

Asylum Seekers /New Entrants : Advice and Support Services

“Everyone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution” Universal declaration of human rights.

UK hosts 2% of the worlds 10 million refugees

The 1951 UN Refugee Convention defines a refugee as a person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it. (www.refugeecouncil.org.uk)

Definitions

- **Asylum Seeker:** Someone who has made a formal application for asylum i.e. to be recognised as a refugee.

If requires housing is given this on a no-choice basis in any ‘dispersal area’ of the UK of which Glasgow is currently the only city in Scotland. Receives basic cash support around £36/week for food and other necessities during initial consideration of case and during an appeal process, if refused and submits fresh claim or unable to undertake journey home due to severe health problems may be entitled to support in the form of a card which can only use at certain shops and not e.g. for transport.

- **Refugee:** Someone whose application has been successful

Currently around 30% of applicants receive refugee status on initial application but this depends greatly on country of origin. Many more are recognised as refugees on appeal or following court proceedings.

- **Refused (failed) asylum seeker:** Someone whose application has been unsuccessful.

Has option to leave UK voluntarily or to continue pursuing claim for protection by fresh claim or further legal processes. At risk of being detained or deported. Loses accommodation and financial support under government policy of intentional destitution to persuade to leave. Can be in this situation for months or years, clearly vulnerable to exploitation and abuse and worsening or physical or mental health problems. Is required to continue to report regularly to home office but

this causes anxiety due to risk of removal to danger in own country. With appropriate legal and practical support however many eventually receive refugee status or other right to remain.

- **Economic migrant:** Person voluntarily moving to another country to improve their quality of life through work or study.
- **Illegal immigrant:** Someone who has not made themselves known to the authorities or whose legal status has expired.

Humanitarian Protection

Some asylum seekers are seeking humanitarian protection rather than refugee status. This may be due to fleeing situations such as forced marriage, honour-based violence, domestic violence, FGM or human trafficking. It can be very difficult to receive such protection and those who are refused face destitution and homelessness in the same way.

Primary Care Support

Primary Care is free throughout the UK to any person who has applied for asylum, no matter whether their case is pending, successful or unsuccessful.

GPs are required to register asylum seekers and refugees as any other patient.

In Glasgow the Asylum Health Bridging Team assist those newly housed in the city to register with a GP and also seek to do a basic health check including BBV testing as appropriate prior to GP registration. They can also help those who have lost their accommodation and need to find a GP in a new area.

Inclusion Team Specialist Nurse Karen Johnston provides inreach to this service.

The team is currently based at Clyde House, 209 Govan Road.
Co-ordinator 0141 553 2812.

Homeless asylum seekers can also be seen by the Homeless Health Team at 55 Hunter St G4 0UP. 0141 553 2801.

Secondary Care

In Scotland this is also free as for primary care. Elsewhere in the UK secondary care is restricted for refused asylum seekers but throughout the UK they are entitled to A and E care, sexual health services including HIV, some other infectious diseases and maternity care.

However maternal mortality is higher among asylum seekers which is likely to be related at least in part to poor access to care.

Antenatal care

Sister Hilary Alba is link midwife for Asylum seekers and refugees and FGM (GG&C) based at the Glasgow Royal Infirmary can be consulted regarding all pregnancy related issues in asylum seeking women but will usually only see complex cases if out of area 0141 211 5326 , 07960 880504

Other experienced midwives will coordinate the majority of care in their own areas:

The SNIPS midwives at RAH 0141 314 6199.

Mental Health Care

Referrals can be made to local Community Mental Health Team including Crisis Team as for any patient.

Glasgow Psychological Trauma Service, The Anchor (based in Ibrox)- includes the former COMPASS team- will accept referrals of those who have experienced complex trauma. 0141 303 8968

<http://www.staffnet.ggc.scot.nhs.uk/Partnerships/MHP/Specialist%20Services/GPTS/Pages/GlasgowPsychologicalTraumaService.aspx>

Freedom from Torture (a charity with premises in the Gorbals) also provide mental health support for those who come within its remit (= State sponsored torture).

0141 420 3161 www.freedomfromtorture.org

TARA provide Support for women over 18, trafficked for Commercial Exploitation, 0141 276 7729.

- Professional advice - Bronagh Andrew manager 0141 276 7724.

Migrant Help 0141 884 7900 supports those who have been exploited for labour.

For a list of key agencies helping asylum seekers and refugees in Glasgow and particularly destitute refused asylum seekers and other migrants facing homelessness and no recourse to statutory homeless services: www.destitutionaction.wordpress.com/resources

Support within Sandyford

Clients requiring **additional SRH/GYN** support can be offered an appointment in the vulnerable adults clinic at Sandyford Central with Dr Groom on Monday afternoons or at Sandyford Renfrewshire on Thursday afternoons contact her secretary Gail Cairns 0141 211 8146.

Genitourinary Medicine appointments can be booked with via the GUM secretary on 0141 211 8138. Please ensure the appropriate interpreter is requested at the time and a double appointment arranged if an interpreter is required. Consider that some clients may find it easier to access local hub/satellite specialist services if available.

Contact the inclusion team for further advice and input if individual clients have extra needs or information needs shared with other teams and partners.

You can refer any client you are concerned about using the referral page on NaSH and select Inclusion team (adults or young persons from the drop down list.

External Services that can help/provide information

- Scottish Refugee Council: Provide advice for new asylum seekers including help to access a GP 0141 248 9799 (0141 223 7979 advice line for asylum seekers).
- Legal Services Agency Women's Project for women who have experienced gender-based violence in their country of origin or the UK: 0141 353 3354 / <http://lsa.org.uk/lsa.php?id=38&n=2>
- Women's Aid : Hemat Gryffe: Black and Minority Ethnic Womens Aid 0141 353 0859.
Provide refugee accommodation to women, families and young women, can occasionally assist when a client has no recourse to public funds and is homeless.

Destitute Domestic Violence Concession

The UK Government has introduced a new Destitution Domestic Violence (DDV) concession from 1 April 2012.

The concession will provide women (and men) who are eligible to make an application to stay permanently in the UK - under the Domestic Violence Immigration Rule (Settlement DV) - with 3 months limited leave to remain in the UK and will enable them to apply for public funds.

The new policy has replaced the Sojourner Project that ended on 31 March 2012.

If staff come across an individual who they believe may be eligible to make an application to benefit from the concession, they should refer women to Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid: <http://hematgryffe.org.uk/> Tel: 0141 353 0859 and men to the Men's Advice Line at: <http://www.respect.uk.net/pages/mens-advice-line.html>

Further Guidance:

- Guidance on Trafficking can be found within Greater Glasgow & Clyde's guidance document on Human Trafficking, available via Staff Net.
- Guidance on forced marriage is available via:
www.scotland.gov.uk/forcedmarriagepractice