

Do Refugees or Asylum Seekers have access to your services?

A **Refugee** is someone who has successfully applied for asylum and is allowed to stay in the country having proved they would face persecution back home. Successful applicants may also receive Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave.

An **Asylum Seeker** is someone who has left their country of origin and formally applied for asylum in another country, but whose application has not been dealt with yet.

A **'Failed' Asylum Seeker** is someone who has been unsuccessful in their appeal for asylum and has exhausted all appeal routes.

They **are not** economic migrants or illegal immigrants.

There is a certain amount of confusion regarding the availability of treatment and the rights of Refugees and Asylum Seekers. We hope that this guide will help clarify some of these issues.

Is communication a problem?

If a **language barrier** exists, you should arrange for an **interpreter**. **This is paid for by NHS Kingston** and not the clinic/surgery.

Please bear in mind that family members or friends acting as interpreters may hinder the person from discussing sensitive issues with their health or social care professional and may compromise confidentiality.

If needed immediately, an interpreter can be arranged to interpret over the telephone.

For an appointment, an interpreter should be booked to come in person.

Contact **Kingston Interpreting Services** to arrange an interpreter or if you have any queries regarding interpreting, on **020 8547 5822**.

Unsure of eligibility to NHS treatment?

Refugees and asylum seekers have the same rights as other people to access all health and social care services and therefore are eligible to register with a GP for free.

'Failed' asylum seekers are also eligible to be treated as NHS patients by GP practices.

Uncertain whether the ID shown is valid?

There are a variety of documents that are given to Asylum Seekers and Refugees by the Home Office that confirm their status.

Please bear in mind that Refugees and Asylum Seekers are not always aware of what their status means to them.

The Home Office regularly holds documents of asylum seekers for long periods of time.

This leaflet was developed by the Equalities and Community Engagement Team, and follows Department of Health guidance (**correct as of June 2009**), and has been endorsed by the NHS Kingston Primary Care Team. For more information please contact Phil Murwill (Community Development Worker for Refugees and Asylum Seekers) on 020 8547 6053, or email phil.murwill@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

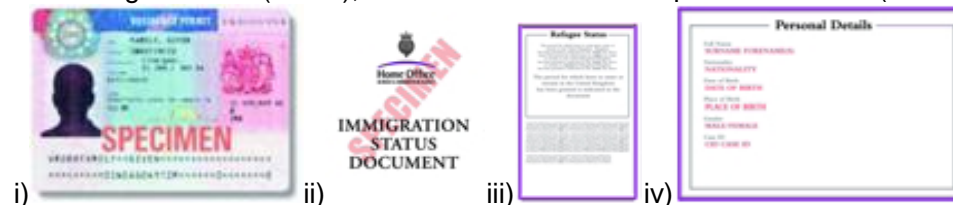
IS96 – This letter is given by the Home Office and details that the individual has an asylum case pending. This is given to Asylum Seekers at their port of entry.

Application Registration Card (ARC) – This shows that the person has made an application for asylum. An ARC is a credit card sized document issued to asylum applicants after screening to show that they have applied for asylum.



Specimen of an Application Registration Card (ARC)

Immigration Status Document – An Immigration Status Document (ISD) is given to an applicant following the grant of leave where no passport is held or where it would not be appropriate to endorse a national passport. The ISD provides details of the applicant, length of leave in the UK and may indicate their status (Refugee, Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave). It is an A4 piece of paper with information split into four quarters. One is a colour, passport-style ID with details and photo (see image i below), one shows the document title (see ii), another explains their refugee status (see iii), and a fourth shows their personal details (see iv).



NASS 35 - This document states that the holder has received a positive decision on their asylum application and has refugee status.

Travel Document – This is a passport style ID that somebody with refugee status can obtain.



Examples of travel documents

If you come across issues that are not dealt with by this leaflet please contact Phil Murwill (details at the bottom of the page).