

# Pathways into Accommodation for Non UK Nationals: Minimum standards

Each pathway into accommodation identified and facilitated by MAPS must meet the following criteria:

1. Provide a sustainable route out of homelessness regardless of whether the housing option is in the UK or elsewhere in the world. This is risk assessed against the areas outlined in section 1 below.
2. The client has access to immigration advice to understand their rights and entitlements including implications of leaving the UK on current and future status.
3. The client has capacity and wishes to accept the pathway into accommodation.

## 1. Sustainable Route Out of Homelessness

A client should first receive a comprehensive assessment of their needs, entitlements, and wishes. Following this, the proposed pathway into accommodation should be risk assessed to identify whether it meets their needs. We confirm the service offer meets the client's needs using the following areas:

- A route into long term safe accommodation that is appropriate for their needs. This could mean short-term or temporary accommodation that would enable access to settled accommodation. The destination of the accommodation must be in a location that is considered to be safe according to UK government guidance alongside input from their immigration adviser and on the ground contacts, as well as taking into account the client's experiences of the destination location.
- Access to or the ability to access documentation that evidences their right to reside at the destination.
- A route to financial stability. This might involve access to welfare benefits, employment support as well as interim arrangements to avoid destitution in the short term.
- Access to healthcare that meets the client's needs. This includes mental and physical health as well as needs around addiction.
- Links to friends and family networks or other community networks.
- Other risks are managed, e.g., criminal convictions or unpaid debts.

- Safe travel to the destination is possible and if support is needed to facilitate a safe travel and handover on destination then this can be facilitated.

Given the increased complexity and risks, pathways into accommodation outside the UK should be risk assessed using our bespoke risk assessment template, see appendix A.

As part of ensuring that any accommodation option facilitated by MAPS is sustainable, MAPS will follow up with the client post-move on to ensure that the option is meeting their needs and that they are not at risk of renewed homelessness. If through these follow ups it becomes clear that the option is at risk of not being sustained, MAPS will offer remote interventions by liaising with accommodation and support services to advocate that the client's needs are met.

## 2. Access to Immigration Advice and Welfare Rights Advice

Each client should have access to immigration advice to understand their rights and entitlements including implications of leaving the UK on current and future status. We help to explain the remit of the immigration adviser to the client, i.e., supporting the client to clarify and where possible resolve their immigration status in the UK, and what that means for how their immigration adviser can support them in practice.

We support the person to weigh up the pros and cons of the options available to them including the likely timeframes around any current/future applications and risk around continued rough sleeping. We always seek to arrange a case conference with the client, immigration adviser and homelessness professional to ensure joined up support.

We support clients to explore their entitlements to welfare benefits and refer to Migrants Specialist Welfare Rights Advice when appropriate.

### **3. Client has capacity and wishes to proceed with the pathway into accommodation**

If during the assessment of the client's needs there are concerns about mental capacity, a referral to Adult Social Care will be made and support from EASL accessed as appropriate.

In cases where clients lack capacity to accept or reject a service offer or there are capacity concerns/fluctuating capacity, we cannot proceed with the offer. We will liaise with Director of Safeguarding at St Mungo's to ensure that the Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice is followed and where appropriate a best interests meeting is held, in line with St Mungo's Assessing Mental Capacity and the Mental Capacity Act B49 policy.

### **4. Developing a service offer**

We always seek to find an offer which meets the client's wishes as well as their needs.

We are transparent from the outset with the client about the remit of our service, i.e., that we are commissioned to identify and deliver a solution to their homelessness, and what that means for how we can support the client in practice.

We work with the client throughout the process of identifying a pathway into accommodation and rely on the client participating with this process to ensure that it best meets their needs and is a sustainable route out of homelessness.

Once we have arrived at a suitable pathway into accommodation, we will ask the client if they wish to accept it. If they wish to proceed we will start completing actions to facilitate the accommodation option and the client will also be expected to complete actions. The client can of course change their mind at any point and ultimately have the option to reject the accommodation pathway offered to them, that is, however, likely to mean (depending on circumstances) that our support ends.

### **5. Circumstances where a suitable pathway cannot be identified**

In some cases, it is possible that after exploration we find that there are no sustainable accommodation options identified. In these situations, the cases will be escalated with senior St Mungo's managers and discussed with Commissioners highlighting that the client is at risk of renewed or protracted rough sleeping, to ensure that all options have been explored and before a decision is made on whether to end the MAPS service to the client.

We will evidence the number of clients we work with who are in this situation and provide anonymised data to influence system change.