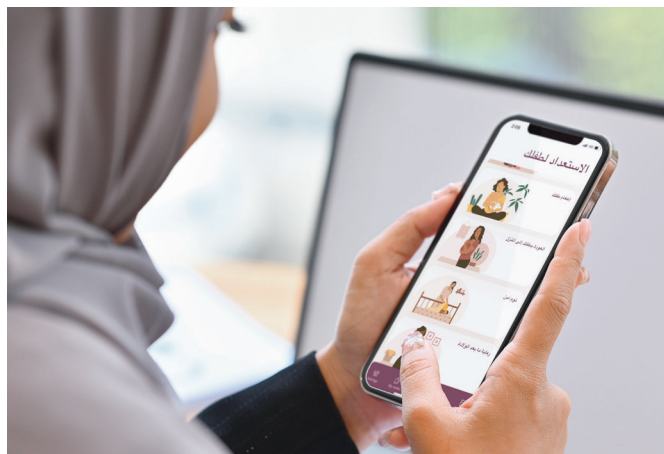


SCALING SMART: MULTILINGUAL MATERNAL CARE



CARE
TECHNOLOGY



Project title:	Mama Talk app: Scaling up for Hazaragi and Dari speaking women
Investigators:	Emma Koster, Dr Natalie Araujo, Prof. Raelene Wilding
Timeline:	June 2024 to December 2025
Location:	National
Partners:	Good Hood



CONTEXT

In Australia, 23% of the population speaks a language other than English at home, and 872,000 people report limited or no English proficiency. Government and health services often struggle to deliver timely, reliable information in languages other than English, compromising the health and safety of some of the country's most marginalised communities. Pregnant and post-natal women are particularly vulnerable, with research highlighting a lack of language support in maternity care. This gap can lead to serious social, mental health, and obstetric risks. In Victoria, one in three women who give birth are migrants or refugees. Many of these women struggle to access essential translation and interpretation services. This systemic failure deepens health inequities and puts both mothers and babies at risk.



APPROACH

MamaTalk is a prototype app conceptualised by Emma Koster of Good Hood in 2022. Designed for Australia's healthcare context, it delivers accessible, culturally sensitive antenatal and postnatal information in multiple formats and languages for women from migrant, refugee, and asylum seeker backgrounds. The app was developed through a robust co-design process involving healthcare professionals, community organisations, and women from non-English speaking backgrounds, ensuring it meets diverse literacy and communication needs. Following a successful La Trobe researcher evaluation of the original Arabic-language pilot—developed with support from the Australian Red Cross Humanitech Program—additional funding was secured to expand MamaTalk. This phase has involved creating, testing and evaluating content and resources in Hazaragi and Dari.



OUTCOMES

This initiative has improved access to culturally relevant, respectful health information for underserved women during pregnancy and the postnatal period. It supports MamaTalk's mission to enhance health literacy, foster self-advocacy, and improve outcomes for women from migrant, refugee, and asylum seeker backgrounds. Feedback from users of the Arabic pilot and ongoing Dari and Hazaragi versions has been overwhelmingly positive. Evaluations show that women not only gained confidence and agency but also used the app in creative, unexpected ways to better suit their needs—extending its usability beyond initial expectations. These outcomes highlight the app's impact as both a health education tool and a catalyst for empowerment. Scaling the project has required sustained commitment, strong community partnerships, and creative funding, demonstrating that co-designed, community-led solutions can drive lasting, scalable impact.

"There are many pregnancy apps, but MamaTalk isn't just giving generic advice or information. It isn't only telling me the size of a baby. It is beautifully tailored to my needs as an Arabic woman in Australia."

Evaluation participant





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