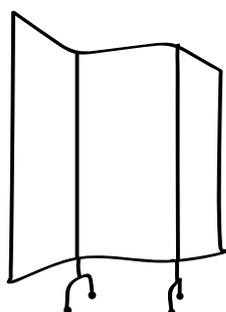
- send women to talk to women
- most women will not talk to men about women's health problems. Be ready to help a woman come up with a story to tell men



- involve people’s families. Make sure everyone knows you are there to help, not take over



- find out about the person’s rules for being clean



- privacy is very important. Do not take someone’s bed covers away if someone else is there
- if someone is in hospital or a clinic, think if they can bring their own bedding and clothes



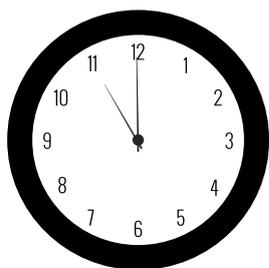
- do **not** make promises unless you are sure you can keep your promise. Say “I can’t make any promises”



- if you say you will do something, do it



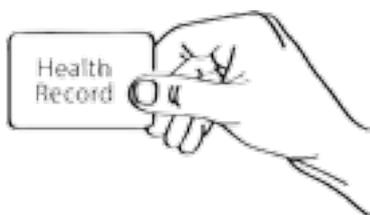
- tell people if their appointment will be with a man or a woman. Remember Gypsy and Traveller women will usually only see a woman about health.



11:00

Be flexible and give people time

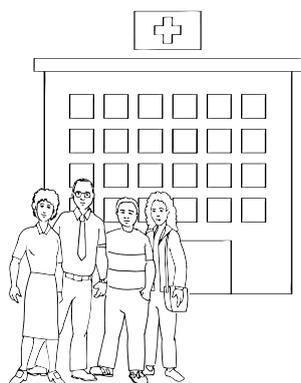
Late morning is usually best for appointments.



Think about giving people their own handheld health record. It means you can take your own record to any doctor or hospital. This is very important for travelling people.

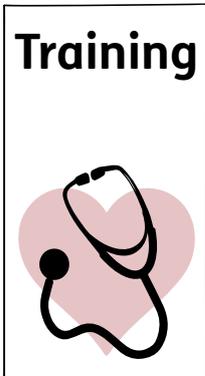


Be flexible if a different person comes to an appointment, or more than 1 person comes.



If a Gypsy or Traveller is in hospital, a lot of family will visit them. It may be easier if you give them a bed by the entrance or a room of their own. Speak to a close relative about rules for visiting.

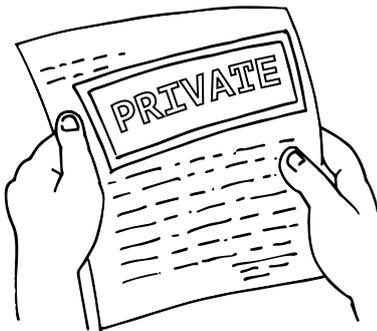
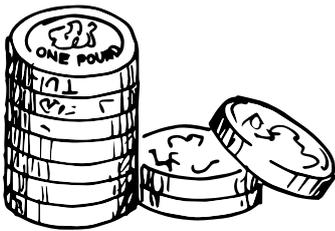
Training for Gypsies and Travellers



Think about training Gypsy and Traveller women to help other Gypsies or Travellers to be healthier.

Some people think this works well because:

- it is easier to trust each other
- the person learns new skills and can earn some money.



Some people think this is **not** a good idea because people like to keep things private. They may not want another Gypsy or Traveller to know about their health.



Having services on sites is good. But it can make Gypsy and Travellers feel shut out from other services.



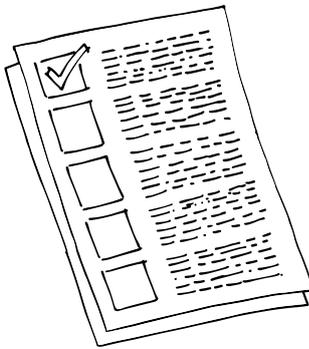
All NHS staff need to know about Gypsy and Traveller cultures.

Knowing people's ethnicity



Ethnicity means your culture and your family identity.

It is very important to know people's ethnicity.



