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MIG-HEALTH APPS

Mobile Health Apps for Migrants

<https://apps4health.eu/>

Module 2 - Teaching session (2.1)

How to search and select Health Apps



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Teaching Session: Content

1. [Why are there search criteria for Health Apps?](#)
2. [Typical Health App areas and apps](#)
3. [Where and how to search for Health Apps?](#)
4. [Criteria for finding good and trustworthy Health Apps](#)
5. [Discussion and Evaluation](#)



Objectives

- ✓ Providing participants with the knowledge of how to search for Health Apps and find what they are looking for
- ✓ Providing participants with criteria for selecting trustworthy Health App, especially since health data is particularly sensitive data
- ✓ As digital literacy will vary widely within the diverse migrant community, this module aims to provide general information and skills in this area that can be of use to all, including migrants, so that everyone is equally equipped.

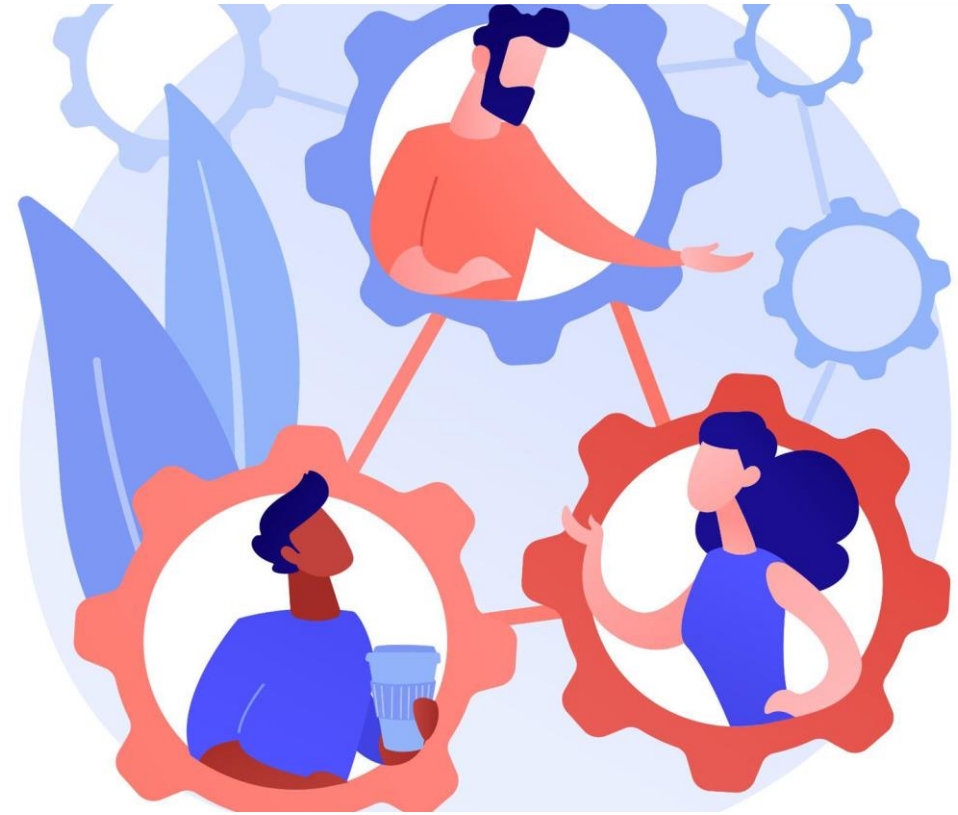


Source: Image by nuraghies on Freepik



Competences

- ✓ Learners will be able to search for health apps, which are most relevant for them.
- ✓ Learners will be able to select trustable and relevant health apps.



[Image by vectorjuice on Freepik](#)



2

How to search and select Health Apps

Background information – addressing migrants

Migrants, like everyone else, are a heterogeneous group with varying levels of access to and experience with smartphones and apps. Even with experience, not everyone thinks about the process of choosing and selecting apps. As we want to promote the use of health apps as an additional and complementary tool in different health areas, it is important to reach a shared knowledge and understanding about the search and selection of apps.



