

CoppaFeel! research shows young people are a “health conscious” generation but remain worried about using NHS services due to coronavirus.

CoppaFeel! Research shows 1 in 5 young women would delay a GP visit due to a fear of catching Coronavirus, despite the fact more young women are self-checking and confident to notice a change.

CoppaFeel! annual research shows despite the pandemic, more young people are checking their boobs and pecs on a monthly basis (36%) and feel confident to notice an unusual change (60%). Attention to health remains a priority for young people with checking their boobs or pecs, just behind other health behaviours such as visiting the dentist, opticians, doing exercise and checking weight.

Cara was diagnosed in March 2020, at the age of 28, “I check really regularly because I am signed up to the CoppaFeel! Text reminder service. Although it was in between checks that I found my lump by chance, if I didn’t usually check, I wouldn’t know what was normal and that something was wrong. When I had my appointment the GP referred me to St Bartholomew’s Hospital where I was seen. The doctors had said it looked suspicious so I was prepared for the worst.”

Many young people are aware that breast cancer can affect them at a young age, with 78% believing it is important to raise awareness of breast health amongst young people, but 61% feeling there is not enough awareness being generated to encourage young people to be breast aware. There is also less clarity as to whether non binary genders can also develop breast cancer, highlighting the need for breast awareness messaging to work harder in reaching and appealing to everyone regardless of how they identify.

As a charity on a mission to ensure young people are educated, encouraged and empowered to check their chests, it was pleasing to see some positive results with regards to self checking, confidence and awareness. However the research also showed the impact of coronavirus on young people’s views of the NHS and their health.

Natalie Haskell, CEO of CoppaFeel!, explains “despite being a digital first generation, young people still desire human contact when it comes to healthcare and being prompted to get to know their bodies. 62% would prefer in person contact with a

healthcare professional as their first choice compared with on the phone appointments and video calls. Young people are more likely to be prompted to check from doctors, nurses or family members, showing the importance of returning to provide health promotion and services in person where possible. It is important that services and messaging still meet the needs of young people to ensure they stand the best chance of detecting and diagnosing breast cancer early.”

More than half of young people would be more likely to visit their GP with breast cancer symptoms since the Coronavirus outbreak, compared to other health concerns. However, the results revealed that around 70% are worried people will be diagnosed late due to the pandemic and vital services being stopped. 20% of young women specifically stated they would delay visiting a GP visit due to a fear of catching Coronavirus. Those who said they were less likely to contact a GP if they had a sign or symptom during the pandemic, was because of a lack of GP appointments available, fear of catching Coronavirus and believing they are not a priority for the NHS.

In light of these headlines, the charity urges young people to be breast aware and know that the NHS services are open, safe and there for them if they experience any concerning changes to their chest.

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For further information or to arrange an interview with a spokesperson, contact CoppaFeel!'s Marketing manager on press@coppafeel.org.

About CoppaFeel!

CoppaFeel! aims to ensure that all breast cancers are diagnosed at the earliest stage possible by educating people on the signs and symptoms of breast cancer, encouraging them to check regularly and instilling the confidence to seek medical referral if they detect abnormalities. Currently 5% of diagnosed cases are already at stage IV with breast cancer being the second most commonly diagnosed cancer in women under 30 in the UK (181 new cases diagnosed and 12 deaths annually).

CoppaFeel! is the third most recognized breast cancer charity amongst young people and those aware of CoppaFeel! are 58% more likely to check their boobs regularly than those not aware (CoppaFeel! research, sample based upon 18 – 29 year olds.

December 2019 research). Due to the pandemic 90% of their programmes/projects



have been affected, 40% of programmes/projects have been completely cancelled for 2020.

Find out more about CoppaFeel! at: coppafeel.org

Instagram and Twitter @coppafeelpeople