

<i>Theme: Asylum & Migration; User Group: Migrants; Language: English; Country: Ireland; ESN Seminar 2017</i>	
Programme's name: <i>Original title:</i>	Referral & Accompaniment of Migrant Unaccompanied Children to Mainstream Health Structures in Melilla (Spain)
<u>Organisation / Country:</u>	Doctors of the World Spain (DoW) - Médicos del Mundo España
<u>Website:</u>	https://www.medicosdelmundo.org/
<u>Contact:</u>	Chema Atienza Borge chema.atienza@medicosdelmundo.org
<u>Summary:</u>	<p>Since April 2016, Doctors of the World (DoW), Spain, has been running a project in cooperation with local authorities targeting unaccompanied children aged 12 to 17 in Melilla (Spanish city on the northern coast of Africa). This project addresses both unaccompanied children living in reception centres and sleeping rough near the harbour. DoW aims to improve their health conditions and their access to mainstream healthcare.</p> <p>To do this, DoW organises group workshops in one of their reception centres with migrant unaccompanied children. Workshops are designed for a maximum of 25 participants and organised in cooperation with local public authorities in charge of the guardianship of children in order to tackle health education, drug prevention, prevention of sexually transmitted infections, self-care, healthy habits and self-esteem.</p> <p>In addition to targeting the health conditions of unaccompanied children, DoW designed a needs' assessment methodology which has been validated and approved by local authorities. It will be implemented in 2018 together with dedicated workshops for professionals working with children. The objective is to ensure that they are better acquainted with health-related issues facing unaccompanied children such as glue inhalation or drug use, intercultural communication methods and referrals to healthcare centres. The project aims also to assess levels of burn-out in caregivers and professionals experience, through individual interviews.</p> <p>DoW also targets unaccompanied children sleeping rough near Melilla harbour. There are approximately 50-100 unaccompanied children sleeping rough every day in Melilla, and most of them are young Moroccans aged 10 to 17. NGOs refer them to DoW staff, who in turn refer them to mainstream healthcare services.</p>

Depending on their needs, they are taken to hospital emergency units or health centres. They are always accompanied by an intercultural mediator to ensure fluent communication between healthcare staff and children.

Activities:

To achieve its objectives, the project implemented, among others, the following activities:

- Implementation of health education & self-care group **workshops targeting migrant unaccompanied children** in the reception centre called “La Purísima”. Workshops are organised in coordination with the local public authorities in charge of unaccompanied children. Workshops tackled the following issues: health education, drug prevention, STI prevention, self-care, healthy habits and self-esteem. DoW’s approach is participative and inclusive to keep children interested in the topics. Three other workshops also target children turning 18 to advise them on how to access mainstream health services.
- Design of a needs’ assessment methodology to **support professionals and caregivers** working in children’s reception centres. This methodology has been already approved by local institutions responsible for reception centres and is oriented to promote health and access to health through workshops, beginning in 2018. DoW aims to provide adequate knowledge and skills to deal with some health-related issues faced by children such as glue inhalation, other drugs use, competences in intercultural communication, and referrals to healthcare centres. The ‘Needs Diagnosis’ includes individual interviews with caregivers.
- **Referral and accompaniment of migrant unaccompanied children to mainstream health structures** in Melilla, including children sleeping rough who escaped or do not wish to live in children’s reception centres. In Melilla there are around 50-100 (depending on the season of the year) migrant unaccompanied children sleeping rough that voluntarily choose not to live in reception centres. They live in the surrounding areas close to the harbour waiting for an opportunity to reach the Spanish peninsula by ferry. DoW does not work directly in the harbour area, but thanks to a partnership with other

	<p>organisations that work in the area, many cases of children with serious health problems are referred to DoW. DoW's staff takes them to the emergency units of the hospital and or the health centres. Children are always accompanied by DoW's intercultural mediator to ensure fluent communication between children and medical staff. While they are being attended by a doctor, hospital staff refers the case to the authorities which follow the established protocol to send back the child to the reception centre. Unfortunately, many children abandon the reception centre after a few days hoping to reach the Spanish peninsula as soon as possible.</p> <p>Since September 2016, more than 250 migrant children have been involved in the DoW project.</p>
<p><u>Issues:</u></p>	<p>The experience of DoW working in this area has brought to attention a number of issues which require addressing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved coordination between public authorities and NGOs. • Reinforced cooperation with EU level actors since Melilla is situated on the external border of the EU. • Reinforcement of specific humanitarian programmes in Melilla, for the high number of migrants arriving.
<p><u>Resources:</u></p>	<p>DoW has been working in Melilla since April 2016. Current resources to carry out this project are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Project Coordinator • 1 Intercultural Mediator • 1 health assistant • Support staff located in Madrid • Volunteers <p>Other resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project office <p>95% of the costs of the project are funded by DoW, and up to 5% are funded by other public authorities.</p>

<p><u>Objectives:</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the health status of migrant unaccompanied children in Melilla. • Improve access of migrant unaccompanied children to mainstream health structures in Melilla.
<p><u>Outcomes:</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 250 unaccompanied migrant children residing in children´s reception centres received health & self-care education. • 1 needs' assessment targeting professionals working in children's reception centre has been designed and approved by local institutions. More than 30 professionals and care givers will be targeted during 2018. • 11 unaccompanied migrant children referred and accompanied successfully to mainstream health structures in Melilla.
<p><u>Evaluation:</u></p>	<p>Since starting in 2016, the project has been subject to internal evaluation.</p>
<p><u>Resources:</u></p>	<p>Médicos del Mundo Melilla</p>