

Working with Refugees and People Seeking Asylum Contents

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Introduction

People seeking asylum in the UK have been coming to live in Wigan since 2000 when the Government introduced a policy of 'dispersal' whereby asylum seekers were allocated accommodation throughout the country. Difficult political situations and conflict are often the main causes of forced migration, so the country of origin of asylum seekers & refugees will vary according to what is happening in the world. The majority of the world's refugees are hosted in the world's poorest regions. The UK hosts less than 2% of the world's refugees according to UNHCR. Three quarters of the world's refugees live in Africa and Asia, often in refugee camps. Many people are also internally displaced (IDP's) within their own country due to war, famine, and natural disaster.

This guide aims to give Health & Care professionals practical information and links to key resources, to assist in addressing the health and social care needs of people who are asylum seekers and refugees. The information is compiled from a range of publicly available resources, and is correct at time of preparing for publication. However, asylum legislation, entitlements and services change frequently so some information may alter.

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For further information contact : The Health Inclusion & Equalities Team,
Public Health Directorate NHS ALWPCT.

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Linda.adhana@alwpct.nhs.uk

Definitions

Asylum Seeker

People coming to the United Kingdom as asylum seekers are fleeing from human rights abuses (forced migration) in situations such as war, persecution, imprisonment and torture. An asylum seeker is someone who:

- Flees their homeland
- Arrives in the UK and makes themselves known to the authorities
- Exercises their legal right to apply for asylum with UK Border Agency. Whilst waiting a decision on their claim she/he is called an asylum seeker.

If the asylum application is initially refused, the applicant has appeal rights through the Appeals System.

Refugee

The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees defines a refugee as '*someone with a well founded fear of persecution on the grounds of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion*'. In the UK a refugee is someone whose application for asylum has been granted, and is someone who:

- Has proved that they would face persecution back home
- Has had a successful asylum application
- Is allowed to stay in the country after the authorities say they can stay

Refused (failed) Asylum Seeker

A person who:

- Hasn't been able to prove that they would face persecution back home
- Has had their application turned down, and has no rights of appeal (unless they are able to make a 'Fresh Claim' (Immigration Rules : Fresh Claims 353).

Refugee Status

When the Home Office decides on asylum application and grants individuals permission to stay, an individual will be given one of the following:

- Refugee Status
- Humanitarian Protection
- Discretionary Leave

Refugee Status

When an individual has been granted refugee status it means that he/she has been recognised as a refugee according to the 1951 Refugee Convention. From 30th August 2005, when the Home Office grants refugee status, permission to stay is for five years initially. Applicants should apply for Settlement Protection for ILR (Indefinite Leave to Remain) before this permission expires.

Humanitarian Protection

If an individual does not qualify for refugee status, the Home Office may give him/her humanitarian protection. This status is given when the Home Office recognises that it is unsafe for him/her to return to their own country but they do not meet the refugee status criteria. People can also be granted humanitarian protection for non-asylum reasons. From 30th August 2005, humanitarian protection is given for a period of five years.

Discretionary Leave

When an individual does not qualify for refugee status or humanitarian protection, the Home Office may grant him/her discretionary leave, which is usually given due to non-asylum reasons. This status is granted for three years or less.

More information on the asylum system can be found:

UKBA : <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/asylum/>

Refugee Council : <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/>

General Health Issues for Asylum Seekers and Refugees

It is good practice to carry out a comprehensive health assessment (with a qualified interpreter if the client does not speak English). It is important to ensure that appropriate medical screening and referrals are made to ensure health needs are met, especially when people do not have medical records in the UK and are not familiar with UK health care systems and their entitlements to care.

There are strong links between health status, poverty and social exclusion, and health may even deteriorate whilst living in the UK as a result of poor living conditions and the stress of claiming asylum. Each person's individual health and social care needs should be assessed as health status is affected by complex factors. In addition to general health needs there may be contributory factors impacting on the health status of some asylum seekers and refugees:

- Communicable Disease (higher incidence of certain diseases in some countries): e.g. Tuberculosis; Hepatitis A, B, C; HIV/Aids; Parasitic infections; Tropical diseases.
- Effects of war, organised violence, detention and torture : Physical injury such as landmines, bullet wounds, amputated limbs, disability, loss of vision, eyesight and hearing difficulties, dental injury, internal injury from beatings and torture, rape/sexual assault, malnutrition. Health care at time of injury may have been poor leading to long term disability.
- Effects of war, organised violence, detention and torture : Psychological health problems such as depression, anxiety, stress, post traumatic stress disorder and 'flashbacks', fear of people in authority, physical illness related to stress (e.g. cancer, gastro-intestinal, heart disease), sleep disturbances. Sense of injustice due to deprivation of human rights and persecution. May have witnessed atrocity. Somatisation may occur.
- Effects of social change living in the UK : culture shock, isolation (not knowing anyone or not speaking the language), poor housing, fear, homesickness, family separation, climate change, not understanding health care systems or services, anxiety over asylum claim, racial harassment, unable to work whilst claiming asylum.
- Multiple losses: home, family, employment, profession, status, belongings, deprivation of human rights, may not know the whereabouts of some family members.
- Culture: expression of health problems and health beliefs will vary. Culturally specific colloquialisms may be used to describe a feeling of mental or physical ill health. There may be health beliefs related to traditional medicine or to spiritual and religious beliefs.