2.1.1

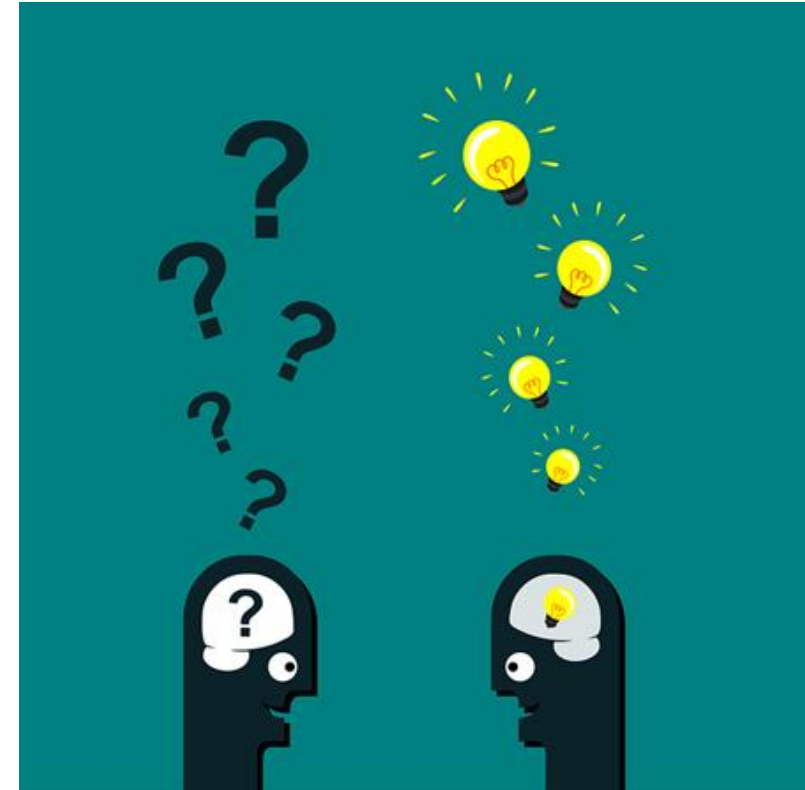
Why are there search criteria for Health Apps?

Introduction

- The use of Health Apps is becoming more widespread by the day
- Yet unlike when receiving a treatment from a doctor a Health App's effectiveness and truthfulness in many cases isn't scientifically verified nor in any way validated
- Therefore, the empowerment of users to be able to differentiate between „good“ and „bad“ Health Apps becomes all the more important

Brainstorming

- So, what risks can you think of when using Health Apps?



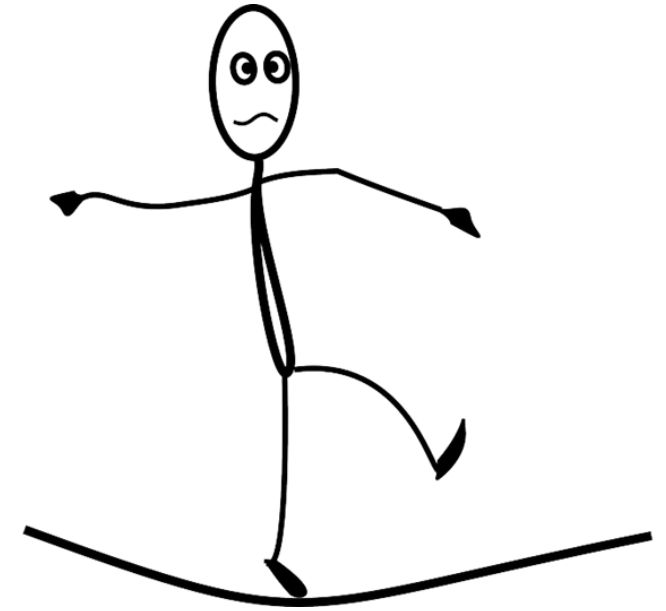
(Mis)Information

- Apps may make false health claims
- Apps may bundle poor or even incorrect information
- An apps (mis)information could lead to incorrect assessment of a disease as well as incorrect treatments, poor decision making in general and to adverse health effects



Poor app design

Poor app design, such as an inconvenient user interface, may lead to infrequent usage and lower therapy adherence when used in addition to a therapy



Protection of sensitive personal data

- Health Apps may require sensitive personal data in order to be used and function properly.
- This may in many cases be problematic since Health Apps often are free and therefore rely on other refinancing methods such as sharing personal data of users for advertising purposes with social media platforms like Facebook or Instagram.
- Also, low data protection standards might increase the risk of data leakage of health information and bring irrevocable damage to its users.



