



Home Office

AUTHORITY: The Secretary of State for the Home Department

Statement of Requirements

Mindfulness Training

Date: June 2023

1. Background

- 1.1. Research is clear that asylum seekers and refugees suffer higher rates of depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and psychosis, and suicide rates are higher for refugees.¹
- 1.2. For the majority of vulnerable asylum-seeking adults, the Home Office does not hold statutory responsibility for identifying and providing access to mental health services. The Home Office's focus is on identifying vulnerable customers and escalating issues of concern to relevant statutory authorities, including social services and medical practitioners. We support and encourage registration with a GP which will ensure the customer is on the pathway towards formal medical support for their needs. Registration with a GP is voluntary however and as such some customers may not start their health journey whilst awaiting a decision on their asylum claim.
- 1.3. The Home Office is committed to supporting and stabilising the mental health and wellbeing of vulnerable asylum seeking adults to reduce the likelihood of harm to the individual or wider society. Most recently (2022) this commitment has been reflected by the provision of the Asylum Seeker Therapeutic Support Grant.
- 1.4. By way of supplement and to prevent the escalation of mental health issues in asylum accommodation, in August 2022 the Home Office Mental Health and Wellbeing Team commissioned the Home Office's Policy and Innovation Lab (Colab) to conduct user-centred research into how to improve mental health and wellbeing in initial asylum accommodation.
- 1.5. The report was completed and presented in January 2023 with recommendations addressing the following key areas:
 - 1.5.1. Sleep;
 - 1.5.2. Purpose and Activity;
 - 1.5.3. Agency;
 - 1.5.4. Certainty and Transparency;
 - 1.5.5. Community; and
 - 1.5.6. Direct Mental Health Support.
- 1.6. One of the recommendations is to 'provide mindfulness education and support' and so this contract will provide the opportunity to align both with the Home Office goal to protect vulnerable people and communities and existing provision of the Asylum Therapeutic Support Grant.

¹ Refugee Mental Health paper for Home Office, Dr Kerry Young and Dr Nick Gray, 2019

¹ Brewin, C., Andrews, B. and Valentine, J.D. (2000). Meta-Analysis of Risk Factors for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in Trauma-Exposed Adults. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 68(5), 748-766

¹ Chen, Hall, Ling & Renzaho, 2017. Post migration factors and mental health outcomes in asylum seeking and refugee populations

¹ Silove, Steel, McGorry and Mohan, 1998. Psychiatric symptoms and living difficulties in Tamil asylum seekers¹ Laban et al, 2008 The impact of long asylum procedure on quality of life, disability and physical health in Iraqi asylum seekers in the Netherlands

¹ Laban et al, 2006

2. Detailed Requirements

- 2.1. The Supplier will deliver the Mindspring Programme to three separate cohorts of ca. 15 residents at three separate initial accommodation sites each over a period of between 4-8 weeks.
- 2.2. The Mindspring Programme will be delivered on-site jointly by trainers with a welfare and refugee background in the language of participants.
- 2.3. The Mindspring Programme will entail one information session and seven 2-hour sessions each ending with relaxation exercises. Topics covered will include:
 - 2.3.1. A normal reaction to an abnormal situation;
 - 2.3.2. Stress, stress symptoms, and the vicious cycle;
 - 2.3.3. How to cope/deal with stress;
 - 2.3.4. Loss and mourning;
 - 2.3.5. Identity;
 - 2.3.6. Cultural differences;x`
 - 2.3.7. A spring towards the future.
- 2.4. The Supplier will provide a robust set of criteria for resident participation that ensures clear and rigorous criteria for how people get involved in the Mindspring Programme. This will include:
 - 2.4.1. how people are informed;
 - 2.4.2. how do people opt-in; and
 - 2.4.3. the prioritisation process if there's more demand than capacity.
- 2.5. The Supplier will set out practical requirements to ensure appropriate facilitation of the Mindspring Programme.
- 2.6. The Supplier will ensure that trainers follow agreed safeguarding protocols in the event that a safeguarding issue arises.
- 2.7. The Supplier will work closely with evaluation partners to agree and apply a rigorous evaluation approach.

3. Measurable Outcomes

- 3.1. Improvement in the mental health of asylum seekers;
- 3.2. Strength of feelings of social and cultural connection;
- 3.3. Self control over individual wellbeing;
- 3.4. Better capacity to engage with asylum process;
- 3.5. Better targeted safeguarding referrals; and
- 3.6. Reduction in costs and risk associated with mental health driven high profile notifications.