(See 'Useful Resources' section for further information)

Survivors of Torture and Organised Violence

Asylum seekers may be survivors of torture and organised violence. Women, children and men can be victims of rape, torture and violence. Rape is increasingly used as a weapon of warfare. Survivors of torture and organised violence need support to engage in the healing process and to assert their sense of self worth and human dignity. In many cultures survivors may feel very uncomfortable discussing their experiences. Survivors of sexual violence should be able to choose the gender of the health care worker and interpreter. A relative or friend should not be used as an interpreter. Persistent unexplained distress and anxiety might be due to a history of violation.

There are additional needs relating to possible testing and treatment for HIV, as those seeking help may experience barriers regarding stigma and prejudice from within their own communities and some services. There may also be the perceived fear that HIV status could affect asylum and immigration claims. Treatment for HIV can be complex and issues such as poverty and poor diet affect the strict antiretroviral treatment regimes. People do not always disclose torture and sexual abuse, or may take many years to disclose.

Spinning World (NHS ALW)

A specialist psychological therapy service is provided by Liverpool Personal Service Society (PSS) to improve the mental and emotional well being of migrant and refugee people who have experienced human rights abuses and trauma

The service provides psychological interventions to people who are survivors of:-

- Organised violence
- Detention
- Torture and ill treatment
- Exposure to situations of warfare
- Human trafficking
- Sexual violence

Referrals can be made by statutory and voluntary agencies, self-referrals or concerned family and friends. This is an Ashton, Leigh and Wigan wide service

Please contact our Liverpool office, who will refer to the appropriate venue



0151 702 5503



0151 702 5566



spinningworld@pss.org.uk

Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture (North West)

Elizabeth Kurtis
1st Floor, North Square
11 – 13 Spear Street
MANCHESTER
M1 1JU



0161 236 5744



ekurtis@torturecare.org.uk

Founded in 1985, the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture provides care and rehabilitation to survivors of torture and other forms of organised violence. Medical Foundation accepts referrals from survivors themselves, friends and family, GPs, solicitors, refugee community organisations or any other voluntary or statutory sector body. All services are free to the client.

Who can be referred?

Survivors of torture or organised violence who:

- Need a specialist service because of distress as a result of torture or organised violence
- Are distressed mainly because of torture or violence, although this distress may have been increased by the losses and difficulties in exile.

Referrals must be made in writing using Medical Foundation referral forms. Either contact headquarters in Manchester or London, or the appropriate centre elsewhere in the UK, for copies of the referral form and guidelines for referrers. Please download referral form here:

http://www.torturecare.org.uk/contact_us/34

Services & Support :

- A counselling and therapy service to survivors who are aged 18 years or over
- Two - five initial assessment sessions to help survivors get appropriate support in the region
- Advice and support to practitioners and organisations working with survivors
- Training for therapeutic and mental health services working with survivors
- Supervision to counsellors or mental health practitioners working with survivors
- Therapeutic groups for survivors of torture
- A resource for survivors and regional agencies needing information on local support services
- A medico-legal report writing service which documents evidence of torture for the asylum process and furthers the principles of human rights by collecting evidence against perpetrators

Things to Consider when Treating Asylum Seekers and Refugees

- Bear in mind that the patient may be extremely anxious about the security of personal information;
- Issues of trust may be problematic;
- Never contact the local embassy of their country of origin for information; instead use organisations such as Refugee Action

Possible Issues Faced by Asylum Seekers and Refugees

Causes	Resultant Losses	Issues in Country of Asylum
War Human rights abuses Persecution on grounds of politics, religion, social group, gender or ethnicity Detention Torture Physical and sexual violence	Family Friends Home Possessions Country Culture Profession Status Language Plans for future	Multiple changes Psychological and practical adjustment (cultural shock) Uncertain future Traumatic life events Racism Stereotyping by host community Unknown cultural traditions Language Processing asylum claim (fear of negative decision)

Working with Interpreters

For people who do not speak English, the use of professional interpreters is essential. Family members and friends should not be used as interpreters. Qualified interpreters should be used in order to ensure quality, legal compliance, confidentiality, and for safeguarding. It is therefore important to find out the interpreter guidelines for your department, as these will vary between different organisations.

Confidentiality issues can be particularly acute if patients want to discuss sensitive information or need to access services such as family planning, termination of pregnancy or HIV testing and domestic abuse. Asylum seekers & refugees are entitled to the same high degree of confidentiality as other patients. It cannot be assumed that patients would be willing to have their health discussed with their relatives. In some communities, however, patient expectations are that family members are included in consultations. It should be made clear to individuals that they can always see a health professional alone unless they want others present and that information will not be passed on without consent.

