

Minutes Health Coordination Meeting Northern Greece

18th August 2016

1. Vaccination

MSF (Swiss) indicated they are still carrying out an assessment of their potential involvement in the camps which were not yet reached. UNICEF planning to purchase BCG and pneumococcal vaccines in September. Team Rubicon indicated they have witnessed a high number of children not vaccinated – TR to share information on covering this need with MdM. Hepatitis A vaccinations being ordered by MdM for Diavata whilst Red Cross have ordered vaccines through Ministry of Health for Nea Kavala and Kordelio-Softex.

Note: MSF (Swiss) subsequently informed Laura that they will be covering vaccination needs in camps that are currently not covered. This issue will be further discussed at the next meeting.

2. Transport for Secondary Care

UNHCR have contracted a private service provider (Marine Tour Agency) to provide transportation for camp residents who need to travel to seek secondary care at Kilkis or Thessaloniki hospital facilities. The past week the transportation has run a pilot project in Cherso and Nea Kavala but there have been very few requests for the service. Initially the service is to provide transportation to priority groups including children, elderly, ill and women but can be offered on a case by case basis. Laura advised that agencies inform medical staff to reach out ask camp management and / or UNHCR who is the focal point for booking this service. Finding sufficient interpreters is still a challenge as its difficult for residents to discuss their requirements once they reach the secondary facility.

3. List of Vulnerable on Medical Grounds and referrals to Team Rubicon

Costas Kousaxides (Ministry of Migration) has compiled a list of vulnerable residents and is working with Elphida to ensure needy residents who urgently need to move from camps to better accommodation are prioritized. Residents at this centre will also receive specialist medical care. Tom (TR) advised that the template / form has been approved and advises agencies working in the camps to submit priority cases on this template. The centre is currently working at peak capacity but plans are in place to triple capacity by the end of the year. Completed forms should be sent to Elphida / Team Rubicon with copies sent to Costas (ckousaxidis@gmail.com). Submitted forms are assessed by TR medical specialists and TR have contracted a Greek doctor who will subsequently give priority grading.

4. Serres campsite and Public Health Care

The Serres site is newly opened is situated about 1.5 hours from Thessaloniki and houses approximately 500 Yazidis who have come from Cherso. Initially their medical needs were served by volunteer doctors from a local hospital which lies about 4 Km away. Praxis are now looking after the PHC needs on Mondays and Thursdays and Humedica pay site visits on Wednesdays and Fridays. MdM are considering taking the days that Praxis are currently doing.

Any Other Business

5. Interpreters / Translators

Major challenges with interpretation services when camp residents access secondary level services with interpretation. Examples given when camp residents cannot in accordance with Greek Government policy have non-relatives such as translators in hospital delivery rooms which clearly heightens the risk at childbirth. Some institutions are showing some flexibility but advocacy with Ministry of Health to relax the rules is important. Laura to discuss with Dr. Gina Leptokaridou (EKEPU).

6. Audiological Assistance

SAMS indicated they have been contacted by someone in the US who is considering audiological services – especially given many migrants may have been exposed to bombs and blasts that may cause ear damage.

7. Family Planning Information Campaign

An open doors family planning information campaign is to be launched on 23rd August. Information on family planning can be sourced at FPHandbook.org which has a wallchart in Arabic.

8. Availability of Medicines

One of the biggest challenges to offering adequate medical services to camp and urban populations is the unavailability of medicines in hospitals, other medical facilities and pharmacies. In addition many international organizations and NGOs have challenges in purchasing certain medicines which are not specifically covered by our main donor(s). This is putting stress on agencies who are being criticized by migrants for not being able to provide the full range of medicines they are used to accessing in their countries of origin. Laura will contact Dr. Gina Leptokaridou (EKEPU) to advocate for medicines being made available to migrants through the Greek health system but there is a recognition that in the current financial climate with severe constraints of funding this will be a challenge.

Note: This issue will be further discussed at the next Health Coordination Meeting

9. Medical Passports

Many migrants has lost their medical records presenting challenges to agencies in accessing their medical history. The Ministry has designed medical passports as have UNHCR and other agencies such as Red Cross. Important that agencies access these passports and use them when conducting medical interventions

The next meeting is planned for the Hellenic Red Cross Building on Wednesday 31st August 2016