

Country: Denmark

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No. Asylum seekers 2007	No. of persons granted protection	No. of NGOs'/GOs' offering mental health services	No. of NGOs'/GOs' working with persons with broken family links	No. of NGOs'/GOs' working with survivors of torture	No. of NGOs'/GOs' working with the elderly and frail
2246	1278	9	1	6	1

Access to health system: The Danish Red Cross Asylum Department takes care of approximately 90% of the total population of asylum seekers coming to Denmark. In every asylum centre there is a health care clinic, where medical care is provided by physicians and nurses. Asylum seekers can also go to the public hospitals for emergency cases, but not for treatment of permanent diseases, physical or mental. Once (or if) recognised as refugees they are entitled to the whole scale of public health care including mental health care (unless a few regulations on dentist care).

Legal Access to mental health care:

Different answers from different organisations show that there is not a clear right to access: The Red Cross states that only refugees have legal right, whereas the Immigration Service answers:

"According to the law an asylum seeker has a right to "necessary health care". The term "necessary health care " is not specifically defined in the law. It the professional medical staff in the accommodation centres, who make the assessment whether (and which) health care is necessary for an asylum seeker." Recognises refugees, however, are fully entitled to access all (mental) health services.

Systematic assessment of mental health needs:

Physicians from the Danish Red Cross can refer asylum seekers for specialist medical treatment according to guidelines from the Danish Immigration Service. A maximum of five consultations for physical illness and three consultations for mental illness requires no additional administrative steps to be taken. But if an asylum seeker needs more than five/three specialist consultations the referrals for the additional consultations have to be approved by the Danish Immigration Service, which provides the funding for these treatments.

Main stakeholders in the asylum system:

- Immigration Service
- Danish Red Cross
- Danish Refugee Council

Country specific features: What drew my attention? Almost all centres are run by Danish red Cross. Special accommodation centre for person with psychological/psychiatric problems (Kongelunden).

Difficulties: Obviously no clear regulation regarding the legal access to mental health care.