Be aware that there may be difficult issues to discuss such as torture or rape or psychological difficulties, so gender and ethnic background of the interpreter can be important. People may speak the same language but there could be a difficulty if the interpreter is from an opposing ethnic group.

Guide to Working with Interpreters

When working with an interpreter it is important that you:

- Allow extra time for appointments (aim for double the time if possible)
- Spend a few minutes explaining and discussing with the interpreter both of your ways of working, so that each of you is clear
- Arrange seating appropriately in a triangle
- Maintain eye contact with the patient rather than the interpreter
- Address the patient directly as “you” rather than speaking to the interpreter and referring to the patient as “she” or “he”.
- Speak slowly and clearly, using straight-forward language and avoiding jargon, one or two sentences at a time, so that they can be interpreted accurately
- Ensure that everything you say to the interpreter in front of the patient is interpreted
- Try to have a short de-briefing with the interpreter after the session

Please refer to your department or organisational guidelines on how to book an interpreter

Useful Resources :

Health Protection Agency Migrant Health Guide :
<http://www.hpa.org.uk/migranthealthguide>

Children and Young people

Children and young people seeking asylum fall into one of two categories

- **Unaccompanied asylum seeking children**
- **Children and young people in families**

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

The UK Border Agency (UKBA) defines an unaccompanied asylum seeking child as a person who, at the time of making the asylum application:

- is, or (in the absence of documentary evidence establishing age) appears to be, under eighteen;
- is applying for asylum in his or her own right;
- and is separated from both parents and not being cared for by an adult who by law has responsibility to do so.

The Children in Need Duty Team is the first point of contact. They deal with all new requests for help that may need children's social care involvement.

Children in Need Duty Team

Peoples Directorate – Children, Adults and Families
Town Hall
Ince Green Lane
Ince
Wigan
WN3 4QX



01942 828300



: 01942 828320

Useful Resource :

SCIE (2010) Good Practice in Social Care with Refugees and Asylum Seekers. Workforce Development SCIE Guide 37

<http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/guides/guide37/files/guide37.pdf>

Vulnerable women

Some women asylum seekers are especially vulnerable. In conflict areas throughout the world rape is used as a method of warfare and many women are raped violently and repeatedly by soldiers, or in detention. This can have lasting physical and psychological effects, especially if the woman becomes pregnant or becomes infected with HIV as a result. Women who have been subjected to sexual abuse are often very reluctant to disclose details of their attack due to trauma and the shame associated with rape in their culture. Some women who have been raped may be disowned by their families.

Some women come to the UK fleeing domestic abuse, as there is no protection for them in their own countries. They may have endured many years of abuse from various family members before escaping.

Some women come from cultures with strict gender roles and divisions.

Forced Marriage

Forced marriage is primarily but not exclusively violence against women. The majority of cases in the UK involve South Asian families. A number of cases however have arisen in the East Asian, Middle Eastern, European and African countries. Forced marriage can involve a number of different forms of abuse such as emotional pressure and threats, psychological abuse, imprisonment, abduction and rape, these lead to high rates of self harm and mental health problems, including suicide. Many asylum seekers and refugees come from countries where forced marriage is practiced in some parts of their country. Forced marriages have formed the basis of some asylum cases by women, often in combination with domestic abuse.

Support for women who have suffered domestic abuse or forced marriages can be provided through:

Arena Options Domestic Abuse Services

Holly House
PO Box 367
Wigan
WN1 2WX



01942 496094



01942 709516

The service provides a 24 hour helpline, as well as safe accommodation. Parenting support is also available. Access to specialist services for ethnic minority groups is also available.

WAVE



Office 01942 262290



Emergency Helpline 01942 262270



01942 262270



Domestic Abuse Services chris@wavedvcentre.com

Resource Centre info@wavedvcentre.com

The service provides support to women who are victims of domestic violence. Services include a 24 hour helpline

www.wavedvcentre.com

DIAS

Suite 38
Rodney House
King Street
Wigan
WN1 1BT



01942 495230



01942 491477



diasdvc@aol.com

Support, advice and counseling are offered to victims of domestic violence.

Advice Line

Monday – Friday 9am – 4pm

Drop in sessions

Monday – Thursday 10am -1pm

Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking

Women and children can be trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Some women and children are also trafficked so they can be exploited as benefits claimants, or for work. Victims of trafficking are often promised a better life as a result of migration.

Trafficking may have physical and psychological effects on a person's wellbeing and health :

Victims of trafficking may suffer from:

- Anxiety, depression, panic attacks, flashbacks, memory loss, insomnia and nightmares
- Loss of trust as a result of being deceived by someone they trusted, who may have offered 'love and protection'
- Guilt, low self esteem
- Consequences of physical and sexual violence and psychological abuse
- Sexually transmitted infections from unprotected sex
- Alcohol and drug use, sometimes forced
- Fatigue and injury from intense exploitation
- Poor general health

Trafficked women and children who are kept in poor accommodation under close surveillance and relocated frequently have few opportunities to learn English or visit health or any other services. They may also be forced to use a false name when contacting services.

