**WM Migration Network Health Thematic Meeting**

**11th September 2025 (11:00 – 12:00)**

**Chair: Andy Hoole**

**Minutes**

**Introductions**

* AH welcomed all to the first meeting after the summer break.
* Shaida Bibi is happy to continue chairing the meeting but was unable to attend today due to a diary clash. AH stated that if others wished to take on the role, either as a role share or rotating basis, then he would be happy to answer any questions.

**Save the Children Partnership Project**

* PE introduced a new research partnership between MPP and Save the Children UK focusing on child poverty experienced by children and young migrants.
* Launch event scheduled 6th October at the xandwhy Foundry in Birmingham with limited capacity
* Research aims to develop policy recommendations locally, regionally (WMCA level), and nationally
* Focus groups planned end of 2025/start of 2026 with parents, families, and children directly
* Final report targeted for end April/start May with potential MP involvement at formal launch
* Project covers cross-cutting issues including health inequalities, employment support, housing for migrant families

**Mental Health Support Pathway Update**

* Due to lack of ongoing funding Asma Malik left post at the end of August.
* MPP is leading on a partnership bid to the Lloyd's Community Foundation with a final decision expected end of October.
* If successful, funding will be in the region of £50,000 per year for two years with optional third year extension and would support mental health pathway development
* Funding would support network partners including Restore Birmingham, St. Chads Sanctuary alongside other partners giving support in kind.

**Integrated Care Board Update**

* Birmingham and Black Country ICBs clustering into single large ICB rather than amalgamation
* MPP continues as voluntary sector migration lead for both Birmingham/Black Country and Black Country-specific working groups
* Next meeting 30th September will include input from incoming Birmingham head of public health
* Quarterly meetings maintain thematic focus for Birmingham/Solihull versus locality-based approach for Black Country

**Any Other Business**

**MSF Clinical Support Initiative**

* New multi-year project starting this month providing clinical mental health support in asylum hotels
* Operating from two locations in Sandwell area and Birmingham
* Two-year timescale with MSF seeking own accommodation for expanded services
* Referrals currently through trusted partners only
* Invitation extended for team to attend future network meetings

**Community Response to Far-Right Activity**

* Significant discussion on recent far-right riots and impact on migrant mental health and community safety
* Absence of hotel support services for several months due to funding delays created additional vulnerability during crisis period
* Massive change in hotel residents with new arrivals lacking even basic sector support previously available
* AC highlighted societal mental health crisis affects all communities, questioning what small organisations can do against larger systemic issues
* AB attending monthly hotel visits with Birch to maintain direct connection with service users

**Network Expansion and Partnership Development**

* WE shared conference contacts from migration, race and ethnicity event may reach out to network
* Regional partnership opportunities discussed to expand impact beyond West Midlands through resource sharing
* Wraparound service model emphasised by SN - connecting life coaching, education pathways, guaranteed interviews rather than just signposting
* Community-led programme development ensuring services built around actual community needs and struggles

**Future Network Development**

* Migration Network Community meeting restart planned to address social integration, migrant welcome and safety
* Migrant Advisory Group launch tomorrow - quarterly meetings with paid participation for individuals with recent lived migration experience. One-month recruitment process with online awareness sessions, starting mid-October
* **Next meeting scheduled 23rd October 11:00am online format**
* In-person meeting planned for following session to improve discussion quality and relationship building