

20<sup>th</sup> World Congress on

# PEDIATRICS AND ADOLESCENT MEDICINE

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# PEDIATRIC ONCOLOGY AND NURSING

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## Investigating the sexual health needs of female refugee children and suggested improvements for service provision

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At a time of record-level global forced displacement, the health needs of migrant populations pose a challenge to our existing healthcare systems. Unaccompanied refugee children have specific healthcare needs, particularly surrounding sexual health due to higher rates of historic sexual trauma. In light of this our team of doctors, who volunteer with asylum-seeking children at 'Community Action for Refugees and Asylum Seekers' (CARAS) in London, conducted a series of educational sessions. This work draws material from the first of a series of on-going sexual health workshops that explore the existing barriers to care, gaps in knowledge and myths surrounding sexual health for these teenagers. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews carried out as part of the teaching session. The group consisted of seven girls, with an age range of thirteen to nineteen, who were predominantly from east Africa and the Middle East. The domains explored included; puberty, female anatomy and FGM, pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and relationships and consent. The results of our study demonstrate vast knowledge gaps of the female anatomy, contraception, STDs and, of particular significance, relationships and sexual consent. Our study highlights the need for; further research into the discrepancies between the health literacy of migrant and nonmigrant children targeted public health interventions and increased primary care awareness regarding the health challenges faced by these teenagers.

### Biography

Isabel Straw is a London doctor who has dedicated her junior years to studying the effects of social circumstance on health. She has developed her global outlook through her experience abroad, working domestically and internationally with children in the asylum system. Isabel is pursuing an education in Public Health to further her understanding of global health inequalities and of the effects of social disempowerment on health.

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