

Vulnerable Communities Asylum and Refugee Health

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THE HAVEN

- * A service providing health care for Asylum Seekers and Refugees, has been running since 2004.
- * Set up to facilitate access to health care and to provide initial care.
- * Address health inequalities and facilitate ongoing access to appropriate health care.

What we do

- * Provide comprehensive review of personal and family health history.
- * Screen for any diseases the person may be at risk of.
- * Complete all recommended immunisations
- * Deal with any presenting health problems.

Where do our referrals come from?

- * Home Office notification
- * Social Services
- * Education department
- * Voluntary organisations
- * GP practices
- * Solicitors and any other agencies working with our target groups.
- * Self-referrals

Our Patients

Subset of migrants

- * Asylum seekers
- * Recent refugees
- * Failed asylum seekers
- * Joining families (family reunion migrant)
- * Unaccompanied Minors (<18 years)
- * Trafficked women and men

Our work

- * Complex and complicated work
- * The complexity of our work takes much time, and we are able to offer longer appointments using telephone interpreting.
- * Knowledge of the asylum system and links with other agencies in the field supports our work in addressing health needs.
- * Using the “Whole-Person Care” model, close team work, knowledge of the asylum system and links with other agencies in the field support our work.

Factors linked to vulnerability

- * Multiple adversity and trauma before, during and since leaving home
- * Social disadvantage - loss of identity, status, relationships
- * Social determinants of health - poverty, poor housing, social isolation, discrimination, no work
- * Cultural bereavement – multiple losses - things that give meaning to life, social structures, cultural values, relations, material loss (Eisenbauch 1991)

Evidence

Migration leads to poor health outcomes for marginalised and socially disadvantaged populations

Keating et al 2002 and Migration Observatory 2011

Social Determinants of Health - accumulation of negative effects on wellbeing across the life course lead to early death

Fair Society, Healthy Lives The Marmot Review 2010

Strategic Review of Health Inequalities in England post-2010

Barriers to accessing effective health care in UK

- * Language
- * Cultural differences in health beliefs and behaviour
- * Different systems of health care from homeland
- * Complex and undifferentiated presentations
- * Confusion/fear about entitlement
- * Fear and mistrust of authorities
- * Hostility/racism

Can we do better?

- * Clarity about entitlement to NHS care
- * Clarity about rules for registration
- * Use interpreters
- * Help patients to navigate the NHS and the practice
- * Explicitness
- * Translated resources

Can we do better

- * Assess health risks and needs
- * Assess vulnerability
- * Assess resilience and resourcefulness
- * Explore circumstances and experiences before during and after leaving home including in refugee camps, urban slums and in UK.
- * Screen for depression, anxiety, trauma
- * Encourage social contact

Can we do better

- * Supportive listening, engender trust
- * Recognise normal psychological responses to adversity and trauma
- * Offer continuity
- * Ask Haven for advice

Biopsychosocial model

- * May be complex and undifferentiated
- * MUS
- * PTSD and chronic traumatic stress
- * Compounding effects of further adversity on symptoms and functioning
- * Medication and psychological therapy and social support help

“The mind that has no vent in tears makes other organs weep”

Henry Vaughan 1621-1695

We see a lot of...

- * Endemic hepatitis B
- * TB – latent and active
- * Vit D deficiency
- * MUS
- * Headaches
- * GI symptoms
- * Psychological and physical effects of trauma
- * Depression and anxiety

What helps a refugee

- * Being able to building a life here
- * Family
- * Improved social situation
- * Acceptance and belonging
- * Access to appropriate health care

Self care for health professionals

- * Can be overwhelming
- * Disbelief
- * Vicarious trauma

Resources

HPA migrant health guide

<https://www.gov.uk/topic/health-protection/migrant-health-guide>

SOP registration

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/commissioning/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2015/11/pat-reg-sop-pmc-gp.pdf>

CCG access to services-translated

<https://www.bristolccg.nhs.uk/your-health-local-services/health-services/>

Translated 111

<http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/AboutNHSservices/Emergencyandurgentcareservices/Pages/NHS-111.aspx>

Translated PHQ9, GAD7, PTSD screen

<http://www.refugeehealth.ca/handouts>

Vitamin D local guideline

http://www.bnssgformulary.nhs.uk/includes/documents/BNSSG%20CCG%20Vitamin_D_Prescribing_Guidelines%20Jan16.pdf