There are also women who choose to come to this country to be sex workers. Some of these may be considered 'trafficked' if their travel is facilitated by someone else, and the conditions they work under in the UK are exploitative and not what they expected. Support for women who have been trafficked is available from the POPPY project:

POPPY Project

The POPPY Project was set up in 2003. It is funded by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform (reporting to the Ministry of Justice) to provide accommodation and support to women who have been trafficked into prostitution and domestic servitude. It has 54 bed spaces in houses nationally.

The POPPY Outreach Service works to improve the safety and wellbeing of women from all over the UK who have been trafficked and who are in need of short-term support and advocacy.

http://www.eaves4women.co.uk/POPPY_Project/POPPY_Project.php



020 7735 2062



020 7820 8907

Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), often referred to as ‘female circumcision’, comprises ‘all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural, religious or other non-therapeutic reasons’ (World Health Organization, 2000). FGM is usually performed on girls between the ages of four and ten but this varies from country to country and it may also happen at birth, in adolescence or before marriage or childbirth. Relatives or Traditional Practitioners are most likely to perform FGM, but health professionals in some countries also undertake it.

FGM can have a detrimental impact on health. The consequences of FGM for women’s physical, reproductive and mental health may include:

- severe pain and trauma
- infection, sometimes chronic, of the pelvic or genitourinary system
- haemorrhaging, sometimes fatal
- damage to reproductive organs sometimes leading to infertility
- increased susceptibility to sexually transmitted infections
- incontinence and urinary retention
- painful intercourse
- sexual dysfunction
- depression
- difficulties during menstruation
- complications in childbirth.

Perinatal Depression

Like all women, female asylum seekers and refugees can experience perinatal depression. This can be compounded by a lack of support networks, if they are isolated from family and friends. This is especially relevant for women who come from cultures where the extended family is very important and women in the community offer a great deal of support, both practical and emotional, to new mothers.

In many cultures there is stigma attached to mental health problems and a woman may be reluctant to admit that she is struggling to cope or bond with her baby. She may be concerned that the baby will be removed from her care if she admits there is a problem or that it will affect her immigration status.

PaNDa (pre and post natal depression support group)

St Luke's Church
Ashton in Makerfield



07771822340 or 07794182466

A support group ran by mums for mum's. This group provides a relaxing, understanding atmosphere. There is an opportunity to meet with health professionals, counselors and a holistic therapist. Free OFSTED registered Crèche facilities are also available. Each session costs £1

Drop in sessions

Every Tuesday (term time only)

<http://pandagroup.org.uk/index.html>

Maternity Services

Asylum seekers and refugees are entitled to free maternity care, which includes antenatal and postnatal care.

Maternity Payment

Parents can apply for a one-off maternity payment of £300 to help with the costs of a new baby. Claimants should apply between 8 weeks before the due date and 6 weeks after the birth. Parents will have to show either a birth certificate or formal medical evidence of the expected delivery date.

Extra Payments

Parents should also receive an extra £5 per week for a baby under 12 months and an extra £3 for a child aged between 1-3 years. Pregnant women can also receive an extra £3 per week. This is to help buy healthy food.

Refused (failed) Asylum Seekers

If a woman is in receipt of section 4 support she is entitled to claim an additional £3 per week during pregnancy and can claim £250 in vouchers 8 weeks before or 6 weeks after the birth. Parents can also claim an additional £5 per week for a child under 12 months and £3 for a child between 1 and 3 years, and £5 per week in clothing vouchers for each child.

Refused asylum seekers are entitled to access maternity care but may be asked to pay for care. NHS guidance states that maternity care is classed as 'immediately necessary care and must not be withheld because the woman is unable to pay in advance'.

Maternity care covers antenatal, birth, postnatal in hospital, postnatal in the community and medication to prevent the transmission of HIV from mother to child.

Care in the community for a baby, such as immunisations, is free.

Medact Maternity Action :

<http://www.maternityaction.org.uk/>

Community Care

The Directorate of People – Adults, supports vulnerable adults in the community by providing social care services which protect them and help them to live independently. This includes: older people; people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities and sensory disabilities; people with mental health problems; people who have a terminal illness; people with chronic ill health; people who misuse substances, such as drugs and alcohol; people who are living with or affected by HIV and AIDS; and carers.

<p>New Referrals</p>	<p>All new requests for help must go through the Central Duty Team – tel. 01942 828777. The service is available from 8.45am to 8pm Monday to Friday, and 8.45am to 1pm on Saturday. Outside these hours, in emergency situations only, tel. 0161 834 2436.</p> <p>The Central Duty Team can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • give information, advice and guidance about services; • arrange for a social worker to contact you to arrange for an assessment of your care needs (and those of carers); or • redirect you to a more appropriate source if we find you are not eligible for services. <p>The governments 'Fair Access to Care Services' criteria is used to determine a person's eligibility for services. There are four bands – those assessed as 'low' or 'moderate' need or risk will not qualify for services.</p>
<p>Starting Point</p>	<p>If you don't qualify for help from Adult Services, we can refer you to Starting Point, which is a helpline run by Age Concern. They can put you in touch with a number of local reputable companies and people who offer services at a reasonable charge, e.g. personal care, cleaning services, shopping services, handymen, lunch clubs, tradesmen, meals-on-wheels, gardeners, cleaning, laundry services, befriending, etc.</p> <p>Tel. 01942 826079 or 825594, 10am to 4pm Monday to Friday.</p>

Directorate of People : Adults

The **BME Carer Support Project** addresses health and social care issues impacting upon unpaid carers from BME communities. Cultural, religious, gender and language barriers sometimes need to be overcome in a sensitive way. The aim is to make it easier for carers to access support, so that they can maintain their caring role, and prevent their own health from deteriorating.

