



Psychotherapeutic care of refugees in Sweden

Aline Braun

Mikaela Lindström

The current situation in numbers

- Sweden has 10 million inhabitants
- ca 1,7 million persons born abroad
- 162 877 asylum seekers in 2015
- 28 939 asylum seekers in 2016

- New, temporary, migration law from june 2016 in order to restrict the number of asylum seekers
- Recent study shows poor mental health in 30-40% of asylum seekers (Tingshög et al 2016)

Health care rights in Sweden

- Refugees (or anyone) with a permanent residence permit have the same rights to health care as citizens of Sweden
- Asylum seekers have a right to emergency care, dental care, maternal care and “health care that can not be postponed”
- People without necessary permits (undocumented migrants) have the same rights to subsidized health care as asylum seekers (since 2013)
- In addition the region is given the ability to provide health care up to the same level as for residents for asylum seekers and undocumented migrants
- Children regardless of legal status has the same rights to health care as children who are citizens

Organization of psychotherapeutic care in Sweden

- In Sweden health care is organized at the regional (county) level (access to trauma treatment may differ depending on where you live)
- Most of the health care provided to asylum seekers and refugees are at the primary care level
- Refugees have less access to specialized treatment and psychotherapeutic interventions
- No general funding for psychotherapy in private settings

Swedish guidelines/best practice

- No national guidelines regarding psychotherapeutic care for refugees
- National guidelines are focused on specific diagnoses
- Regional guidelines in some counties, either on care of trauma related diagnoses or general health care for asylums seekers/refugees

Swedish guidelines/best practice

- In the anxiety guidelines for Stockholm county (2011), it is stated that all patients with PTSD should be offered trauma focused psychotherapy (TF-CBT or EMDR)
- Guidelines for psychiatric care for asylum seekers in Stockholm county from 2009 states that care should be based in the need for care and not legal status