Dear Ms McKelvie

Destitution and Asylum Inquiry

Thanks for your letter of 31 January 2017.

The Scottish Ambulance Service is a Special Health Board providing scheduled, unscheduled and anticipatory care for patients from all groups in remote, rural and urban communities across Scotland.

Please see our responses to the specific questions below.

1. As a public service provider, what support are you able to provide to asylum seekers and those with insecure immigration status. Also what are the main barriers to providing support in these circumstances.

Our contact with asylum seekers and those with insecure immigration status in general terms is limited. However through our engagement work we have worked recently with Syrian refugees in the Glasgow area to raise awareness of our service, how NHS Scotland services can be accessed and what details are required should there be a need to call 999. We are mindful that public engagement work is limited and can reach only those who are able to attend events and can pass on information to others. Working jointly with colleagues in other public authorities has helped us to extend our reach and overcome this barrier to some extent. In this way participants at events are able to access information across a range of services.
2. We’d also like to hear about how an asylum seeker or a person with insecure immigration status’ need for support is assessed and what would make this assessment process easier, please make reference to any policies and procedures within your organisation.

We do not assess need for support in this way. Treatment is provided as appropriate for anyone using the services of the Scottish Ambulance Service.

3. If your area does not have experience of asylum seekers or dealing with people with insecure immigration status, it would be helpful to know what training, policies, guidance or procedures are in place, or being developed, to address support should it need to be provided in the future.

Our guidance is limited to engaging with communities and providing information regarding our services in different languages as appropriate.

Yours sincerely

Pauline Howie OBE
Chief Executive