Safeguarding Asylum Seekers

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We Refugees by Benjamin Zephaniah

We can all be refugees
Nobody is safe,
All it takes is a mad leader
Or no rain to bring forth food,
We can all be refugees
We can all be told to go,
We can be hated by someone
For being someone.

We can all be refugees
Sometimes it only takes a day,
Sometimes it only takes a handshake
Or a paper that is signed.
We all came from refugees
Nobody simply just appeared,
Nobody's here without a struggle,
And why should we live in fear
Of the weather or the troubles?
We all came here from somewhere

UNHCR
Seeking asylum
is a human right.

PEOPLE with
RIGHTS
not just needs

Trauma

- Pre arrival
- Journey
- In the UK

Vulnerability

How long can it take to receive status in the UK through the Home Office asylum system?

Are those seeking asylum in the UK allowed to work?

Can asylum seekers claim benefits?

How much is Home office financial support?

People seeking asylum can spend periods defined as undocumented or *'failed'*

- no recourse to public funds (NRPF)
- Destitute

Over 40% of refused claims subsequently overturned.

NHS entitlements:

In system = everything

Undocumented =

GP + life-saving care + a few exemptions*

Stress points = Increased vulnerability

- Accessing services
- Change in accommodation
- Change in location
- News from home office
- No recourse to public funds
- Receiving leave to remain

Particularly vulnerable groups

Children

- Unaccompanied
- Age disputed
- Carers

Women

- Pregnant
- Precarious sexual relationships
- Trafficked/ Prostitution

Mentally ill

- Chronic complex PTSD
- Psychosis
- Actively suicidal

Survival response

Outcome: **poor memory, concentration, difficulty with basic tasks, sleep and body disturbance, PTSD.**

What is within your control?

HOW IS YOUR SERVICE SET UP?

WHAT BARRIERS MIGHT BE PRESENT?

ARE THERE OPPORTUNITIES TO ENSURE THESE ARE LIMITED – TO BE TRAUMA INFORMED?

Useful tools

- HC1/2 certificate
- Bus pass on mental health grounds from TFGM
- Section 4(2) medical certificates
- Third sector
- Consider Safeguarding referral through usual route*
- Letter writing
- Form filling / internet support
- Interpreters

Basic human rights

Empower and enable

Maslow's Hierarchy of needs

Consider a patient at a GP practice

How do they register?

How do you understand their needs / how do they understand you?

If referring – how is this done?

If prescribing – what support / checks can you offer?

How do they arrange follow up?

How to identify / code as “vulnerable”?

Links

Regarding patients' ongoing asylum cases – further assistance can be obtained from charities such as **Revive, Rainbow Haven,** and **Refugee Action**. Legal support may be available through **GMIAU**. There are many useful links on their websites. They continue to operate remotely during the pandemic.

If people are facing destitution, deportation, or detention due to their asylum case being declined, but you feel that they are not fit to withstand these on physical or mental health grounds, you can use the following medical form (section 4 application) to highlight this to the Home Office https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/section-42-medical-declaration;
This form usually needs to be submitted with additional paperwork and can be facilitated via **Refugee Action** (capacity dependent). You can email to asylumcrisismanchester@refugee-action.org.uk with the patient's consent.

Application for a bus pass on mental health grounds can be one of your single most helpful actions. It offers the ability to reach appointments, independence and, when of no fixed abode or sofa surfing, offers some warmth and dry space. This can help mental health immeasurably, reducing stress for the patient and primary care provider. Here are the links to the form that you can complete quickly and easily. It needs one passport photo, your signature, and the practice stamp, currently it is taking a few months for the bus pass to be sent out to patients.
https://assets.ctfassets.net/nv7y93idf4jq/4pPf9aMez6KmwcCMGEUMY4/33ce34414dfeb3c3080dcb71082772d4/17-1223_TfGM_MH_RDL_Questionnaire_WEB.pdf
and
https://assets.ctfassets.net/nv7y93idf4jq/49posNU7CoGcIGIoM8WCqA/8b4c6113beafc0c91791506c4f881309/17-1223_TfGM_ENCTP_Walking_Diff_or_RDL_Application_Form_WEB.pdf

An HC2 certificate means people seeking asylum and those who are No Recourse to Public Funds (Appeal Rights Exhausted) are exempted from prescription charges. To apply the following form needs to be completed - a HC1 form, you can complete this for the patient or they can complete themselves but they may need some help with translation. From completion and posting of the HC1 form the patient will receive a HC2 certificate a month or so later that lasts only lasts 6 months and must be renewed each time.
https://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcosts/Documents/2016/HC1-April-2016.pdf

Thank you

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