28X: Shaping the Future of Women's Menstrual Health Tracking

Health Innovation
Kent Surrey Sussex

Part of the
Health
Innovation
Network

Office for
Life Sciences

NHS

About 28x

28X is an innovative menstrual health app designed to meet the needs of all women including those from global majority communities and neurodivergent users.

Built with complete data privacy at its core with all information on-device and never stored in the cloud, shared or sold. 28X combines cycle tracking and symptom insights with clinically verified, culturally sensitive resources. Free to use it will be made available in over 33 languages and features an intuitive butterfly visualisation that removes the stigma of using a period app in public.

Created by women, for women, 28X puts lived experience at the heart of its design.

Case study

Challenge: Women, especially those from global majority backgrounds and neurodivergent women, face significant inequalities in menstrual and reproductive healthcare, including dismissed symptoms, long waits, and cultural stigma. 17% of people in the UK lack access to adequate menstrual health information. Existing period-tracking apps are often distrusted, leaving many without personalised, culturally competent guidance.

28X is developing an innovative menstrual health app aims to meet the needs of global majority women, supporting their menstrual health journey with clinically verified resources. Their app puts women's voices and experiences at the heart of design.

What we did: Health Innovation KSS and 28X ran two focus groups with 20 women from global majority communities and women who are neurodivergent. Safe spaces for open, honest sharing were created by using inclusive recruitment through trusted Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) partners. The focus groups explored how participants access menstrual-health information, the challenges they face, their digital-trust concerns, and their views on how the 28X app could better support them. The approach ensured the insights captured reflected lived experience and the realities of people who are often not involved in digital-health design.

Impact:

- **Understanding user's needs:** Significant barriers to accessing menstrual-health information were uncovered, showing that many global majority and neurodivergent women cannot access trustworthy, tailored support. Participants reported confusing guidance, fear of dismissal, privacy worries and inaccessible app design - reinforcing the need for tools that help them understand their bodies and feel confident when seeking care.

- **Unmet need:** A clear unmet need was identified for accessible, personalised and trustworthy menstrual-health information, particularly for global majority and neurodivergent women. Distrust of existing apps - driven by unclear data practices, poor clinical validity and one-size-fits-all design - leaves many without reliable support.

- **Lived experience:** A safe space enabled participants to openly discuss stigma, cultural expectations, neurodiversity, and negative healthcare interactions ensuring the app is grounded in lived experience from people rarely included in digital-health design, leading to meaningful, practical recommendations.

- **Relevance:** A user-led approach shaped 28X into a clinically grounded, culturally competent app designed around lived experience, helping to reduce menstrual-health inequalities. Recommendations on personalisation, navigation, tracking, culturally competent content, privacy transparency and NHS alignment directly informed development. Participants described the app as **"a little friend in my pocket"**, valuing the calm, inclusive design, butterfly visualisation, privacy transparency and ad-free environment - features that boosted confidence when speaking with healthcare professionals.

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