

Pharos:
Long-term Plan Undocumented Migrants and Health

Pharos is a Dutch knowledge centre that is specialised in the field of refugees, migrants and health care. Pharos passes on practice oriented, applicable specialist knowledge to care providers and other intermediaries who work with refugees and migrants. Pharos does this at both national and international level. The purpose of this is to promote the health of these groups and to improve the accessibility, and quality of care and the facilities.

The Klazinga committee works on clarification of the concept of *medically necessary care* and the development of handles and criteria for practical implementation of this concept.

In the Netherlands there are an estimated 125 to 225 thousand undocumented migrants (Leerkes e.a. 2004). They are generally in a worse state of health than people with a residence permit. It is regulated by law that undocumented migrants should receive medically necessary care, even if they cannot pay for it themselves. In practice however it appears that their access to care still leaves much to be desired. The most important reason for this is the inadequate financing of this care and the lack of knowledge about the regulations on the part of the care providers and the target groups themselves.

In order to change this Pharos is developing a number of products and services. For instance Pharos is developing, in co-operation with Doctors of the World and the University of Nijmegen, a medical file for undocumented migrants for the purpose of guaranteeing the proper handing over to other care providers and the continuity of the treatment. Furthermore Pharos runs the secretariat of the Klazinga Committee (Commissie Klazinga). The Klazinga Committee consists of the representatives of medical professional groups (general practitioners, specialists, hospitals etc.). This committee works on clarification of the concept of medically necessary care and the development of handles and criteria for practical implementation of this concept. Pharos also accommodates Lampion, the national information and advisory point that was set up to provide information to care providers. During this “Access to Health Care for Undocumented Migrants” conference Lampion is being brought to the more specific attention of the public, see leaflet. In addition, the co-workers of Pharos regularly organise meetings about the theme undocumented migrants. Pharos regularly issues publications about the care provided for undocumented migrants written by authoritative authors. One example of these is the publication by Van den Muijsenberg “Sick and no papers: Health care for people without valid residence papers” (Pharos 2004). Pharos is going to further explore the state of affairs surrounding the care provided for undocumented migrants in a number of Dutch municipalities. In addition, Pharos will examine to what extent an integral approach concerning undocumented migrants is desirable. Over the period to come extra attention will be paid to vulnerable groups, in particular to illegal children and illegal women.

For more information

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When developing products and services, Pharos collaborates with other relevant Dutch organisations such as Dokters van de Wereld (Doctors of the World), the LOS foundation (National Support Point for Undocumented Migrants), University of Nijmegen, and several umbrella organisations for medical practitioners LHV(the National Association of General Practitioners) , KNMG (Royal Dutch Society for the promotion of Medicine), GGZ(Mental Health Care). GGDs (Local Area Health Authorities).