

TRANSLATION

Bergen Declaration (Migrant Health), 16th November 2018

INTRODUCTION

We, the participants of the Migration Conference from all over Norway, gathered in Bergen from 15th to 16th November 2018, convened by the University of Bergen:

RECOGNIZE

- ✓ That the 2018 Migration Conference: *Health in all we do*, is a milestone in migration health which has gathered stakeholders from across disciplines and sectors nationwide to emphasize the importance of migration health in Norway
- ✓ The importance of focusing on migration health and its implications in multicultural societies
- ✓ That the heterogeneity of different immigrants is masked if they are considered as one group
- ✓ The need for dialogue: to ensure all experiences and viewpoints are heard, to share and disseminate useful and updated information in order to improve health care for all, including immigrants, to address causes of inequality in health care as identified by users, and to promote the involvement of users at all levels in migration health work
- ✓ The need for a common understanding of terms and concepts related to migration, human migration, diversity within groups and similarities with the host population
- ✓ The need to evaluate the measures/interventions taken to promote migrant health
- ✓ The need to include migration health in professional education
- ✓ That the conference increased the participants' knowledge and experience, which is a step to reducing the gap between researchers, decision makers, volunteers and other practitioners
- ✓ That this conference is a boost for the field of migration health and the national goal of equity in health care

DRAW ATTENTION TO

- ✓ The requirement for self-reflection in order to strive towards equitable health services: what we represent, who we are as individuals and how and what we offer are all crucial
- ✓ The three levels which must be considered in the implementation of equity in health care services: individual level, organizational level and system level
- ✓ The importance of user perspectives to gaining trust and tailoring measures to meet the needs of the target group
- ✓ The value of users' ability to safely share experiences and meet professionals, and the importance of this solidarity and unity in promoting dissemination of information and increasing motivation for treatment
- ✓ The positive effect of facilitating the involvement of young immigrants, and descendants of immigrants, as spokespersons due to their ability to assist others in similar situations
- ✓ The value of efforts to improve communication with patients from different language backgrounds, including furthering health literacy. Practical interpreter training lowers the threshold for use of interpreters, and good quality and safe interpretation services are crucial to the quality of health care services, including reducing the risk of incorrect diagnosis and treatment.
- ✓ The value of developing and adapting health information material in collaboration with key resource persons and health professionals of migrant origin.

- ✓ The importance of discussing little known or difficult topics such as: negative social control, equitable services regardless of faith- and life-vision, and discrimination in society.
- ✓ Specific challenges for irregular migrants, such as exclusion, lead to their marginalization in health and social sectors, which are unworthy of a welfare society.
- ✓ New insights gained at the conference on topics such as; mental health, “new families”, the invisible labour immigrants, occupational health risks, patients with chronic illnesses.
- ✓ The need to scale up tried and tested innovative methods; training of professionals, interventions must be directed both at healthcare professionals and patients at the same time, and a bio-psycho-socio-cultural approach in the treatment of immigrants should be used
- ✓ Findings from research and experience, which show: that the loss of family and home have a significant negative impact on health, there are low levels understanding human biology among immigrant women, and that immigrants seek treatment later, some users having greater difficulty understanding information and experiencing poorer patient safety
- ✓ The factors underpinning successful integration depend on individual, organizational and institutional resources, social support and involvement in meaningful activities. Therefore, structural and social frameworks must be in place
- ✓ The need to strengthen interdisciplinary cooperation; networking can be an important tool for improving health systems and structures, increasing the competence of the services, and disseminating information and knowledge
- ✓ Knowledge gained from training health professionals which shows that cultural awareness, epidemiology, knowledge of laws and regulations, and how to overcome language barriers are perceived as relevant and useful, rather than specific information about cultural differences

THEREFORE, WE RECOMMEND

- ✓ Decision makers, and society at large, acknowledge that better health for immigrants is better health for all, and requires strategic work at local and national levels
- ✓ Adaptation of services incorporates not only individual factors, but also social and structural frameworks, including living conditions and working life
- ✓ Mapping of migration health at educational institutions should be undertaken, especially of professionals interacting with migrants at different phases of the migration process in different services, including: staff in asylum reception centres, physiotherapists, psychologists and doctors, school teachers, kindergarten and day care workers
- ✓ That education and work are recognized and strengthened as important sectors to improving migration health. There is also a need for academic institutions to work more on topics such as inclusion, integration and human resource development.
- ✓ To increase access to quality assured interpretation services, knowledge of the use of interpreter for health professionals, and adaptation of medical professional terminology and contextual knowledge for interpreters
- ✓ To adapt health information and teaching material to the users’ needs and health literacy level in order to improve information for the entire community and society at large
- ✓ Further research on specific knowledge gaps: the experience of social support, and the health impact of discrimination in work places, educational institutions and health care services and the different coping strategies that individuals use
- ✓ To enable routine collection of data on health and the use of services amongst immigrants, as well as evaluation of measures and interventions