Therapeutic Services
Supporting and Empowering Asylum Seekers and Refugees
Four Phases of the Refugee Experience

Understanding the experience of refugees and asylum seekers is at the heart of all we do, which starts with an appreciation of their complex needs at four stages they go through (Papadopoulos, 2002). To respond to these, the Refugee Council provides support through political advocacy and front line services.
We Work with Clients in Phase 3 & 4
Asylum Seeker
Refugee Status

HOMELAND
phase of apprehension of loss due to possibility of persecution

REBUILDING
phase of relief at safety in host country and sadness of loss of homeland
Symptoms of Depression

Grief: Multiple Losses 1) Can’t believe won’t see home 2) Anger projected in (depression)
Loneliness: Loss of cultural support system (family and friends). Incompatibility with other refugees.
Host country barriers: Foreign language, different climate and customs. Lower self esteem:
Reduced social status: Top professionals without language work as labourers.
Grief, Loneliness, Lower self esteem may cause Depression.
Symptoms of Anxiety

Anxiety: Those who are traumatised can be triggered by past stimuli, such as uniforms (like their torturers) creating internal panic. PTSD: Avoiding stimuli associated with trauma. Paranoia: Home country persecution triggered by Host country authority figures. Asylum seekers: constant fear of being apprehended and deported.
Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

A recent Asylum Seeker will have usually made a very challenging journey often risking life and limb. For this reason physiological needs of food and water may need medical interventions due to dehydration and illness which leads into the second level of safety, the physical integrity of the body and housing to shelter. Then belonging, claiming asylum having become an exile, and because of this the next level to regain self esteem
REFER TO A DOCTOR

Disability
Injuries

Physical
Health

PHYSIOLOGICAL
REFER FOR NASS ACCOMMODATION
REFER TO SOLICITOR

BELONGING

Asylum Application
First Claim
Appeal if refused
Fresh Claim if Appeal is refused
PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES
Therapeutic Services

Suicidal
PTSD
Depression
Self Harm
Anxiety

Mental Health

SELF-ESTEEM

SELF-ACCEPTANCE
**BASIC NEEDS MET**

- **Physiological**
- **Safety**
- **Belonging**
- **Self-Esteem**
- **Self-Actualization**
- **Mental Health**
  - Suicidal
  - PTSD
  - Depression
  - Self Harm
  - Anxiety

- **Destitution**
  - Disability Injuries

- **Asylum Application**
  - First Claim
  - Appeal if refused
  - Fresh Claim if Appeal is refused
PHYSIOLOGICAL
SAFETY
BELONGING
SELF-ESTEEM
SELF-ACTUALIZATION
Immigrant
Immigrant
THERAPEUTIC SERVICES ISSUES

- Mental Health
  - Suicidal
  - PTSD
  - Depression
  - Self Harm
  - Anxiety

- Physical Health
  - Disability
  - Injuries

- Pregnant & New Baby

- Child Protection

- Destitution

- Detention

- Asylum Application
  - First Claim
  - Appeal if refused
  - Fresh Claim if Appeal is refused

- Torture
  - Sexual Exploitation
  - Domestic Abuse
  - Bonded Labour
  - Child Labour
  - Organ Exploitation

- Trafficking
  - Sexual Exploitation
  - Sexual Abuse

- FGM
We meet them at a vital stage...

... the survival phase of their journey
It’s scary looking back...

...especially without refugee status
It’s scary looking forward...

...especially if the land of milk and honey isn’t
Our three core principles help with these...

...starting with a good relationship
A therapeutic relationship of trust...

...creates the possibility to tell their story
We bear witness to their persecution...

...and check with them that it’s accurate
We fill in whatever they need to know...

...through psycho-education
Key learning at Initial Accommodation...

...moment of trust, unpack, normalise
A typical assessment session...

20 minutes

if client feels heard and is assured confidentiality

build trust
therapist needs to connect to client for client to connect to their concerns

client’s story
holistically identify issues client brings as important therapist applies trauma grid sees issues that are missing

psycho-educate
offer empowerment for issues important to client prioritise client’s basic needs check if client knows first

strengths
resilience
asylum case
housing
medical health
Map out client’s basic needs... to check physical & psychological safety
Support or Empower

traumatised
  support

resilient
  support and empower

strong
  empower
Introduction to Our Client
In Conclusion

Therapeutic Services

- Take refugees seriously as competent interpreters of their own lives
- Offer a holistic approach with integrated programmes of social, emotional and psychological help
- Demonstrate receptivity towards culture
- Recognise the impact of ongoing events on refugees' lives
- Focus on empowerment through ownership and participation
- Engage with family and meaningful others
- Seek to enhance refugees own capabilities (Watters, 2008)