

**Submission to
Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland**

Cairde
31st of January 2018

It is Cairde's view that a comprehensive and holistic approach to the development of future professional and effective policing is essential to enable immigrant communities to participate equally in Irish society and achieve their full potential.

This submission is based on the experiences of the ethnic minority communities in Ireland as evidenced by Cairde in its work and highlights the impact of

Cairde would like to point out that migrants' interactions with the police systems in Ireland have direct and indirect impact on individual and community health.

The issues and impacts to be considered:

1. Under reporting of racially motivated crimes.

- Communities and individuals should be encouraged and supported to report hate crime and incidents of racist behaviour; awareness raising activities, direct work and engagement with the affected communities should form a part of this process.
- Guidelines/ policy should be developed for all members of An Garda Síochána on how to record hate crime and racist incidents in the police crime and information system (PULSE).
- Hate and racially motivated crimes should be a subject of detailed analysis and monitoring.

- These measures should be underpinned by effective legislation, strengthening the laws against hate crime, including the area of online hate speech.

2. Racial profiling.

- It is an experience of some of Cairde's clients (particularly for people from Roma ethnicity) that stereotyping and racial profiling does present in their interactions with the police. While specific Gardaí training in Human Rights which is currently in place is welcomed, this alone is not enough. There should be a more in depth look at the value base and ethos of organisation as a whole which would penetrate through all ranks.

3. Gardaí's lack of response to unlawful evictions in the housing sector.

- It is a Cairde's experience that ethnic minorities do not enjoy the protection of police when being unlawfully evicted. Often this has been referred by the Gardaí as a 'civil matter'. This creates a lot of stress and anxiety for tenants from migrant communities who are particularly vulnerable to evictions.
- For the future, there should be a set of guidelines developed on how to deal with such issues and what constitutes 'civil' or 'criminal' matter.

4. At present the makeup of An Garda Síochána does not reflect the community it serves.

- More efforts should be made to recruit people from the ethnic minority background in An Garda Síochána.
- This should include targeted campaigns, awareness-raising activities in migrant communities and changes to the application process to make it more accessible to people from ethnic minority communities.
- The consideration should be given to introduction of quotas within the recruitment process.

About Cairde

Cairde is a non-government health advocacy organisation working to reduce health inequalities among ethnic minorities and is committed to supporting the participation of minority communities in enhancing their health. Cairde works through the rights based approach believing that the absence of equality and respect for human rights is correlated to the existence of health inequalities. Cairde, by adopting a community development approach, supports new and existing community-based groups in taking an active role in the analysis and redress of the issues effecting them as well as providing individual advocacy and information to ethnic minorities.

Cairde operates the Health Information and Advocacy Centre in Dublin North Central and Balbriggan, Co. Dublin which provide individual health advocacy and relevant, culturally appropriate health information to ethnic minority individual and groups.

Cairde's Objectives:

1. Improving access

To improve ethnic minority take up and experience of health services through:

- 1.1 Provision of high quality, relevant and culturally appropriate health information;
- 1.2 Individual support and advocacy;
- 1.3 Community based health promotion;

2. Building Participation

To build and support ethnic minority participation in the planning and delivery of health services:

To build participation of ethnic minority communities in the planning, delivery and monitoring of local health service provision;

- 2.1 To promote statutory/ethnic minority interaction and engagement on health service planning and delivery;
- 2.2 To initiate partnership models which build broader community/statutory support for ethnic minority participation;

3. Policy & Research

To influence the development of health services through relevant research, data, policy submissions and participation on key structures:

- 1.1 To highlight ethnic minority experiences and outcomes from their use of primary care services;
- 1.2 To highlight barriers to health services and model approaches to address these barriers;
- 1.3 To participate in the planning, implementation and monitoring of Government health strategies which impact on the delivery of primary health care to ethnic minority communities;

For information please contact: Tonya Myles, General Manager, Cairde, 19 Belvedere Place, Dublin 1, Tel: (01)8552111; tonya@cairde.ie; www.cairde.ie