



East London

NHS Foundation Trust

Information Governance

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I am responding to your request for information received 24 October 2024. I am sorry for the delay in responding to your request. This has been treated as a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I am now enclosing a response which is attached to the end of this letter. Please do not hesitate to contact me on the contact details above if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely,

Information Rights Coordinator

If you are dissatisfied with the Trust's response to your FOIA request then you should contact us and we will arrange for an internal review of this decision.

If you remain dissatisfied with the decision following our response to your complaint, you may write to the Information Commissioner for a decision under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Tel: 0303 123 1113
Web: www.ico.org.uk

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Chief Executive Officer: Lorraine Sunduza
Chair: Eileen Taylor

Request: Under the Freedom of Information Act, I would like to request the following information:

Question 1: What outreach support service offers do you have for asylum seekers and refugees in initial accommodation hotels and community-based houses across the region?

How does the model interface with other providers to deliver the service.

Answer: **Community Health Newham (CHN)** – if temporary housing is the patients main address, is registered with a Newham GP they can access Newham community services.
There is no specific asylum seekers service therefore there is no interface with other providers.

East London (EL) (Newham & Tower Hamlets): We don't have an active outreach programme, but in some directorates, our Primary Care nurse within the Primary Care Neighbourhood actively engages with many of these individuals and provides signposting as needed.

Bedfordshire and Luton (B&L): In Central Bedfordshire we have one hotel in Dunstable, the below was put in place to support:
It was agreed that any asylum seekers would access Kingsbury Court GP services for mental health support. The GP would then refer people onto secondary services if required. The referral would be triaged, and a decision made regarding support involving the usual pathways.

Any asylum seekers requiring support outside of the hotel would access through usual processes.

Bedford: Mental health in reach into Sharbrook (asylum seeker hotel provision): This is provided by a senior clinician. Referrals made to primary or secondary care as appropriate. Regular interface with children's services (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT)) to address joint family challenges.

Therapy services within Specialist Children's and Young People's Services (SCYPS): For outreach services the structure varies by team:

- **Community Children's Nursing Service (CCNS):** While CCNS does not have specialized outreach programmes, they do accommodate home visits when necessary to deliver care to children. This flexible approach allows the team to support children's health needs directly in their homes if it is appropriate, and they have done so when required.
- **Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) Early Years Team / Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy:** The Therapy services within SCYPS (Specialist Children's and Young People's Services) collaborates with the Magpie Project to provide support for asylum-seeking families in the borough. This partnership aims to support and work with the families and young children in asylum-seeking families who may be at higher risk of developmental delays due to factors like housing instability, limited access to healthcare, and language barriers.
- **Children's Development Services (CDS):** Currently, CDS does not have a designated outreach service specifically for asylum-seeking



families or similar vulnerable groups. It's unclear if other teams have specialised outreach services, as practices may differ across teams.

Together, these services ensure that while formal outreach programmes are limited, SCYPS teams remain adaptable in their approach, meeting vulnerable families' needs through partnerships, flexible home visits, and responsive care where possible.

Primary Care (PC):

ELFT Inclusion Health Primary Care provides a GP practice in each of the following boroughs:

- Tower Hamlets (Health E1).
- City and Hackney (The Greenhouse).
- Newham (Newham Transitional Practice).

We receive some funding from the Integrated Care Board (ICB) to provide outreach to hostel and contingency hotels from each of these practices. Our model focuses on holistic, accessible healthcare and integrates multi-disciplinary teams to address both physical and mental health needs, working to overcome the unique barriers faced by vulnerable populations. The teams also offer street outreach to engage with any undocumented rough sleepers and refugees and asylum seekers who are street homeless.