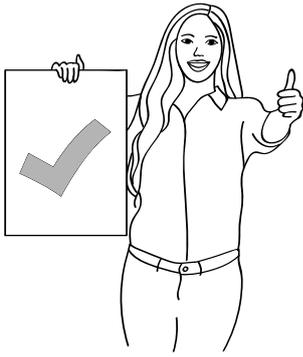
Knowing people's ethnicity helps us to check if everyone is being treated fairly.

It helps us spot if the health of some groups of people is worse than others.



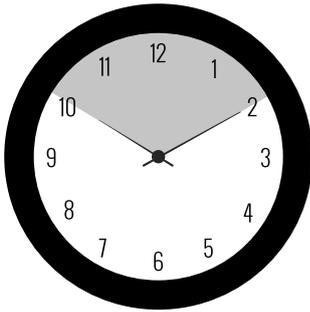
Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Welsh Government wants the NHS to use the tick list from the 2011 Census to help us see if health is improving over time.



What works

Family doctors



Saint Thomas **GP Surgery** is in Haverfordwest. They:

- give people longer appointments
- let someone else come to the appointment instead
- ask “While you are here, shall we ... ?”

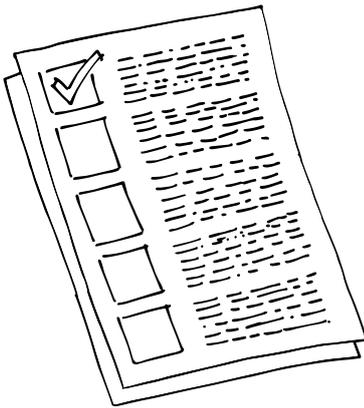


Health Help Card

Health Help Card

A group in Brighton called “Friends, Families and Travellers” had the idea.

You can tick if you want:



- help filling forms
- help reading
- to see a woman
- to talk privately to someone.



Then you just show the card when you want extra help.

Here is a link to the card:

www.gypsy-traveller.org/your-family/health/health-help-card



Teeth

Pontypool (Torfaen) and Tremorfa (Cardiff) had a mobile dental service for children and young people.



The van went out to sites one day a week to look after children's teeth.



What did they do?



- got children signed up with the dentist
- gave away toothbrushes and toothpaste
- helped people get the right information and services
- people knew more about keeping teeth healthy
- people on the site and health workers got on better.





Mental Health



The law says you can get help with mental health from a GP without having to register with the GP.

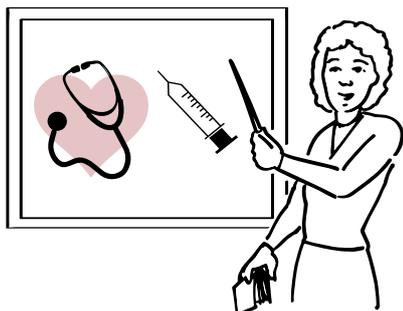


Women's Health



An organisation called Friends Families and Travellers has done a leaflet about smear tests.

Children's Health (including jabs)



A community midwife in Gwent teaches boys and girls about health on a Gypsy and Traveller site:



- she teaches children and young people who are not in school



- she teaches boys and girls separately
- they run other health services on the Gypsy and Traveller site too



Many health visitors already go to people's homes to give children their jabs.

Long term health problems



Wrexham had a project to help Gypsies and Travellers to have healthy hearts.



They had a health bus.

200 Gypsies and Travellers had health checks.



They had a project worker. A lot of people went to the worker for advice.



Almost all the Gypsies and Travellers are registered with a doctor now.



Community health worker

An organisation called Friends, Families and Travellers has a health trainer from the Gypsy Traveller community.

She is in Sussex.

She helps people:



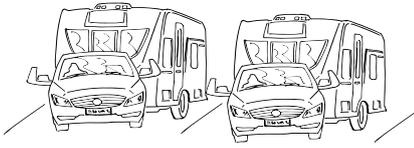
- stop smoking



- eat more healthily

She runs Zumba classes too.

End of life care



Withybush Hospital made space for a lot of trailers to park outside so people could visit a dying relative.



Another good example

An organisation called Friends Families and Travellers helped 10 Travellers to get a qualification.



The qualification is the **Royal Society for Public Health Level 1 certificate in Health Awareness.**

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.