



Traumatic Stress Wales Conference

March 2022

Mental Health and Wellbeing:

Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Migrants

Introduction



- Policy Background: Supporting asylum seekers, refugees and migrants in Wales
- Migrant voices – opportunity to hear from those with lived experience
- Discussion Session – Traumatic Stress Wales: workstream on asylum seekers and refugees and supporting materials
- Discussion Session: Mental Health Task and Finish Group and proposals to address the unmet mental health needs of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants

Policy Background



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Welsh Government

- Wales is a Nation of Sanctuary
- Mental Health Strategy and Supporting Delivery Plan for Wales: Specific commitments to support vulnerable groups
- Welsh Health Circular (2017): Access to mental health services for asylum seekers and refugees
- Welsh Government Guidance (2018): Health and Wellbeing Provision for Asylum Seekers and Refugees
- New Programme for Government (2021-2026): Commitment to provide effective, high quality and sustainable healthcare AND protect, rebuild and develop our services for vulnerable groups.

New developments



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- Traumatic Stress Wales: People Seeking Sanctuary Workstream
- Race Equality Action Plan: Commitment to establish a Task and Finish Group to support better access to mental health services in Wales amongst minority ethnic communities.
- Additional Task and Finish Group – jointly chaired by the Wales Strategic Migration Partnership and Traumatic Stress Wales – focussing on unmet MH needs
- PHW / TSW Trauma-informed framework – out to consultation



Wales Strategic
Migration Partnership
Partneriaeth Mewnfudo
Strategol Cymru



**Strategic leadership,
advice and coordination on migration.**



Wales Strategic Migration Partnership (WSMP)



- Established in 2001, funded by the Home Office and works with stakeholders in the statutory, voluntary, private and community sectors to provide **strategic leadership, advisory and coordination** function on migration in Wales.
- **Facilitates collaboration and debate** among UK, devolved and local government and public services, voluntary and private sector and all partners with an interest in migration, in support of a strategic approach.
- Contributes to the development and implementation of national, devolved and local migration policy, resolving issues and **influencing and shaping** policy and practice
- Assists in the delivery of services that meet asylum seekers, refugees and migrants' needs across Wales.
- Acts as a conduit for two-way information flow between the Home Office and other government departments and national (UK and Wales) partners

The WSMP staff team - roles:

Refugee Resettlement

Asylum dispersal

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children

Hong Kong BN(O) Visa Scheme

English /Welsh language acquisition

Other cross cutting migration issues



Cross-cutting work

- No Recourse to Public Funds
- Mental Health – with Traumatic Stress Wales
- VAWG
- Safeguarding
- Cohesion

Tim Cymru / Team Wales -

*a collaborative approach to supporting
asylum seekers and refugees in very
challenging scenarios*

- COVID
- Penally MOD Site
- Kabul evacuation-arrivals into bridging accommodation



Pandemic Pressures

- COVID-19 = reduction in asylum -seekers due to **movement restrictions** and **border closures**
- The 'outflow' of people - less than the 'inflow' particularly those arriving by small boat.
- Rapid increase in use of **contingency accommodation** – to fulfil Home Office statutory duty to accommodate



Afghan Resettlement

- *harnessing the Team Wales approach*





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Migration Partnership
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COMFORT BREAK



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Discussion Session

Traumatic Stress Wales People Seeking Sanctuary Workstream

Traumatic Stress Wales



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- National quality improvement initiative funded by WG
- Aiming to improve health & wellbeing of people of all ages living in Wales who have been exposed to traumatic events.
- Co-produced, co-owned and co-delivered by all relevant stakeholders including people with lived experience of traumatic events.
- National Hub within WHSSC, network of locally based services centred around people they are trying to support. Leads appointed across health boards.
- Streamlined, cross-sector care pathways.

People Seeking Sanctuary Workstream



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- Developed to improve access to high-quality mental health support for forced migrants who have experienced traumatic events – including effective and evidence based therapies.
- Works in close collaboration with people with lived experience, as well as colleagues across the public and voluntary sectors.
- Provides a network for sharing good-practice.
- Supporting the creation of culturally-applicable and co-produced resources and training for staff supporting People Seeking Sanctuary.
- Supporting the development of a trauma pathway underpinned by the principles of trauma-informed care.

