Health needs assessment of the dispersed asylum seeker population in Wakefield

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Aims

To provide an overview of the health needs of the dispersed asylum seeker population in Wakefield and their experiences of accessing primary care services.

Methodology

The report includes a review of literature on the health needs of refugees and asylum seekers, analysis of induction centre health data, and data from two focus groups with staff and a survey of 49 asylum seekers and 49 members of the general population.

Key issues

Survey findings cover issues including being understood; knowledge of services; expectations of the health service; access to primary care; and improving services. Responses from asylum seekers are compared with responses from the general population showing differences in expectations of health services and health status. The report provides information on entitlement to NHS treatment and includes the questionnaire used and full findings in appendices.

Conclusions

Use of high cost telephone lines creates inequality of access by asylum seekers. Asylum seekers are more likely to expect to be seen quickly, but may need longer appointments to deal with complex needs. The survey suggests that asylum seekers experience significantly higher physical and mental ill health than the general population.

Recommendations

The report offers detailed recommendations aimed at primary care services focussing on improving equity of access, the need for a different model of access to primary care, mental health needs, improving communication methods, the needs of pregnant women or those with young babies.

Migrant Group
Asylum seekers
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Access to healthcare

Health
Health needs
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