The BME Carer Support Worker can:

- arrange for carers to have a carer's assessment, to see what help they may receive from Adult Services;
- put carers in touch with support groups and the Adult Services' carers support team;
- provide information about a range of free training courses for carers;
- help carers to access a one-off payment from the Carers' Grant, to help provide some respite from caring;
- advocate on behalf of carers if they are having trouble getting what they are entitled to;
- provide details of the GP registration scheme, so that carers can make sure that their own GP knows about their caring responsibilities

The **BME Community Worker** works with BME communities and acts as a liaison between community members and organisations to provide relevant information and sign posting to services. They can also provide advice and information to local services about engaging with local BME communities.

This is done to ensure that BME communities are able to access the services they are entitled to, and to prevent problems arising which would require intervention at a later stage.

BME Carer Support Worker Department of Adult Services Leigh Town Hall Market Street Leigh WN7 1DY Tel 01942 404487	BME Community Development Worker Department of Adult Services Leigh Town Hall Market Street Leigh WN7 1DY 01942 404592
www.wigan.gov.uk (click on Health and Social Care)	

Homelessness and Destitution

The Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 defines a person as destitute if they do not have adequate accommodation or any means of obtaining it; or they have adequate accommodation or the means of obtaining it, but cannot meet other essential living needs. Asylum applicants who are assessed as being 'destitute' can claim asylum support (housing and benefits).

At the end of an asylum claim, whether the asylum claim is positive or negative, destitution can be experienced. If a claim fails, asylum support is withdrawn after which section 4 support may be provided to people if they meet the criteria. Some people find that they cannot be given leave to remain nor can they be returned to their country of origin immediately. Those granted refugee status have asylum support withdrawn after 28 days. These people are also vulnerable to destitution and homelessness as they struggle to find alternative accommodation and employment and enter the normal benefits system. There can be a gap before normal benefits are received. There are also periods in the asylum process in which applicants can lose benefit entitlements, for example due to administrative errors, and face destitution.

Destitution can have a detrimental affect on both the individual's mental and physical health.

Homeless and Vulnerable Persons Service

Orrell Clinic
299-301 Orrell Road
Orrell
Wigan
WN5 8QU



01942 775757

The service offers health advice regarding smoking, drug, alcohol and sexual health, alongside a range of other health issues. Parenting advice, advocacy and support is also offered. An initial health assessment aims to confidentially address physical, mental and social health and assistance is also given in registering with a local GP. The team acknowledges that regardless of age, race, religion, disability or sexual identity, clients should have a safe place to live and free access to health services at the point of need.



Health Services

The National Health Service care is free for asylum seekers and refugees. This includes seeing a doctor and hospital care.



Registering with a GP

People with medical conditions, pregnant women, families with children under the age of 9 months must be taken to register by the housing provider on arrival. Other people can be signposted.

Asylum seekers are allocated a GP when they arrive, through their housing provider and Patient Allocations Department in Preston. Asylum seekers and refugees who do not have a GP can also register at a GP surgery or at the NHS Information Centre :

Bryan House 61 Standishgate Wigan WN1 1AH  01942 482711  www.alwpct.nhs.uk	Address after 8 th August 2011 Wigan Life Centre College Avenue Wigan WN1 1NJ
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If you experience any difficulty registering someone with a GP, you can contact:

Patient Allocations Department LASCA (NHS) 3 Caxton Road Preston PR2 9ZZ Contact: Norma Rowlands  01772 221341  01772 221447
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Help with Health costs

Asylum seekers and dependants claiming support from UK Border Agency (UKBA) are entitled to additional health care costs free of charge with a HC2 certificate, which is issued by the UKBA on behalf of the Department of Health. A HC1 claim form can be used for people not receiving support from UKBA. These give entitlement to:

- Free NHS prescription
- Free NHS dental treatment
- Free NHS wigs and fabric supports
- Necessary travel costs to and from hospital for NHS treatment
- Free NHS eyesight tests
- The full value of an NHS optical voucher towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses

UKBA will issue HC2 certificates to asylum seekers after they claim asylum and when they are being dispersed.

Asylum seekers not supported by UKBA will need to complete form HC1 (claim for help with health costs including prescriptions through the NHS Low Income Scheme (LIS)). Refused (failed) asylum seekers can also apply.

A HC1 claim form can be obtained from the PCT Information centre above. Claims for asylum seekers have been given a priority; therefore a separate postcode printed on white envelopes can be used to send their HC1 claim form (Fast Track System). Order these from Tel. 0845 850 1166.

