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Federal Office of Public Health FOPH

Health Equity

Mental health support for refugees: can we do better?

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Zürich Spirit Symposium, 26 May 2023 _ Scalable psychological interventions: Quo Vadis?



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What do we know (FOPH research project)

INTERFACE Politikstudien, “Mental health of traumatized asylum seekers: current situation and recommendations”, 2018 (Müller et al.)

- There are no national data for traumatized asylum seekers requiring care
 - The number of people with such needs ranges from 10% to 70%. (according to experts)
- > Recommendation to strengthen early detection
- > Recommendation to strengthen resilience factors and reducing risk factors



What do we know – apart from what we can learn in existing studies

- **No systematic data collection** on mental health issues (and factors contributing to health issues such as housing, integration) for asylum seekers in Switzerland
- **First consultations** with a doctor by asylum seekers **is optional** at the federal asylum center level (they can wish to see a doctor, but it's not standard)
- **No information on existing plans at cantonal level** to scale up Psychological Interventions in Refugees In Switzerland
- For now, there is **no current mandate and resources to the federal administration** to tackle this issue.
- **FOPH and SEM will examine in 2024 existing offers for specific target groups for the psychiatric/psychological care of asylum seekers** (BSS study, Formative evaluation of health care for asylum seekers: 2023)



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Can we do better?



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Thank you!

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