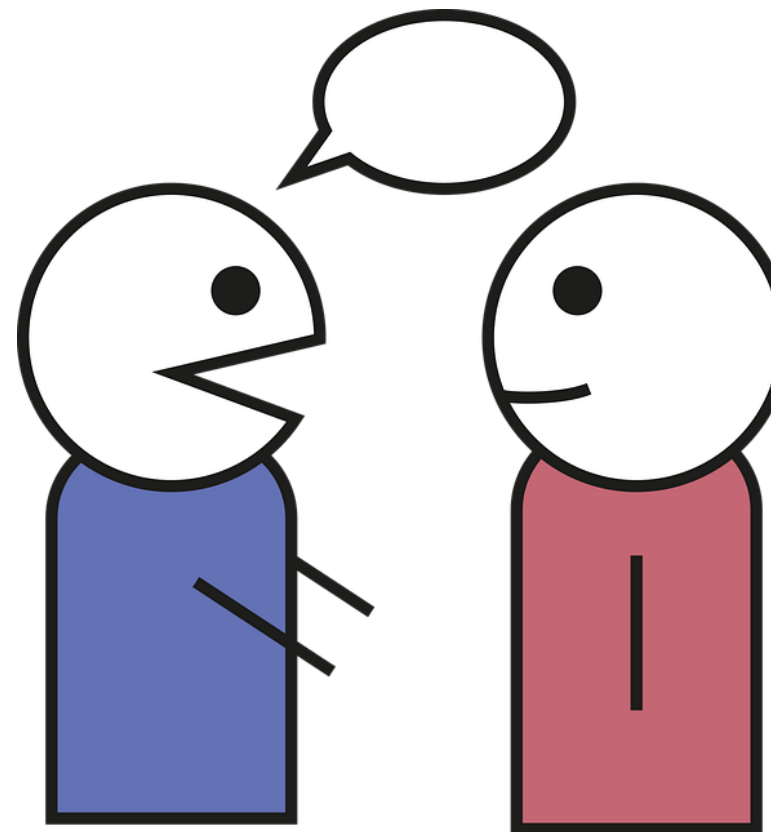


2.1.2

Typical Health App areas and apps

Let's share our experience

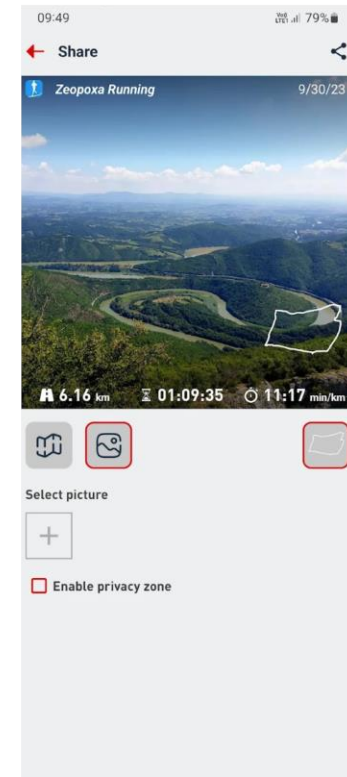
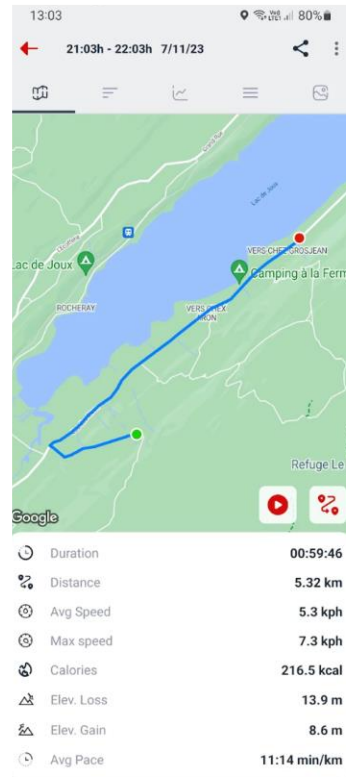
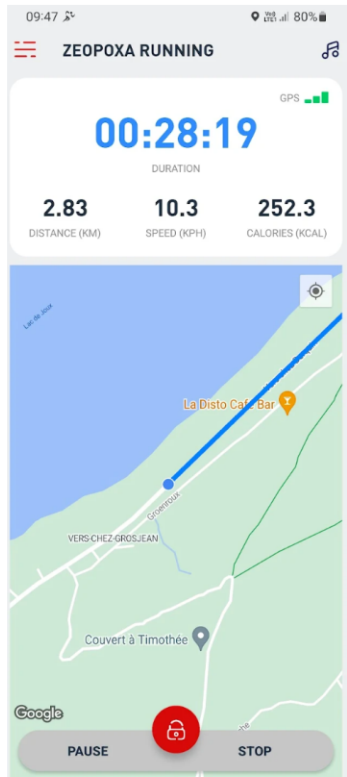
- When thinking of your own experience with Health Apps, are there any that you currently use or have used in the past?
- What Health Apps can you think of?