Refugees access healthcare as UK citizens. An Introduction to the NHS leaflet available in a wide range of languages is available on the Department of Health website.

Health Treatment for Refused (failed) Asylum Seekers

Refused or 'failed' asylum seekers can continue to receive free primary care at the discretion of their GP. However they may fall under overseas visitor's regulations for some hospital care (certain conditions and exceptions apply). Certain services are exempt from charges for everyone, whatever their immigration status in the UK. This is to ensure that everyone has access to emergency care and to protect public health. This includes treatment provided in an Accident and Emergency Department, Walk in Centre, treatment of certain infectious diseases, compulsory mental health care and family planning. Flu immunisations are given to those who are in at risk categories. Legislation is currently under review, and it is proposed to grant free hospital care to failed asylum seekers on Section 4 support.

More information on Overseas Visitors Regulations can be found on the Department of Health website:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/Entitlementsandcharges/OverseasVisitors/DH_836

Dentists

Asylum seekers are entitled to dental health services **free of charge** with a HC2 or HC1 Certificate.




The PCT will direct people to dental practices that are taking new patients or to emergency care if there is a waiting list.

Dentists Bryan House 61 Standishgate Wigan WN1 1AH	Address after 8 th August 2011 Wigan Life centre College Avenue WIGAN WN1 1NJ
 01942 482711	
Urgent/Emergency care If someone is in pain during the day they should contact their own dentist. Anyone who does not have their own dentist should contact the:	
In Hours Dental Access Service  01942 614390	
Emergency Dental Service (Out of hours) times  08456 038504	
Weekdays Monday to Thursday 6.00pm - 8.00am the following morning Friday 6.00am – 8.00am Monday	


Mental Health

For mild/moderate mental health problems referrals should be made to the Gateway and Advice teams. Referrals can be made through self referral or via the GP. There are three teams; referrals should be made to the relevant team depending on their locality.

Gateway and Advice Teams

Wigan	Lower Ince	Leigh
Boston House Frog Lane Wigan WN6 7LB  01942 482130	Claire House Phoenix Way Lower Ince, Wigan WN3 4NW  01942 481300	The Pennington Unit Leigh Infirmary The Avenue WN7 1HS  01942 777628
Opening Hours Monday to Friday 9.00am – 5.00pm		

For severe/enduring mental health problems please contact the Crisis Team:

Crisis Team
The Avenue Day Hospital Leigh Infirmary Leigh WN7 1HS  01942 264536 Open 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week

Homeless & Vulnerable Persons Service

Orrell Clinic
299-301 Orrell Road
Orrell
Wigan
WN5 8QU



01942 775757

An in depth mental health assessment can be provided to assess mental health needs. The Community Psychiatric Nurse can deal with mild/moderate mental health problems. If necessary a referral can be made to the Gateway and Advice Teams or Crisis Team or any associated service.

Children

Social Care's Children in Need Duty Team would deal with children and young people under 18 years. A referral would need to be made to a mental health service via the GP or the duty team. Referrals can be made from 9am to 5pm by telephoning the Children in Need Duty Team. Referrals of an urgent nature between the hours of 5pm and 9am and at weekends and Bank Holidays can be made to the Central Duty Team.

Children in Need Duty Team

People's Directorate Children Adults
& Families
Ince Town Hall
Ince Green Lane
Ince, Wigan
WN3 4QX



01942 828300



: 01942 828320

Central Duty Team

Wigan Council
Hyndelle Lodge
King Street
Hindley
Wigan
WN2 3AW



01942 828777



Specialist Trauma Counseling Services for Asylum Seekers & Refugees:



Spinning World and Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture

(Please see section on Survivors of Torture and Organised Violence)

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If an asylum seeker or refugee has a concern/complaint or compliment regarding the NHS, or needs support to access services they can contact the following services depending on the health issue:

<p>Patient Relations</p> <p>Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust Trust Headquarters, The Elms, Wigan Lane, Wigan, WN1 2NN</p> <p>Contact: Lesley Boyd</p> <p> 01942 822376</p> <p>Patient Advice and Liaison Service for hospital issues</p>	<p>Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)</p> <p>Bryan House 61 Standishgate Wigan WN1 1AH</p> <p>After 8th August 2011 : Wigan Life Centre College Avenue WIGAN WN1 1NJ</p> <p>Contact: Kath Taylor</p> <p> 01942 482956/482869</p> <p>Patient Advice and Liaison Service for GP's, Dentists, Pharmacy & Optician issues</p>
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<p>Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)</p> <p>Bevan House 17 Smithy Brook Road Wigan WN3 6PR</p> <p>Contact: Sharon Sargent</p> <p> 01942 482778/482765</p> <p>Patient Advice and Liaison Service for Community Health Services eg District Nursing, Physiotherapy, & Occupational Therapy</p>	<p>Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)</p> <p>5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust Hollins Park House, Hollins Lane, Winwick, Warrington, WA2 8WA</p> <p>Contact: Dennis Dewar</p> <p> 01925 664450</p> <p>For anyone who has a concern regarding receiving services at the 5 Boroughs, help and support is available</p>
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Responsibility for Asylum Seekers in the UK

The New Asylum Model (NAM) was introduced in May 2005 and fully operational for all new asylum claims since March 2007. The main objective of NAM has been to conclude the majority of asylum cases within six months leading to either integration or removal from the UK. The UK Border Agency (UKBA), part of the Home Office, is responsible for asylum issues. All new cases under NAM are dealt with by individual case owners.

