



advancing Migrant Access to Health services in Europe

aMASE

New study investigates health problems disproportionately affecting migrants

People decide to move to a new country for many reasons. Sometimes they decide to pick up and go because they are looking for adventure or are in hope of a better life for their family. Some people move determined to work for a few years and save enough money so they can go back home and live in style. Others flee war or persecution and face many dangers on the way to their new destination, where they hope to spend the rest of their lives. Often only those in good health make the move - people who are sick tend to stay behind, unable to make the journey. Indeed, people on the move are generally healthier than most of the people in the country they move to!

The "healthy migrant effect" is well known to health researchers; however, after a few years living in a new country, people may become more vulnerable to certain health conditions. A new study by researchers

from across Europe aims to identify and address the issues that people living away from their home country face when accessing healthcare in Europe.

Researchers are looking for anyone aged 18 or over living away from their home country to take part in an anonymous 15-minute survey for the European Commission to help shape the European healthcare system. People interested in taking part in the study, called aMASE (advancing Migrant Access to health Services in Europe), can access the survey in 14 languages at www.amase.eu

The study is being co-led by Dr Fiona Burns from University College London and Dr Julia Del Amo from Instituto de Salud



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Carlos III, in Madrid Spain. Both clinicians have a long history working in public health and both are keen to identify the different health experiences people face after immigrating to a new country.

“Many people living away from their home country are at higher risk of various health problems and are often more reluctant to go to the doctor,” says Dr Fiona Burns “This survey will help us to better understand the reasons behind this and enable participants to shape the future of European healthcare.”

The survey results will help researchers to understand the scale of certain health problems facing people living away from their home country and develop ways to address them. The research will be used to identify at-risk groups and the barriers that prevent people from accessing healthcare services before they become seriously ill.

“There are a number of factors that could affect how different people use healthcare services across Europe,” explains Dr Burns. “For example, some people might be

unfamiliar with or simply unaware of the healthcare services available to them. There are also cultural stigmas attached to certain conditions, such as HIV, that can make people reluctant to report them. This study will help us to identify the main barriers that certain people are facing and develop ways of breaking these down.

“We will report our results to the European

Commission, with the ultimate aim of improving public health across Europe. People move around Europe all the time, so improving the health of anyone will benefit everyone, helping to reduce the incidence and improve access to treatment of infectious diseases across the continent.”

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**Dr Fiona Burns,
University College
London**

To be part of aMASE visit www.aMASE.eu

It takes just 15 minutes to complete and it's anonymous and confidential and it could make a difference for you, your friends and your family.

If you would like to help promote the aMASE survey in your area contact amase@ucl.ac.uk