[Source](#) | [Pixabay license](#)



Examples of Health Apps: Running & Jogging, Run tracker



Examples of Health Apps: NeuroNation – Brain Training

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8zyLk8PY03I>



Source: [Google Play Store - NeuroNation](#)



Source | [Pixabay license](#)



Brainstorming

- Let's take a broader look.
- What different areas of Health App can you think of?



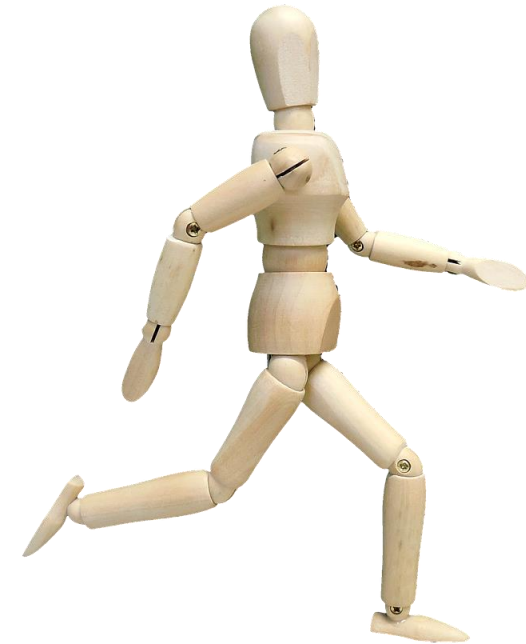
Examples

- Pedometer and Activity Tracker
- Gymnastics and Fitness
- Diet and Nutrition
- Mental and Cognitive Health
- Medicare Management Apps
(Appointments and Health Records)
- Chronic Disease Management



Pedometer and Activity Tracker

- Track your steps
- Set up daily goals
- Push messages to remind you of your daily quota
- Motivation by illustrating progress
- Improvement of health parameters



Diet and Nutrition

- Nutrition and calorie tracking by barcode scanning
- Meal plans and recipes based on your preferences
- Community forum for support and motivation





2.1.3

Where and how to search for Health Apps?

App Stores

- Google Play Store (Android)
- App Store (Apple)



Source: [Apple App Store](#); [Google Play Store](#)

How to find an app which is right for you!

- Are your top results sponsored content?
- Don't fall for product placements in your search results!
- Check for the label „ad“ (advertisement) in your search results and avoid those hits!



Activity

- Now it's your turn: what Health Apps can you find in the identified health areas?
- Take notes, we will come back to your findings at the end of the session!





2.1.4

Criteria for finding good and trustworthy Health Apps

Brainstorming:

- What criteria can you think of to find good and trustworthy Health Apps?



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Checklist: Check whether an app can be trusted and is safe to use (1)

- Check for the developers of the app
- Have they designed other health apps before?
- How long have they been developing health apps?
- Did they consult or cooperate with health professionals when developing this app?



Checklist: Check whether an app can be trusted and is safe to use (2)

- Do any reputable hospitals or health organizations endorse the app?
- Be alerted if an app promises great results in a short time
- Don't let yourself be fooled by nice graphics and illustrations



Checklist: Is the app's effectiveness validated by an independent body?

- Check whether the app has been trialed and deemed successful via a study or another independent and trustworthy body.
- Be skeptical when the only data on its effectiveness is provided by the company itself.
- Check for reviews and or experience reports by other users.



Checklist: Check for privacy and security concerns

- Does the app have clear privacy guidelines on how data shared via the app will be stored and used?
- Does the app ask for permission to access unrelated information that may be used for advertising or other commercial purposes?
- Does the app require your credit card details before you're using it?



Checklist: Choose apps that use evidence-based strategies

- Self monitoring/tracking
- Goal setting
- Cues or push notifications
- Social support rewards



Checklist: Test several apps before committing (for example via a subscription)

- Be aware that if usage is inconvenient chances are high that you won't use it regularly
- Check if the app requires in-app purchases to be useful



Activity

Now that we have a better understanding of the criteria to look out for when selecting a Health App, form groups of 3-5 persons and discuss which app from the following slides you should select based on those criteria!



