

Topic guide

Introduction

My name is Alexandra Tsaparas; I am a master's student of Medicine at the Radboud University of Nijmegen, The Netherlands. I am doing my research internship at the University of Crete, Greece.

My research aims to investigate the care provided to undocumented migrants in primary care settings, with a special focus on mental healthcare. This research will consist of interviews with general practitioners to analyse their experiences and opinions on this subject.

The following topics will be discussed:

- General data regarding yourself as medical professional and your GP practice
- Registration of patient data
- Communication between you as a GP and the undocumented patient
- Need for healthcare for the undocumented patient
- Problems you encounter in providing care for undocumented patients
- The continuity of healthcare
- Effects of current economic crisis on providing healthcare

The interview will last approximately 45 min to 1 h. At the end, there will be an opportunity to ask additional questions or make remarks if you have the feeling there is more information to add.

We would like to record this interview for later analysis. After analysis, the interview will be deleted from the recorder and eventually removed from the computer files after file years. The obtained information will only be used for this study. We will be discrete with the given information, your name (or the name of others) will not be used in our article, all information will be anonymized.

Is there anything left unclear?

Do you give your permission to record this interview?

Then we will start now with the interview.

General data of GP practice

First, I want to know some general information about your practice.

What is your profile as a GP?

(Age, gender, work setting like own practice/together with other GP, part-time/full-time, etc.)

How many patients approximately do you see in your practice every month?

(A) How many of them are migrants?

(B) How many of them are undocumented migrants?

(C) How many undocumented migrants consult your practice in a year?

1. How would you describe the composition of your patient population?
(Age groups, nationalities, occupations, socio-economic status, etc.)

2. How do undocumented patients know your GP and how do they come here?

3. Where do you see the undocumented patients (at your GP office/elsewhere)?

4. How are fees for undocumented migrants arranged in your practice?
(Are there possibilities of referring undocumented patients?
(Are you aware of the fees for consultations, medication and referrals?)

Patient registration in GP office

5. How do you register the consultations of undocumented patients and why in this manner?

(A) Are the consultations of undocumented patients registered in the same way as documented patients? If not, what is the difference?

(B) Are the consultations of undocumented patients coded/encrypted?

(C) Do you record the consultations with the other migrant patients?

(D) If this is different, can you explain why?

(E) Is registration of undocumented patients as good as that of the documented patients?
What is different?

6. How long are undocumented patients registered in your GP practice?
How does this compare to the documented patients?

Communication

7. How do you communicate with the undocumented patient in general?
Do you experience language barriers?

8. How do you usually solve the problem of the language barrier? Is there any governmental support available, like official interpreters? If so, how are costs covered?

9. Which problems do you encounter during consultations with undocumented migrants?
(For example: other ideas about health, illness and treatment, gender of doctor/patient)

Need for healthcare

10. Which problems do you experience as a GP in your practice when patients without a residence permit come to you with a physical problem?

11. How big is the need for care in specific for mental health problems?

(A) How are psychological problems mentioned?

(B) On whose initiative are they mentioned the first time, the doctor or the patient?

(C) To what extent is this different with native patients or documented migrants?

(D) Do you think the undocumented patients have more psychological symptoms than documented migrants?

(E) Do you think that undocumented patients delay more with mentioning a psychological problem than documented migrants? If so, what do you believe are their reasons?

Problems providing care for undocumented migrants

12. Which difficulties do you experience in general providing care for undocumented patients?

(For example: communication problems, cultural differences, ignorance of undocumented patients regarding health, fear of been reported, fear for medical expenses, difficulties with referrals, financial problems, dental care or physiotherapy.)

13. Do you experience other difficulties if you have an undocumented patient where you suspected a mental health problem?

If so, is this different than in other patients?

14. How do you experience the treatment of mental health problems of undocumented patients in your practice? (For example referrals, prescribing medication, etc.)

(A) Do you find this difficult? Why yes/no?

(B) Is there a difference in diagnosis/treatment/referrals in mental healthcare with compared to other patient groups like native patients and documented migrants?

Continuity of care

15. Are you usually the only doctor treating the patient?

Are there other healthcare workers involved?

Does this affect the care the patient receives?

How is the follow up in undocumented migrants?

Other topics

16. Are there changes on governmental base that you would like to see regarding primary healthcare in Greece? And regarding the care for undocumented migrants specific? What kind of things would help carry out your work as GP better?

17. Have you observed any changes due to the economic crisis in general? And specific changes towards healthcare, migrant care and the attitude towards undocumented migrants.

18. Now something else: It is known that Greece is a country with a large informal economy, where undocumented migrants can easily find a job without being controlled by the authorities. In what way does this illegal work affect their (mental) health in your opinion?

19. Are there other topics you missed in this interview and still want to discuss?

Thank you very much for your time and willingness to participate in this study.