Ms Lora Pullicino
Malta

Guaranteeing asylum seekers’ right to care: the role of midwives and nurses
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LORA PULLICINO
Different Routes
Between 2002-2013, Malta received an average of 1,700 annually through the irregular migration sea route from Libya (central Mediterranean route).
Arrivals in Malta

Boat Arrivals

Non-Boat Arrivals
Granted International Protection

- 2002: 50%
- 2012: 100%
- 2013: 100%
- 2014: 60%
- 2015: 80%
“We were working for health promotion and they said it’s not allowed because it is a European concept. I was physically attacked and one of my friends was killed. We were in a car together and my friend was shot. I was very scared, really, that day. I could not forget my friend. I could not. My psychological state was very bad really, so I couldn’t stay in that place.”

24 year old, nurse
The Journey

“A lot of guys were drinking and fighting. One night one Sudanese man and Somali, I don’t know, they started fighting and then the Libyan come, and he killed four of them in front of us. With the gun – ch, ch, ch [shot them]. One of my friends get bullet in here, he was injured. I gave him first aid, but with what? With nothing. Just boiled water with salt and a piece of cloth. That’s all....”

24 year old, Nurse
Trauma does not end here...

“Because there were many friends died in the sea. The boat sank - they cut the wire. 320 people they dead in the sea in front of us. And really, to tell you the truth, me also I scared. I said, ‘Why you are throwing yourself by the problem? If they are sinking you can’t do anything, you can’t save them.’

But still, when I sleep in the night I see them in my dreams, and I wake up crying, really. The people that you were eating together on place, you were talking which country you will go, I don’t know... they have a lot of dreams – he wants to go to study, he wants to go to work, he wants to go... I don’t know. Everyone have a dream to do. All of them are.... [dead] Yes. But god thanks, save me, save my friends, in the same boat.”

24 year old, nurse
Access to health care

- Restrictive rules on entitlement
- Unreasonable bureaucratic documentary requirements
- Lack of knowledge of asylum seekers’ rights to access healthcare
- Negative attitudes from health professionals
- Language barriers
Health Service

- In depth Cases
- Accompany Hospital & Private clinics
- Maintain & Liaising with other health Professionals
- Medicine Preparation & Purchasing
- Hospital & Home Visits
- Assessment of Health Needs
Multidisciplinary Team

Health

- Legal
- Cultural Mediators
- Administration/Pastoral Care
- Physico/Social
Lesson Learnt

• Challenging Experience
• Advocate for the rights of vulnerable persons
• Addresses not as patients but human beings
Recommendations

• Health Professionals – Advocate
• Dare to be a voice for the voiceless
• Work and liaise with NGO’s
• Aware of the right to health for all
“It’s a really difficult question. If they give me option that I now, if I go back to 2015, and I know that I will saw many troubles, many difficulties many sufferings in that way, really I will take a First Aid box and I will come again by that way. When I finished the University, no one take me to swear. I took my sister and said just let me I want to swear on the Holy Koran, that I will do everything I can. And from the time that I swore I really tried my best. I have done everything to do my job. Yes, I will come the same way. My only regret is that I didn’t take one Panadol with me. I am not angry that I stayed without food, water. No. I feel pain on my inside for people who dies for careless [carelessness?], who died without health promotion or prevention or help. I can’t forget it. So I will come that way yes, but I will take some water and a First Aid box. Because everyone who is coming that way really has dreams, and he wants all of the dreams to come true. I will help them to stay alive to come true all their dreams, really.”

24 year old, Nurse

Should we not aspire to be like her?
Statistics quoted from UNHCR - Malta

info@jrsmalta.org
http://www.jrsmalta.org
Thank You