Example 1: Headspace

- App to improve your mental health through guided meditations and mindfulness exercises
- Good reviews by its users – rated with 4.8 of 5 Stars in the App Store (Apple)
- Backed by various scientific studies of independent, recognized entities and published in scientific journals
 - the North Eastern University
 - Journal of Pediatric Nursing
- No explicit indication in the App Store that personal data will be passed on to third parties



Activity:

**Good or bad example?
Discuss!**

Bad

Good



Example 2: Sleepio

- App to improve your sleep through a cognitive behavioral approach over the course of six weeks, for example what behaviours to change to calm an otherwise racing mind
- Cognitive behavioral techniques backed by decades of clinical research and twelve randomized controlled studies that addressed the app itself
- No transparency on which entities conducted the studies
- Clear indication on what the app can and what it can't achieve
- No transparency, neither on the number of downloads nor on the rating by its users in the App Store



Activity:

**Good or bad example?
Discuss!**

Bad

Good



Activity

- *What are your results on what app to pick?*
- *Let's discuss the results in the plenum!*



Activity

- *Now: come back to your results on your individual search for Health Apps from earlier today.*
- *Check the app(s) you have found with the criteria you just have learned about!*
- *What's your outcome? Would you still use the app or would you now use it with some limitations?*



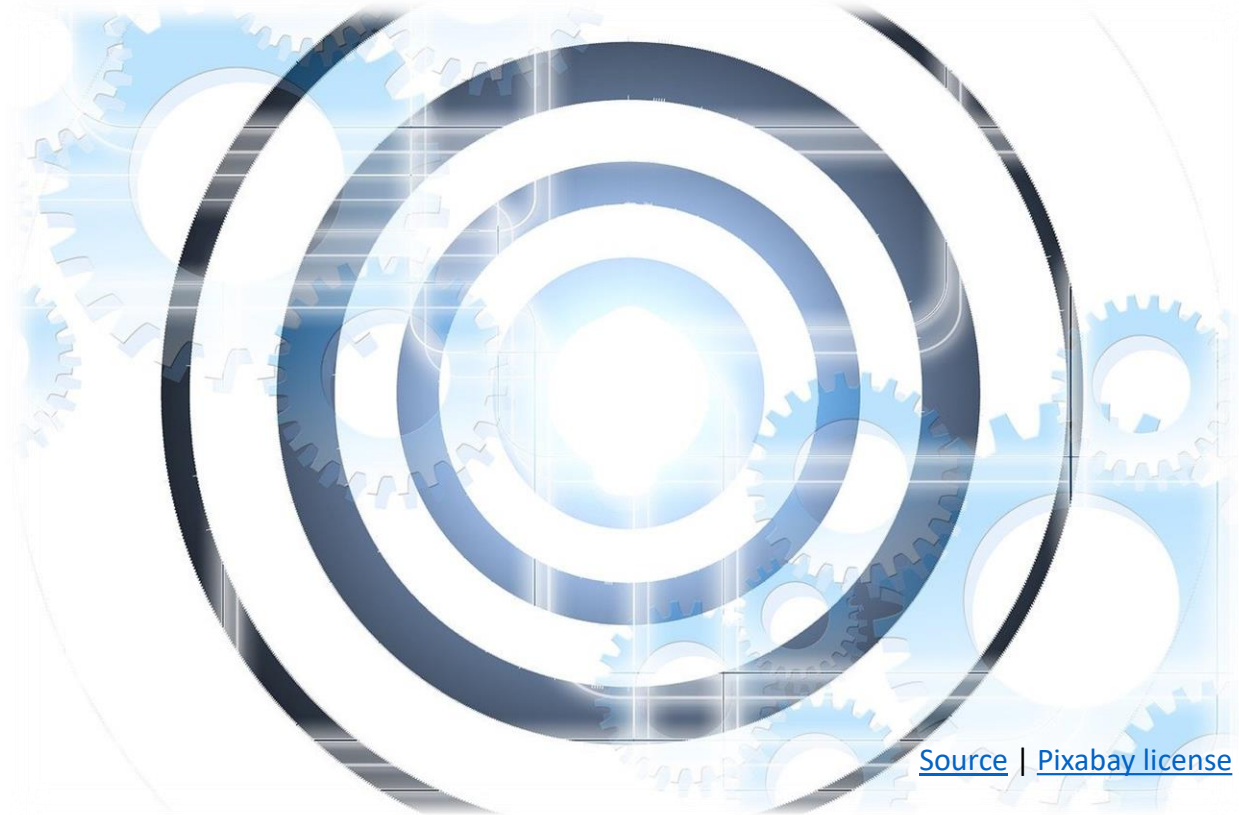


2.1.5

Discussion and Evaluation

Objectives

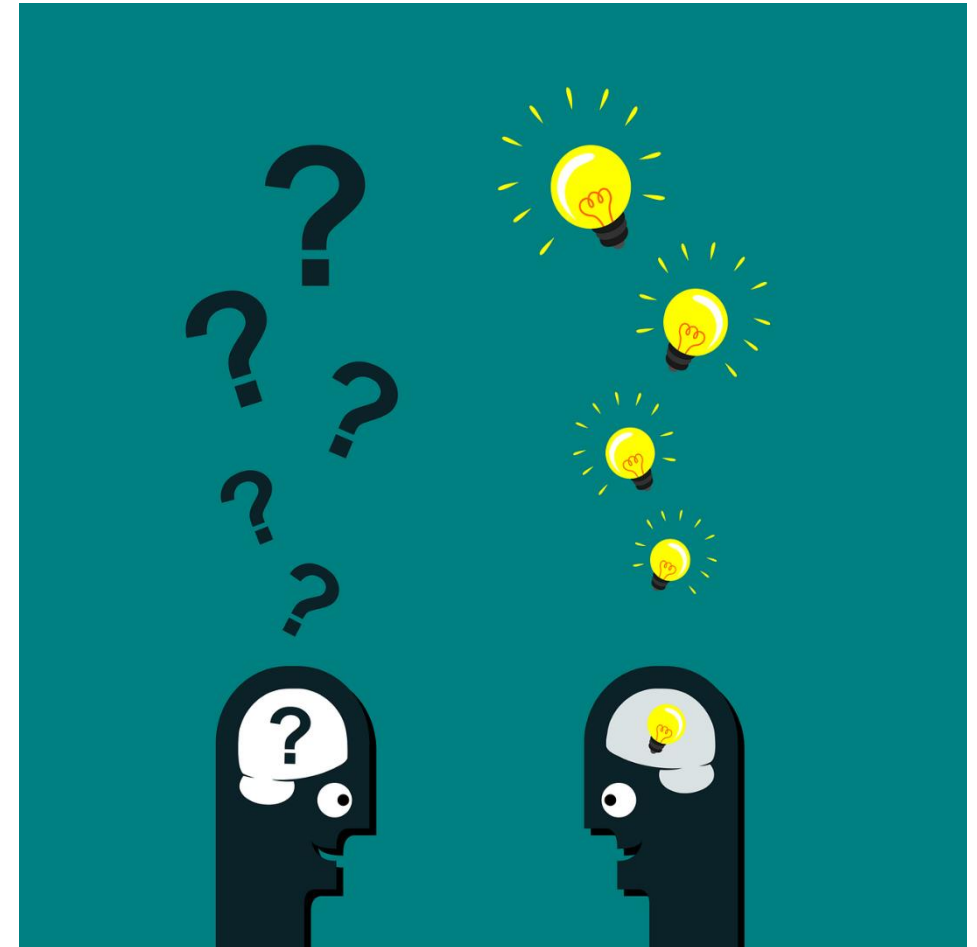
- To resolve and clarify misunderstandings that emerged from all previous theoretical information.
- To ensure in depth comprehension of the module's contents.
- To evaluate the module.



Source | [Pixabay license](#)

Discussion

- *Questions?*
- *Clarifications?*
- *Comments?*



Evaluation Questionnaire

The content of the module was stimulating and interesting *(1 minimum, 5 maximum)*

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The content of the module was clear, understandable and easy to follow *(1 minimum, 5 maximum)*

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The trainer was well prepared *(1 minimum, 5 maximum)*

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Evaluation Questionnaire

The module enhanced my knowledge of the subject matter *(1 minimum, 5 maximum)*

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I would recommend this module to others *(1 minimum, 5 maximum)*

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I am satisfied with the module overall *(1 minimum, 5 maximum)*

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References and further readings

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MIG-HEALTH APPS

Mobile Health Apps for Migrants

Congratulations!
You have completed the teaching
session of this module!