As part of the initial screening process, people are interviewed for basic information, fingerprinted and photographed. Once the identity of the applicant has been confirmed they are issued with an Application Registration Card (ARC), which contains personal details and a photograph. Some people may have a SAL (standard acknowledgement letter) which is valid for two months.

The UKBA considers all asylum applications. Asylum seekers attend for an interview in which they are expected to disclose all aspects of their claim under the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees as well as humanitarian/human rights reasons. Good quality legal advice is important for asylum seekers. Only solicitors, barristers or legal executives regulated by either their own professional body or the OISC (Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner) are legally allowed to provide immigration advice.

Asylum seekers eligible for support are placed in accommodation, and some will be accommodated in Wigan after their initial screening, and receive benefits supported by UKBA. In Wigan accommodation is provided by private housing providers contracted by UKBA.





For more information on the asylum process see:

Home Office : <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/asylum/>

Refuge Council : <http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/>

Housing Providers in Wigan

There are two NASS /NAM Contract Housing Providers who provide accommodation for asylum seekers dispersed to Wigan. The providers are responsible for inducting asylum seekers into properties and signposting them to access key services such as health and education.

Priority Properties NW Ltd	United Property Management
294 Littleton Road Salford M7 3QG	123 Collyhurst Road Manchester M40 7RT
Contact: Wayne Roberts	Contact: Dean Randle
 0161 708 0370	 0161 202 0201
 Wayne.Roberts@ppnwLtd.co.uk	 Dean.Randle@upmgroup.co.uk

Advice & Support

Publically funded legal advice and representation is available for asylum cases. This is obtained from Legal Services Commission (LSC).

Information and free advice on asylum issues is available through:

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

Gerrard Winstanley House
Crawford Street
Wigan
WN1 1NA



01942 241113

6 The Avenue
Leigh
WN7 1ES



01942 267962



admin@wigancab.org

Website: www.wigancab.org

Opening Hours

Monday 9am to 4pm
Tuesday 9am to 4pm
Wednesday 9am to 4pm
Thursday 9am to 4pm
Friday 9am to 4pm

Opening Hours

Monday 9am to 4pm
Tuesday 9am to 4pm
Wednesday 9am to 1pm
Thursday 9am to 4pm
Friday 9am to 4pm

The main organisation for free advice services is the Citizens Advice Bureau, which has two offices, one in Wigan town centre and one in Leigh town centre.

The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) service offers free, confidential, impartial and independent advice on a range of issues, including debt, welfare benefits, housing, employment, family and personal, consumer, immigration and asylum including NASS support.

Immigration Advisory Service

Lower Ground Floor Suite
Cloister House, Riverside
New Bailey Street
SALFORD
M3 5AG



0844 974 4000



manchester@iasuk.org

Website: www.iasuk.org

The Immigration Advisory Service (IAS) gives free advice and assistance on all immigration, asylum and nationality issues to persons eligible for legal aid. They also present appeals against refusal decisions for all who have a right of appeal.

Appointments: Weekly surgery at the Wigan and Leigh Citizen Advice Bureau.

Refugee Action

23-37 Edge street
Manchester
M4 1HW



0800 917 2719 (asylum seekers only)
0161 831 5420 (agencies only)



0161 236 4285

Website: www.refugee-action.org.uk

Refugee Action provides advice to clients at their office and through a free phone helpline.

They give specialised training and have a telephone advice line to support partner agencies working with asylum seekers and refugees.

Opening times for drop in:

Monday	9.30am - 4pm
Tuesday	Closed - Appointments only
Wednesday	Closed - Appointments only
Thursday	9.30am - 4pm
Friday	Closed – Appointments only

Clients should get there earlier than the above times to queue, as only a limited number of people can be let in at once.

Refugee Integration and Employment Service Northwest (RIES-NW)

Refugee Action
23-37 Edge Street
Manchester
M14 1HW



0161 831 5462
Mobile 07500 078144

RIES-NW provides support for refugees in the first year after they get a positive decision to help them access housing and benefits, other mainstream services and to get employment.