Outreach offer includes:

- **Primary Healthcare Access:** Through regular visits and mobile clinics, the centre offers general medical consultations, screenings, and preventive care directly within the accommodation sites. This ensures continuity of care for those unable to travel to central medical facilities.
- **Mental Health Support:** Recognizing the high rates of trauma and stress among asylum seekers, outreach offer mental health screenings, and referrals to specialized mental health providers. They offer culturally sensitive support to accommodate diverse needs.
- **Public Health Interventions:** Teams deliver health education sessions on topics such as hygiene, nutrition, and infectious disease prevention. They also facilitate vaccinations and urgent dental care to improve overall well-being.
- **Peer, Navigation and Advocacy Support:** The centre provides case management to help residents understand and access other social services, including housing, legal aid, and employment support. They also act as advocates for patients within the healthcare system.
- **Virtual Wards:** Health E1 offers virtual ward services through Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) sessions with allied healthcare professionals (HCPs), allowing for a coordinated approach to manage complex health cases remotely. These virtual MDT sessions enable ongoing assessment and support from various specialists, ensuring comprehensive care even when in-person visits may not be possible.
- **Community Health Promotions:** we conduct clinics at day centres to promote health, vaccination programmes, and educational initiatives.
- **Health E1 and Greenhouse work in close partnership with statutory and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSE) organisations to ensure a coordinated approach. There is an infrastructure of formal meetings to support this alongside organic**



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networking and being a point of contact and advice for mainstream GP practices.

Partners include:

- Local Healthcare Providers and NHS Trusts including (Primary Care Networks (PCNs), Acute and Mental Health hospital services.
- PCNs support includes use of Additional Roles Reimbursement Scheme (ARRS) workers and Social Prescribing.
- Charity organisations who in turn work closely with NHS England and UK Border Force to align their services with national health initiatives.
- Community and Voluntary Organisations, collaborating with non-profit organisations such as, Migrant Health, Praxis and Migrants Organise Ltd, who are supporting our patients in the Refugee and Asylum Seeker (RAS) hotels who contact us if they have concerns for our patients.
- Public Health and Local Authority Services to integrate their outreach model into public health frameworks, sharing health data and coordinating emergency responses to address issues like infectious disease outbreaks.

Question 2: What group support programmes do you have for asylum seekers and refugees?

Answer: **EL:** We work with Praxis, a charity supporting migrants, to offer group programmes that adapt based on local needs, facilitated through our Community Psychology team.

B&L: Any asylum seekers requiring support outside of the hotel would access through usual processes.

Bedford: No specific group provision. Access is available to all current group programmes if criteria is met.

The **SCYPS** and **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)** services include a Barts Charity-funded initiative, the HIYA (Healthcare Improvement for Young Asylum Seekers) programmes, specifically designed to support unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people under 18 who are in the care of the local authority. This programme addresses the complex needs of these young people, offering a series of supportive workshops on essential topics such as:

- Sleep Management
- Sexual Health
- Tree of Life (a therapeutic approach focused on resilience and personal growth)

These workshops are available to young people across North-East London, allowing the HIYA team to collaborate extensively with local charities like Dost Centre and health services, including sexual health, to create a well-rounded support network for this vulnerable group.

In terms of outreach within SCYPS:

- SLT Early Years / Occupational Therapy / Physiotherapy: Their primary outreach continues through the partnership with the Magpie Project, providing support to asylum-seeking families.
- Community Children's Nursing Service (CCNS): Though not part of this specific programmes, CCNS remains flexible in delivering care at home for children when needed.



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The HIYA team's programme is a vital addition to SCYPS and CAMHS, helping to bridge health and social support for unaccompanied young asylum seekers in collaboration with community partners.

Primary Care: The Greenhouse Practice ARRS health wellbeing coach has bi-weekly women's wellbeing group and a men's walking and coffee group. They also offer one to one health and wellbeing coaching and Social Prescriber including referrals to the gym. This offer is not exclusive to refugees and asylum seekers however half of newly reregistered patients in 2024 are in Refugee and Asylum Seeker (RAS) accommodation and a minority of registered patients are of UK origin.

The Mental Health Nurse Prescriber offers trauma-informed support to asylum seekers and refugees. This support is initiated when patients present for assistance or if mental health needs are identified during their initial health check. We have a close working relationship with Freedom from Torture, based in Islington.

Talking Therapies (TT): Services are not currently delivering outreach workshops specifically aimed at asylum seekers and refugees, although these cohorts would be able to access services either online or face-to-face.

Question 3: What trauma-based therapy do you provide for asylum seekers and refugees?

Answer: **CHN:** 1.0 WTE Counselling Psychologist for all staff and select patient group i.e., house bound people.

EL: All our usual services are accessible to this population, offering a range of evidence-based interventions, such as EMDR and trauma-focused CBT. We also provide culturally sensitive interventions for post-traumatic stress reactions, including narrative exposure therapy and other collective narrative approaches.

B&L: Any asylum seekers requiring support outside of the hotel would access through usual processes.

Bedford: No specific group provision for this: access is available to all current group programmes if criteria is met. Clinical interventions are trauma informed.

Newham CAMHS: The service can provide trauma-focused Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT), Eye movement Desensitization and Reprocessing therapy (EMDR), narrative therapy (e.g., Tree of Life), and narrative exposure therapy (KIDNET) for children and adolescents up to the age of 18. These services are available to all young people, including those who are seeking asylum or are refugees, but are not specifically designated for these groups.

Primary Care: GP Practices access support from PCN mental health staff and refer on to community / secondary care.

Question 3a: If yes how is this commissioned and funded?

Answer: There is no separate funding for these services.

Question 3b: Does the service operate in isolation or as part of a pathway with other services?



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Answer: **Bedford:** Primary and secondary care services work in collaboration with wider stakeholders.

Question 4: What community mental health wellbeing and support resources do you offer to asylum seekers and refugees?

Answer: **EL:** In Tower Hamlets, we offer group programmes that adapt to local needs, facilitated by our Community Psychology team.

SCYPS: Workshops provided through the HIYA (Healthcare Improvement for Young Asylum Seekers) programmes, are or will be delivered in community settings such as Youth Zones.

Workshops on essential topics such as:

- Sleep Management
- Sexual Health
- Tree of Life (a therapeutic approach focused on resilience and personal growth)

These workshops are available to young people across North-East London, allowing the HIYA team to collaborate extensively with local charities like Dost Centre and health services, including sexual health, to create a well-rounded support network for this vulnerable group.

B&L: Any asylum seekers requiring support outside of the hotel would access through usual processes.

Bedford: Specific support is through Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) community stakeholders.

Question 5: What provision do talking therapies have to respond to requests for support regarding trauma from asylum Seekers and refugees?

Answer: **TT:** Services are available to asylum seekers and refugees who are resident and/or registered with a GP in the relevant area; services accept both self-referrals and professional referrals. Services are able to offer support for service users with trauma and/or PTSD, including trauma-focused therapies such as EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing), Trauma-focused CBT, Trauma-informed relational work and Narrative Exposure Therapy, mostly on an individual basis. Where necessary services work with interpreters to ensure accessibility for service users who are not able to participate in therapies in English. Generally, these therapies are delivered as a stand-alone intervention but where relevant we would signpost to other appropriate services for additional support.

Question 6: What training do staff receive in supporting asylum seekers and refugees?

Answer: The Trust has no specific (Trustwide) staff training for supporting asylum seekers and refugees, however, there is training for staff that work with all service users who may have experienced trauma.

TT: Some of our Talking Therapies staff have attended Evidence Based Therapy for Refugees and Asylum seekers who have experienced trauma. It included adaptations for Trauma Focused-CBT for this population and taught clinicians on how to deliver Narrative Exposure Therapy.

Primary Care: HE1 (Higher Education Grade 1) staff have had “Refugee Rights and Legal Frameworks” training: Education on the rights of asylum



seekers and refugees and the legal frameworks surrounding their care ensures staff can provide informed support and advocacy. (Supported by Primary Care Network - PCN).

Other practices have had no whole team training specific to supporting refugees and asylum seekers but have had general Mental Health First Aid Training, Communication and Safeguarding.

Question 7: What provision is available to access interpreting services and how is this funded?

Answer: The Language Shop (TLS), funded from Trust budgets

Primary Care:

- Language Line – funded by London Borough Tower Hamlets GP Care - Group
- The Language Shop funded by ICB.

Question 8: What joint commissioning arrangements do you have with the local authority for supporting asylum seekers and refugees?

Answer: **TT:** no specific commissioning around this cohort. Services will liaise and work with other services as appropriate to ensure service users can access the most appropriate local support for them.

Primary Care: There are no such arrangements in place. None of the Primary Care provision has been explicitly commissioned for refugees and asylum seekers, rather the provision set up with homeless people and those living in hostels in mind has organically shifted in focus to accommodate/ absorb the needs of this growing population.



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