Afghan Resettlement



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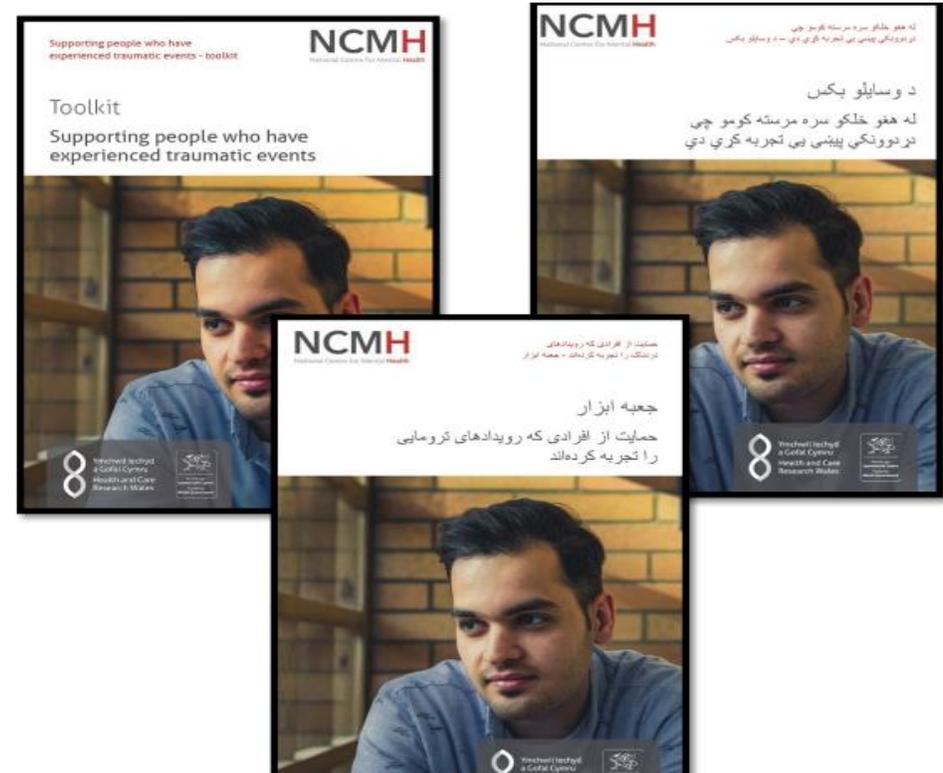
Mental Health:

Links and resources for people supporting recently arrived Afghan Nationals

Given Wales' Nation of Sanctuary pledges, the Welsh Government have committed to accommodate and support Afghan nationals who are leaving Afghanistan following the withdrawal of British and American military personnel in August 2021 via the ARAP (Afghan Relocations & Assistance) Policy. A number of families have already been resettled within Wales, and this number will likely increase.

Further information on the ARAP Policy can be found here: [Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy: further information on eligibility criteria and offer details - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy)

The following document is intended to be a set of potentially useful links to webpages and resources that can be used by families or individuals who have recently arrived in Wales from Afghanistan, or for staff working with this population.



TSW Resources: Stabilisation Tools



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#1



MEHDI - 6



MEHDI REMINDED HIMSELF OF THE THINGS HE WAS GOOD AT AND HIS COURAGE.

HE MET A FRIEND FOR COFFEE AND TALKED TO HIM ABOUT HOW HE WAS FEELING.



HE VOLUNTEERED AT HIS LOCAL MOSQUE...

...AND HELPED OTHER PEOPLE WITH THEIR ASYLUM CASES.

Coproduced Resources



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- A number of forums where there is excellent engagement of people who have sought sanctuary in Wales (e.g. Voices Ambassadors, DPIA Advocacy Forum).
- Support from members of the TSW Workstream to establish a sustainable group of individuals who can actively support the development of resources.
- Traumatic Stress Wales Reference Group now in place.



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Listening and learning from those with lived experience



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Key Questions for Discussion:

- Views on the TSW resources and materials to be developed for Wales?
- Views on TSW training and stabilisation materials?
- Other ideas on what people may need to support mental health?



Discussion Session

Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Migrants Mental Health Task and Finish Group Proposals

Proposals are being developed by the Task and Finish Group to address the unmet mental health needs of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants.

Key challenges:

- Lack of a cross-sector, strategic, co-produced, whole-system approach
- Lack of understanding/awareness of (and sensitivity to) cultural issues, the asylum and migration settlement processes and impacts / conscious and unconscious bias
- Limited services / pathways, especially for people with lower-level needs
- Lack of cross-sector communication, engagement, co-ordination and understanding of each other's services and roles
- Lack of specific consideration of children's needs
- Lack of provision of interpretation services
- Lack of capacity at all tiers
- Lack of flexibility in the current pathway to access mental health services

PROPOSAL: Health Boards in Wales are asked to develop proposals to test new ways of working locally that adhere to the principles agreed by the Task and Finish Group.



These principles are:

- A cross-sector/discipline, strategic, co-produced, whole-system and sustainable approach to be adopted.
- Establishment of a Reference Group formed of people with lived experience of being an asylum seeker and/or refugee/migrant who can be consulted on as the approach develops.
- Pathway for accessing support – to be trauma-informed and culturally-informed.
- Pathway to consider the impacts of the systemic shock of the pandemic to staff and service users, and the increased and exacerbated risk and the impact of trauma.
- Education / training and other work will be undertaken to improve understanding and awareness of, and sensitivity to, cultural and gender issues, the asylum and migration settlement processes, conscious and unconscious bias.
- Facilitation of cross-sector communication, engagement and co-ordination of service delivery at local regional level, linking into relevant national structures.

Key Questions for Discussion:



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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

- What are your views on the unmet mental health needs of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants?
- What are your views on the proposals currently being developed?
- What are the current strengths of the proposals?
- Are there any gaps?

THANK YOU!



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