The service is only for refugees where the asylum applicant:

- Is over 18
- Is living in the North West
- Made their initial claim after April 1st 2007 and within 12 months of arrival in the UK
- Has been granted refugee status or humanitarian protection after Oct 1st 2008

This excludes refugees given discretionary leave and those where the decision has been taken by the Case Resolution Directorate (Legacy Cases)

Clients eligible for the service are referred directly to Refugee Action by the UK Border Agency. This service is by appointment only. An **advice line** for eligible clients is available on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings from 10.00am to 12.00pm on **0161 831 5498**

Voluntary Return: An asylum seeker, a refugee or person whose application has been refused may decide to leave the UK and return to their home country. It is possible to apply for help to return home through the Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme (VARRP). This is run by Refugee Action in Manchester :

Refugee Action

23-37 Edge street
Manchester
M4 1HW



0800 917 2719 (asylum seekers only)
0161 831 5420 (agencies only)



0161 236 4285

Website: www.refugee-action.org.uk

The service consists of confidential advice and information for people deciding whether to apply for a voluntary return programme. Assistance is provided with travel documents, flight bookings and other practicalities for those who do wish to return voluntarily. This service is for three groups of people who may be considering voluntary return:

- Asylum seekers and refused asylum seekers (VARRP programme)
- Families and children (AVRFC programme)
- Irregular migrants (AVRIM programme)

For further details please see the Refugee Action website:

<http://www.refugee-action.org.uk/ourwork/assistedvoluntaryreturn.aspx>

Contacting Family Members Abroad: Some asylum seekers and refugees have lost contact with family members. The **International Tracing and Message Service of the British Red Cross** can help families who have been separated through conflict, upheaval or natural disaster. www.redcross.org.uk

Social Support

Support for Wigan Arrivals Project (SWAP)

(Previously known as Friendly Faces)

Groundwork Lancashire West & Wigan, 74 - 80 Hallgate,
Wigan, WN1 1HP

Contact : 01942 614486

E-mail: info@swapwigan.org

Website: www.swapwigan.org

Leigh Asylum Seekers and Refugees Support (LASARS)

LASARS Office, Fit 4 Life, King Street, Leigh, WN7 4JL

Drop In : Kingsleigh Methodist Youth Centre Leigh

Contact: Jean Richardson

Tel: **01942 678574**

E-mail: help@lasars.org Website: www.lasars.org

Wigan Welcome

Saturday drop in :

Queens Hall, Methodist Mission,
46 Market Street, Wigan, WN1 1HX

Contact: Jean Parker

Tel: 07832146301

Leigh Community Integration Project (LCIP)

85 Church Street

Leigh

WN7 1AZ

Contact: Julia Mwaluke

Tel: 01942 607186 07956686861

E-mail: leigh.cip@fsmail.net

Lancashire Kurdish Cultural Association (LKCA)

35a Sunderland Place

Marsh Green Wigan

WN5 0QT

Contact: Sulleyman Mohammed

Tel: 07709755149

Useful Resources

Health

Health Protection Agency Migrant Health Guide :

<http://www.hpa.org.uk/migranthealthguide>

Burnett A. Fassil Y. (2002) **Meeting the Health Needs of Refugee and Asylum Seekers in the UK. An Information and Resource Pack for Health Workers.** DH.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4010199

Updated web version of "Meeting the Health Needs of Refugees and Asylum Seekers" Originally published as an information pack by Angela Burnett & Yohannes Fassil in 2002. This online updated resource includes practical information, details of useful contacts and resources and examples of good practice

<http://nrif.homeoffice.gov.uk/Health/SpecialistSupport/index.asp>

HARP (Health for Asylum Seekers and Refugees Portal) provides on-line health information for health professionals and voluntary agencies working with minority communities.

<http://www.harpweb.org.uk>

NW Regional Strategic Migration Partnership : Website contains a wide range of useful resources.

<http://www.northwestsmp.org.uk/index.php/health>

Ashton L. Moore J. (2009) **Guide to Providing Mental Health Care Support to Asylum Seekers in Primary care.** Royal College of General Practitioners

<http://www.mhhe.heacademy.ac.uk/silo/files/guide-to-providing-mental-health-care-.pdf>

Health Translated Resources

NHS

How to use the NHS : See HPA Migrant Health Guide

<http://www.hpa.org.uk/MigrantHealthGuide/GeneralInformation/MigrantsAndTheNHS/ExplainingTheNHS/>

Emergency Multi Lingual Phrase Book British Red Cross

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4073230

Multikulti provides accessible accurately translated advice and information in community languages. Translations are available in 12 languages - Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Farsi, French, Gujarati, Portuguese, Somali, Spanish, Turkish and Urdu.

<http://www.multikulti.org.uk/>

Women's Aid – Domestic Abuse information in various languages. Women's Aid is the key national charity working to end domestic violence against women and children. They support a network of over 500 domestic and sexual violence services across the UK

<http://www.womensaid.org.uk>

General advice and support

Information Centre about Asylum and Refugees in the UK (ICAR)

Founded by Kirsteen Tait in 2000, and initially based at King's College London, is an academic research and information organisation situated in the School of Social Sciences. <http://www.icar.org.uk>

Manchester Refugee Support Network (MRSN) aims to build strong and independent refugee community organisations.

<http://www.mrsn.org.uk/>

Refugee Action provides practical advice and assistance for asylum seekers and refugees

<http://www.refugee-action.org.uk/>

The **Refugee Council** is the largest organisation in the UK working with asylum seekers and refugees. They not only give direct help and support, but also work with asylum seekers and refugees to ensure their needs and concerns are addressed:

<http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk>