



## **Humans for Rights Network's Submission to ICIBI's call for evidence: An inspection on the use of hotels and barracks as contingency accommodation**

Humans for Rights Network is a human rights monitoring organisation. We provide opportunities for asylum seekers, migrants and refugees to bear witness to the treatment they have experienced. Our work has in recent years predominantly been focused on the humanitarian situations of France and Greece, however since the beginning of the pandemic we have shifted our intention to documenting the use of barracks and hotel accommodation and the harm that these accommodations are doing to asylum seekers living there. We conduct interviews in order to gather first-hand testimony, collate photographic and video evidence of situations and assess for action needed.

What follows below is a combination of extracts of testimony given to us by asylum seekers accommodated in hotels and army barracks accommodation. We have also set out below, information we have ourselves received through other means be that visits to hotels, meetings with other stakeholders or first-hand experience of engaging with accommodation providers as well as conversations with asylum seekers in these accommodations. We have visited 10 hotels in London, Napier Barracks, a hotel in Bristol and have spoken to asylum seekers in a hotel in Birmingham.

## Summary – Contingency Hotel and Napier barracks accommodation

- We have witnessed a rapid deterioration of the wellbeing of those we remain in contact with at Napier barracks. No support has been offered to residents in alleviating the effects of the barracks on their wellbeing other than widespread prescription of sleeping tablets and antidepressant medication.
- The lack of action taken to reduce the spread of COVID-19 at Napier barracks, by the accommodation management, has resulted in a serious outbreak that poses serious risk to those accommodated there and the wider community. It is not possible for social distancing to be conducted in a communal living environment
- Access to medical care and other vital services is only accessible through the accommodation providers which has resulted in non-medical staff making decisions about the type and timings of treatment provided and forced asylum seekers to disclose personal information to staff who we have consistently heard threaten residents
- No effort made by Clearsprings Readyhomes to communicate information about the COVID-19 outbreak and associated decisions, to the residents of Napier barracks in appropriate languages or in a culturally safe way resulting in distress and confusion.
- We have consistently identifying individuals with specific vulnerabilities such as victims of torture, potential survivors of trafficking and modern slavery. This demonstrates that no steps were taken by the Home Office to ensure that the most vulnerable asylum seekers were not accommodated in a way so as to cause harm and claims that the most vulnerable have been moved from the accommodation are false.
- None of the former residents of Napier have had any meaningful contact from the Home Office regarding their asylum claims, and we have not met anyone who has been given a date for their substantive interview. Coupled with the deteriorating in wellbeing as a result of treatment in Napier Barracks, many we have spoken with believe that the lack of communication from the Home Office is representative of an issue with their claim. These long delays, whilst being accommodated in conditions which in our opinion constitute a breach of Article 3 ECHR, continues to cause a

further deterioration to the wellbeing of those currently held there due to a total lack of information, and persistent delays.

- Whilst we welcome the transfer of all residents of Napier to alternative accommodation, given our experience of hotel contingency accommodation, and the clear indication from many formerly accommodated in Napier that they are distressed and severely effected by their experiences there. These individuals now find themselves in hotel rooms, with limited access to basic services such as healthcare and mental health support.
- Whilst we recognise the need to accommodate asylum seekers in hotels as a result of the covid-19 pandemic, a lack of suitable dispersal accommodation and severe delays to the processing of asylum claims, access to services such as medical care, legal advice, material items such as clothing, medication, education are riddled with problems. Accommodation providers are contracting security companies and hospitality staff to carry out functions they are not appropriately trained to deliver. Information is not provided to asylum seekers as to how to access these services and they are consistently prevented from doing so. The current arrangement is causing serious harm to asylum seekers in these accommodations, many are without access to medical care or any meaningful support, subjected to threats by staff, and without any information as to the progress of their asylum claims. Children have been living in hotels for up to 11 months without education and with nowhere to play, and Home Office contracts are being mismanaged allowing security guards to arbitrarily introduce rules and restrictions on people's freedom of movement in light of Covid - 19.

### **Staff behaviour and threats**

In interviews conducted with residents of Napier barracks and contingency hotel accommodation, we have consistently been told of threats made to residents by security and accommodation management.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/jan/23/uk-asylum-seekers-told-claims-at-risk-if-they-misbehave>

People are living in fear of speaking out about the conditions in Napier barracks, as they have been told Clearsprings staff that it will affect their asylum claim and we believe that this is preventing certain vulnerable individuals such as potential victims of trafficking from accessing the support they need to be transferred from the barracks.

Residents have been told by the management of the accommodations that Clearsprings will inform the Home Office that they are a 'troublemaker' if they complain, for example about the food, and that it will affect their asylum claim. The people we have spoken to have expressed concerns about their identity being shared and we have taken all our statements anonymously, as people have told us they are worried that talking to us about the treatment they may receive if the Home office or Clearsprings find out that they have discussed how they are being treated. For example, one man told us, 'If you request something that you believe is your right, they threaten you and say we will tell the Home Office, and it will affect your claim.' No members of the accommodation management team or associated contractors should make any reference to the asylum claims of individuals in the accommodations they manage.

We are concerned that the suitability of the staff tasked with the day-to-day management of Napier barracks contingency accommodations, has not been fully considered. And, that the Home Office does not have a robust procedure in place to ensure its contractors are in adherence with their contractual obligation, such as the training expected to be provided to all staff. Furthermore, as per Home Office guidance asylum seekers are directed to the Migrant Help 24hr advice line in order to raise concerns and issues. However, this does not provide sufficient remedy as we have heard from many asylum seekers in both Napier barracks and various hotel accommodations that they have had to wait for up to 6 hours when attempting to call Migrant help, with some not succeeding in making contact at all as the line will cut out after they are on hold for an extended period of time.

In the Crowne Plaza hotel, London, one family told us that the Clearsprings manager of the hotel told them that if he said anything bad about the food, he would call the Home Office and that this would be 'a problem for their case'. A resident of a hotel in Birmingham told us that a member of Serco staff warned him that if he continues to attend meetings with other

asylum seekers and volunteers advocating for those in the hotel, it will affect his asylum claim.

### **Lack of vulnerability assessments and equalities act**

Napier barracks is felt by many residents to be unsafe and poses a risk to the wellbeing of those accommodated there, not least those who have survived torture, trafficking, modern slavery and conflict. The Home Office has itself<sup>2</sup> stated that MOD sites are not appropriate accommodation for these individuals and claims to be 'screening' to ensure that anyone who has endured trafficking, torture or modern slavery is not transferred to the barracks.

As an organisation we have met with many people who have told us that they are survivors of one or a number of these experiences and that being accommodated in the barracks is triggering for them, is affecting their sleep and that they are depressed. In an interview in November 2020, we were told;

“this place, the barracks reminds me of torture I faced back home. This was a very bad experience for me. It reminds me of a camp. I have bad memories; it is like a camp in other places. It is like a prison it is inhumane”

This echoes much of the testimony we have received from residents. Further to this, on the 3rd February 2021, we spoke for the first time to three individuals who are potential victims of trafficking, who expressed concerns that if they were to challenge their accommodation with the support of a lawyer, this might affect their asylum claim.

When visiting hotel accommodation, we have met a number of people who similarly, have complex needs and are not being supported to access the specific support needed, whether this be for an underlying health condition or mental health issue, or due to a specific vulnerability.

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<sup>2 2</sup> Page 3 'Contingency asylum accommodation, Ministry of Defence sites Factsheet', October 2020

In the weeks after the hotel in Bristol was opened, individuals with diabetes and heart conditions were calling ambulances in order to access vital medication as no arrangements had been made for them to access medical care, nor had the management identified them as having underlying health conditions as no screening process was conducted with residents before they were to be moved in. We have heard from residents in many other hotels that there was no initial provisions made for people who require medication and this continues to be an issue for many.

In this same hotel, there have consistently been between 6 and 10 survivors of trafficking in the hotel. We have heard from some of the women in the hotel who have survived trafficking that they are being triggered and feel very afraid living in the hotel. It is a very male dominated environment, and a woman we have spoken to experienced unwanted attention including men knocking on their door at night. These issues were raised with Clearsprings and no action was taken that satisfied the needs the woman had. There is no consideration of individual experiences or vulnerabilities or how a mixed gender hotel will affect people's wellbeing and mental health.

We also spoke to a man who has diabetes who said he is experiencing a lot of tiredness and that his diabetes is not under control because the food that is provided in the hotel is very greasy. We also heard from one woman who has also experienced health issues because of the food, that when she raised this with the hotel staff, they told her to stop complaining or they would tell the Home Office and it would affect their asylum claim.

In hotels in London, we have repeatedly heard from people with varying underlying health conditions, who have been prevented from accessing medical care by staff in these hotels. For example, in November 2020, an individual in a hotel in North London told us that despite having longstanding hepatitis, and suffering from liver pain, that the staff in the hotel had told him it was not possible for him to see a doctor due to the pandemic. We were also contacted by a man in a hotel in West London who had been accommodated there despite being severely disabled due to having lost both of his legs. He had been left in this hotel for 3 months, without a wheelchair, in chronic pain due to poorly fitting prosthetics and suffering from digestion issues. He had repeatedly called Migrant help to make them aware of his situation and no meaningful action was taken to improve his

situation. We connected him with a solicitor who was very quickly able to obtain assistance for him as his support was in clear breach of the equalities act.

The Home office has consistently said it would not house people with vulnerabilities or underlying health conditions in hotels, we have found this to be untrue.

This week, we received a message from a man in a West London Hotel. He, his wife and their 5 children have been living in a room with no natural light for over 6 months. He is diabetic and his diabetes is not under control, there is no provision for refrigerated storage of medication in the hotel and this is affecting his insulin. He has repeatedly asked Migrant Help to assist him and has been told each time they would call him back in a few days with some further information, this never happens. These hotels are not appropriate for individuals with diabetes as the food is often not suitable to ensure control of the condition, and no provision for storage of medication is made available. We have met a number of people in this situation and it appears that the issue is widespread across the contingency estate.

### **Welfare checks**

When raising concerns about the welfare and wellbeing of asylum seekers in hotels and Napier barracks we have consistently been told that 'regular welfare checks are carried out'. Clarifying the nature and frequency of these checks, as well as who conducts these checks and what training they have had has been met with a refusal to provide any clarifying information.

Recently we were given some further clarity regarding the process in the Bristol Hotel and in Napier barracks, both of which have raised concerns as to their effectiveness.

Firstly, in Napier barracks, it was brought to our attention that the staff who carry out these welfare checks are security staff who are also living on site. We were informed that no interpreters were used to carry out these checks and that an asylum seeker who speaks English was himself asked to interpret for Farsi speaking residents. This was incredibly distressing for him as he heard accounts of suicide ideation and self-harm.

Secondly, in conversations regarding a number of Covid cases and suspected Covid cases in the Bristol hotel, and delays in Asylum seekers requesting tests when they have symptoms, we suggested that the regular in-room welfare checks could be an opportunity to proactively ask if people have Covid symptoms. We were told that these 'welfare checks' are carried out by a security guard when people come to collect their food from the dining hall and all that is asked is 'how are you today'. This is inadequate for a number of reasons; firstly, there are questions regarding the training the staff member has received, secondly conducting these conversations in public is not appropriate and does not create an environment in which people are able to disclose in a private context, there is no consideration for those who are not leaving their rooms, likely to be those who need these checks the most, and finally, the questions asked are not sufficient.

### **Mental health and Wellbeing**

In every interview conducted in November 2020 with residents of Napier Barracks we heard from residents that they were experiencing issues such as inability to sleep, depression and that they feel unsafe. One individual told us "There is no privacy. It is unpleasant to be here. Seeing people trying to take their own lives. Police and ambulances coming all the time are reminding me of the war. Seeing the blood, and the difficulties that we are facing reminds me of the treatment and war that I experienced, I don't feel safe, I don't feel mentally stable."

On Friday 15th January 2021, we were told that 22 people had until very recently, been held in a building inside the barracks on suicide watch by a security guard and had been unable to leave. We spoke to a resident on Saturday 16th January 2021, who told us that he was one of the 22 people held in this way. He said "There are a group of people who are suffering with acute mental health problems. Before, they put us inside a room and did not let us get out. Now they give us sleeping tablets that make us sleep all day."

Some of these individuals are still in the barracks, and to our knowledge have not received any support regarding their health and wellbeing. Those who have left are still without adequate support. Since the events of the fire on the 29th January, each individual we have spoken to has said that their mental health is worse than it was before, and the events



surrounding the fire are reminding them of what they have fled. Many have now left, and we are concerned that the experience these men have had in the barracks, coupled with existing traumas will cause their wellbeing to deteriorate. We have heard from residents who are now in hotels that they are finally able to sleep for the first time in months, but that they feel isolated and depressed and are still unsure of how to access support in the hotel.

In interviews we have carried out with residents of various hotels we have been told that people have struggled to access mental health support, that the total lack of information that they're provided with in relation to their asylum claims coupled with isolation and lack of access to services is exacerbating existing mental health conditions and causing others feelings of depression and issues sleeping. It is important to remember that the vast majority of asylum seekers have experienced some kind of trauma and have survived or witnessed unimaginable horrors, and that without support and connection, the consequences as to peoples wellbeing could be catastrophic. We have spoken to a number of individuals who told us that their accommodation is affecting their mental health and the time it has taken for their asylum claims to be processed is making them feel like I have done something wrong, and that they are being singled out.

In another hotel, there are a number of individuals who are being support by the crisis team. Initially, offering them any mental health support was delayed it was known that they had chronic mental health conditions, and because there was no clarity given by Clearsprings or the Home Office as to how long people were going to be living in this hotel. We were initially informed that this hotel would be in use for 6 weeks so it was felt it was not in their best interest to begin receiving meaningful support if they were to move to another area withing a matter of weeks.

### **Covid-19**

In September 2020, when the first asylum seekers arrived at Napier barracks, many without any idea of their intended destination, and others with only hour's notice, it is our understanding that no tests were carried out with individuals moved from hotels or other accommodations from various local authority areas to Napier barracks. We were also

informed by residents that no isolation was required or facilitated upon arrival at the barracks.

During an interview with a resident of Napier barracks on the 16th January 2021 we were informed that there were in excess of 15 cases of COVID-19 in Napier barracks and that no effort was being made by staff to support those who had tested positive to isolate. Our contact told us “These infected people are inside every room inside the restaurant, inside the rooms where we sleep, we can get infected anywhere”.

Days later we were informed by residents that over 120 of the 400+ residents had now tested positive. We consistently heard reports from residents that there was no provision to allow those who had tested positive to isolate from those who had not, with the sharing of dormitories, toilets and showers continuing. Furthermore, we were also told that individuals were being forced to share beds and blankets after the fire on 29/01/21 rendered at least one of the dormitories out of use.

In one of the hotels we visit in West London, we were informed by a resident 2 weeks ago that there have been approximately 150 Covid+ cases in the hotel. He told us that the hotel was overcrowded with approximately 500 people living there, making it impossible to socially distance. At mealtimes, only a short period of time is given to collect food meaning that social distancing is impossible. He also told us that when people are tested, they are not given their results in writing, and are only given results verbally by staff if they are positive and others unaware of their test results entirely.

In another hotel in the South West, there have been a small number of Covid-19 cases including a staff member. There is no process for informing stakeholders of these cases and the impact that these cases might have on the rest of the residents. We were only informed of these cases after the fact, and it was clear that the process of obtaining tests for residents was not clearly defined, resulting in staff from a local medical service responsible for care of refugees and asylum seekers in the city, were being called upon out-of-hours to order tests and obtain results for residents. Secondly, we were initially told that if there were found to be two active cases within the hotel at one time, the hotel would be placed in complete

'lockdown' with no ability for support services to enter the hotel and that residents would not be allowed to leave the hotel under any circumstances, even for exercise or to purchase basic items. This is of course not in line with Covid legislation and would have a severe detrimental effect on the wellbeing of residents who were not positive for Covid, including young children.

We have also been told by residents of two hotels in London that staff have told them they may only leave the hotel once a day for one hour. This is not in line with the Covid-restrictions that the rest of the population of the UK is expected to adhere to, and represents a manipulation of regulations to control the freedom of movement of asylum seekers accommodated in these hotels.

### **Communication and information**

In every hotel we have visited, residents have told us that they have not received information about how to access basic services such as GPs and legal advice. Although Migrant help is available, we are consistently told that people are either unable to speak to a call handler as the phone is cut off after being on hold for over an hour, are told they will receive a call back and never do or that Migrant Help tell them their questions cannot be answered and they must direct it to their accommodation provider. In most cases, when individuals direct their question or requests for assistance to staff in hotels, they are told to call Migrant Help. There is a clear passing of responsibility taking place, meaning access to essential medical care, safeguarding and support is being blocked.

The vast majority of individuals are only able to access a solicitors when they are assisted to do so by a charity or volunteer. We have met many people who are still without solicitors who are distressed regarding the fact that they have not had assistance in completing their preliminary interview questionnaire. We are also frequently told that Migrant Help are telling people they do not need a solicitor until they are dispersed.

“When I arrived (in the UK), I was in a hotel in London, I called Migrant Help and said I need a solicitor, they said you don't, you do not need one until you are dispersed.”

A key issue regarding information is that of transfers made to, or cancellations of transfers to other accommodations. We have heard consistently from individuals that they have been given only a few hours notice before being told they are to move, and no information is given to them as to where they will be going.

One individual in a Birmingham hotel told us;

“They don’t tell people until the day before they will be moved or 11pm the night before they tell you they will be that you will be transferred tomorrow giving no time. Once I was told at 11pm that I was to move, I packed my stuff. The next day I sat on the stairs in reception all day until 5 pm then I was told I was not to be transferred. People are now given two hours before they are transferred. Most people are always ready just in case they will be called to be moved.”

Many of the men currently or formally residents of Napier Barracks told us they were given no more than an hour or two’s notice before being told they were to be transferred. It was only when arriving at the camp, that it became clear to them where they were.

Furthermore, a family with 5 children, who are currently in a hotel in West London were informed they were to be transferred to a house, after assistance from a solicitor, only to receive the following message from Clearsprings cancelling their transfer;

“The reason the transport didn’t come is because you are not moving. Your support from the Home Office has changed but you will be staying at the Crowne Plaza”

This lack of engagement with asylum seekers regarding transfers or lack thereof, is distressing, creates further uncertainty to an experience already categorised by uncertainty and a lack of information and is once again a further example of the disregard for people’s physical and mental wellbeing.

## **Testimony**

### **Statement extract 1 – Napier Barracks – November 2020**

I was on hunger strike for three days from, this took place because we don't know why we are here. How long we will be here. We asked management but get no answers. On the strike day, people gathered inside the barracks. The security tried to speak to everyone. He was violent towards people. After the strike, I asked management, we need answers to our questions. Why we are here? What's happening?

The security guards are very aggressive and abuse us using swear words. The dormitories that we are sleeping are very bad. There are 24 people using two toilets and two showers. The place is very depressing. We are living like animals. We don't know why they put us here? There is no communication from anybody. Nobody is telling us how long we will be here or what will happen to us, people are suffering mentally. I am not sleeping without tablets. They are putting us at risk of catch COVID-19. Sharing a place like this with a lot of people is not good for my health. It is inhuman, sharing a place with 14 people. I have health problems, it affects my sleep. I have nightmares. The situation makes it worse.

My family are in a refugee camp, I can only talk to them on the phone because they do not have any internet. I do not have any credit they do not give us credit for our phones so I cannot talk to my family They are treating like animals Eat, sleep, eat sleep. We are not treated like humans.

### **Statement extract 2 – Napier Barracks November 2020**

It is inhuman here. It is like a prison. It is not good at all for me. I have been here for two months in the barracks.

I have been in the UK for four months in total. I was in a hotel beforehand. For two months, it was the Crowne Plaza Hotel in London. The food in the hotel was very bad, the food here is much worse. They do not clean the place when they clean it is still very dirty, whilst I was living in the hotel, they gave us no information about the move to the barracks. One day at 9am in the morning, I received a phone call saying at 10 you must come to reception, you must pack your stuff, you will be leaving. I did this and went down to reception. I saw another eight or nine people who had all been told the same thing to come down to

reception. Nobody knew what was happening. After that, at 11 o'clock, a car came 10 people got in and we were taken to the barracks. We were never told where we were going.

Inside the barracks from day one, no has no one has given us any information whatsoever. We only hear rumours. For example, Arabic speaking security guards say maybe one or two months you will be here.

It is mentally exhausting. And I have no money at all.

### **Statement 3 – November 2020**

This place is very very bad, it is very stressful. The treatment is inhuman. We think that we are in a prison or detention centre. We have no freedom. The reason we feel like we are in a prison is because we do not live a free life. We eat what they want, sleep when they say sleep.

We live the life they decide for us. For example, to leave the barracks now to come to meet you. We can only leave once a day for two hours. they are controlling my life. The treatment, inside the camp, I cannot tell you how bad it is. If you want something or ask for something, either it is not allowed, or they don't have it. At 11pm, every night security comes turns off all the lights in the dormitory and says it is time to sleep now. You wake up in the night, because it is very noisy. They plan for your life, how they think you should live it. For 20 days now I have not eaten food from the barracks. I never go to the barracks canteen during mealtimes.

It is depressing here. You are in a prison. If you request something that you believe is your right, they threaten you and say we will tell the home office, and it will affect your claim.

A month ago inside the dormitory that I live in there was one positive case of COVID-19. He slept opposite me. The case was confirmed but they were not open about it. it in the night, they took him. The next day, all of the security and management came like an invasion, they closed the dormitories, to put us into isolation, but did not tell us why, they lied and after a

while they said maybe someone in here has COVID. We said why don't you clean his bed, and his belongings? The cleaners then refused to come inside because of the case. We are living like animals. We said if the cleaners will not come give us the things we will clean ourselves, the management only took his bedding and did not clean anything at all even the toilets, or the area around his bed, the cleaners refused to come inside or to clean the toilets, it was disgusting. It was inhuman. During the time we were isolating we decided not to eat for three days, we went on hunger strike and said unless they clean. We will strike. They threatened us saying if you do this we will tell the home office and we will make a report.

If we question the food they say this is the food, eat it. If you don't like it. Get lost. We are not here to eat. We didn't come here for this we need protection they don't treat us like humans. There was an Indian man who was part of the management team. He always says this is your problem. He is very rude. He says, You are my last concern. I don't care if you don't eat. We don't know who the main manager of the accommodation is. If you talk in a situation like this, they say we are going to call the police

The management, know that people are not happy that they are mentally not good. I think they are trying to take the minds of people away at dinnertime. It is an open buffet. After taking what you want for your savoury course. You sit down, eat this, and then go lunchtime is between one and 230 you queue take your food sit and eat. You queue for hours to get your food, then you have to go and queue again in another place for your dessert, they keep saying social distance social distance but we queue all day, all we live for is to be made busy to get our daily food. It is like a small Arabic country, a dictatorship, these are just examples of their treatment. There's one nurse for over 450 people. He does nothing for you. I have a problem with my teeth, they come out very easily. The nurse doesn't do much. They think I am making things up, I told the manager of the camp, I showed him that my four front teeth will fall out. I can pull them out. I cannot eat. I need a dentist. The nurse always says I forgot to refer you (and says) come tomorrow, come tomorrow. It has been two months since I have been asking to see a dentist. If you need anything, either you get threatened or they just placate you saying come tomorrow.

He did not give me any. When I arrived I was in a hotel in London, I called migrant help and said I need a solicitor, they said you don't, you do not need one until you are dispersed. When there was the positive Covid case, I called migrant help. I was on hold to them for two and a half hours when I got through, I spoke with somebody and explained the situation and told them that we are striking. They said we cannot do anything for you. It is the Home office he put you there. There is nothing we can do for you. Mentally we have lost trust in everybody and everything.

#### **Statement extract 4 – Napier Barracks 17.1.2021**

There are 15 people inside Napier barracks who have COVID-19. There are no more people waiting for test results. These 15 people are not being quarantined no effort is being made to protect everybody else in Napier barracks from catching the virus. Yesterday, we asked the camp staff to put these 15 people into quarantine. They did not take any action. Yesterday, we asked the manager to put these people into quarantine. He didn't take any action. The manager is not cooperating with us. He said he will leave these people to do whatever they like. These infected people are inside every room inside the restaurant, inside the rooms, we can get infected anywhere. These people found out that they had the virus three days ago. There is no cleaning. Six of these people are very tired, they are sick. They went to see the health care representative and asked to go to hospital. The health care representative refused to send them to hospital or to let them see a doctor, they can move freely around the camp.

There are a group of people who are suffering with acute mental health problems. Before, these people were kept in one room. I am one of these people. We were kept locked in one room. Now, anyone suffering from mental health is referred to see the health care professional. This happened after the strike. They are only giving us tablets to make us sleep all day, not taking any other action to help us with our mental health problems.

#### **Statement extract 5 – 17/12/2020 South West Hotel**



I have been in the hotel for two months before that I was in the Best Western Hotel in Croydon. I am very unimpressed and threatened by the attitude of the staff, they treat us like dirt. And there are some racist aspects of the treatment. It is very much the same in this hotel. Everybody lacks respect is unhelpful and disrespectful. For example, because of the food, which is inedible. We are not accustomed to it. No vegetarian is not allowed. There is no salads and no vegetables, somebody bought some food from outside. And we were prevented from getting this food and he was prevented from giving it to us. The police were called and he was threatened by the staff in the hotel. This happened three days ago, it was very startling for the children and the women in the hotel.

None of the staff in the hotel use masks. They use the mask issue as a weapon to threaten people who are living in the hotel. Even people who just pull it down to take a breath.

When senior managers, came to the hotel, suddenly the staff in the hotel would wear masks and they started cleaning, and they were well prepared polite to the asylum seekers. They returned to their normal behaviour after they left the hotel.

#### **Statement extract 6 – London Hotel November 2020**

The food is very low quality. It is cooked with a lot of oil, which I believe is a great risk to my daughter's health, as she suffers with type one diabetes. Since arriving here she is not able to control her diabetes. They (the GP) told her that your diabetes is not controlled and that your sugar is high. The nurse gave her some guidance to control diabetes, but this is impossible as she needs scales to weigh the food or an app on the phone.

The room is infested with mice, as are all the other rooms. When we reported this to management, he gave us sticky paper and said that is all, we have plugged all of the small holes in the room with tissue to stop the mice coming in. I have started getting kidney problems, I experienced pain. When I stopped eating the very fatty food, these pains stopped.

I don't feel safe here, the manager has the right to kick us out if I speak out he will. At one time in the other room that my family has, they had left the heater on in the room. It had t-shirts on the radiator, and it started smoking and set the fire alarm went off. The manager of the hotel came, he was angry, and he called security, he tried to kick my family out He said, your family is lucky I didn't kick them out.

Once he told me, he said, I don't know why people complain about my hotel, if you complain two times to the Home Office, they will think you are a bad person and a troublemaker.

### **Statement extract 7 – London Hotel February 2021**

I am in this hotel with my wife and my five children. They are treating us like animals. I feel suicidal. Maybe I will kill myself. The hotel is making us all very depressed. I am concerned about the impact that this will have on my children. They have not been to school for a long time. I am diabetic and my diabetes is out of control and I think this may also be affecting my mental health. I have been told by a member of staff in the hotel, when I have complained about the fact that my diabetes is out of control and that my health is not good, that he does not care if I die or not. I have to take insulin and there is nowhere for me to keep this in the hotel there is no refrigeration, and it may go bad. I have made many complaints to migrant health over the past six months, and I'm always told that they will call me back in five days, but this does not happen. I am dying here, and nobody appreciates our situation.