

Young Health Programme in Norway

Undocumented immigrants living in Oslo are being severely underserved in terms of the access they have to health services and information.

This has a knock on impact on the children of these immigrants who fear seeking medical help given their illegal status.

Since access to health services is vital to preventing and alleviating human suffering, the 'Health Centre' was established as a humanitarian response to these needs.

Partnering with the Norwegian Red Cross, the Young Health Programme in Norway took place between 2011 and 2014 and focused on improving the health of young people, within this section of society, through the services of the Health Centre.



AstraZeneca 

Young Health Programme

A global community investment initiative

in partnership with



Røde Kors

Young Health Programme in Norway



‘Irregular migrants’ is a term used to describe individuals who do not have a legal permit to stay in a given country and who, for a wide range of reasons, choose to stay or feel obliged to stay in that given country. Many irregular migrants are failed asylum seekers, however this group also includes other migrants such as victims of trafficking or labour migrants without a valid visa.

What did we want to achieve through the Programme?

The Health Centre is a volunteer run service implemented by the Norwegian Red Cross and the Church City Mission. It was set up in 2009 with the aim of improving and strengthening the physical and psychological health of undocumented migrants. Since its opening, it has seen a steady increase of patients, many of whom are adolescents. It is believed that many young people are negatively impacted by their parents’ status as undocumented immigrants.

Objectives:

- Provide undocumented immigrants with access to basic health services
- Provide them with relevant and useful health information to support their health needs
- Help to increase awareness about the health status of undocumented immigrants by sharing information, knowledge and experience with other stakeholders

What activities took place locally?

- Offering access to regular healthcare services to all undocumented migrants at the Health Centre or through the public health system
- Providing specific support to adolescents including the introduction of group therapy sessions, homework help and support, and a telephone helpline for adolescents who find themselves in trouble

- Providing opportunities for AstraZeneca employees to get directly involved, for example, by volunteering at the centre and organising collections of warm clothes for the people living rough in the winter
- Committing to share relevant knowledge and experience between all partners; for example, AstraZeneca Norway will share information on the work done around Tuberculosis, a subject area particularly relevant to this group

What has been achieved?

More than 375 adolescents registered at the Health Centre, with many attending multiple consultations. In addition to these normal consultations, the centre also provided group therapy for adolescents with mental health issues.

Local partner

The Programme was a three year partnership with the Norwegian Red Cross. The Red Cross is an international humanitarian relief agency, with Red Cross or Red Crescent societies in 187 countries. The basic principle of the organisation is the protection of human life and rights in order to work towards worldwide peace. The Red Cross assists all those who are in need, irrespective of race, religion or ideology. The Norwegian Red Cross is a modern, nationwide organisation which has around 170,000 members. The relief work carried out is comprehensive, ranging from caring for the elderly, sick and lonely to providing a prison visitor service, mountain rescue service, working with people with Aids and providing an emergency telephone helpline for children and the young.