

# Addressing legislative and administrative barriers: Voucher for one free consultation for uninsured patients

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# Cel Sofia

Cel **S**ociale- financiële **i**nning en **a**ministratie (Reception UZ Gent)

**Request for 'urgent medical aid' under Royal Degree (R.D.) 12.12.'96 (Mediprima).**

\*Please tick and/or complete as appropriate

Patient details <small>(attach a sticker here)</small>	
Date	<input type="checkbox"/> admission*: <input type="checkbox"/> outpatient care*:
Medical Department:	
Doctor in charge of treatment:	
Social worker : <span style="float: right;">Cel Sofia: UZ1*: <input type="checkbox"/> UZ2*: <input type="checkbox"/></span>	

**Patient paid for first consultation at Reception?\*** :  YES  NO

single consultation voucher  
Assessment of (extreme) emergency in Medical Care

**Doctor's signature and stamp:**

- Care type 1\*** Provision of **emergency medical assistance**  
**Start of emergency treatment only for admissions via Accident & Emergency**
- Care type 2\*** **Scheduled urgent medical aid with follow-up treatment:**  
(in accordance with R.D. 12.12.'96). **Continued specialist treatment is required.** Clarify the treatment plan on the certificate of urgent medical aid in the 'PROVISION' section, together with the date of essential follow-up treatment.  
Pass these documents to Cel Sofia ASAP.
- Care type 3\*** **Scheduled urgent medical aid** (in accordance with R.D. 12.12.'96).  
**Single consultation without a requirement for additional examinations or follow-up treatment.**

**ALWAYS FILL IN THE ATTACHED CERTIFICATE FOR URGENT MEDICAL ASSISTANCE AND RETURN THE DOCUMENTS TO CEL SOFIA**  UZ1  UZ2.

Contact details Cel Sofia: UZ 1: 20280d

UZ 2: 24143d

## Background – Belgian context\* (1)

- **Undocumented Migrants: not covered by the legal Belgian health insurance system**
- **Urgent Medical Aid, Royal Degree 12/12/1996\*:**
  - Entitles undocumented migrants access to health care
  - Medical aid: urgency evaluated and tested by registered medical doctor
  - Urgent Medical Aid: preventive and curative health care
    - Delivered in hospital or ambulatory settings
  - ≠ Emergency Medical Assistance: applies to everyone

\* Roberfroid, D., Dauvrin, M., Keygnaert, I., Desomer, A., Kerstens, B., Camberlin, C., ... & Derluyn, I. (2015). What health care for undocumented migrants in Belgium?. *KCE reports*, 257.

## Background – Belgian context (2)

- **How does Urgent Medical Aid work\*?**
  - Public Social Welfare Centers: intermediary institution
    - Checks if conditions are fulfilled (territoriality, social enquiry)
    - Defines on individual basis the extent of entitlements to health care
  - Payment coverage: when agreement of Urgent Medical Aid is delivered by Public Social Welfare Centre

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## Objective

- **Qualitative, affordable and accessible health care for all patients**
  - No guarantee of payment coverage in case of new undocumented migrant patient without agreement
    - > Risk: no or less qualitative medical consult
  - The voucher guarantees every new undocumented patient a first qualitative medical consult

## Responsibility

- **Department of Patient Support and Administration – University Hospital Gent**
  - Team Reporting and Registering (former Reception)
    - Unit Social- financial collection and administration (Cel Sofia)
    - Interdisciplinary team: administration, social work, intercultural mediation

## Stakeholders and partners

- **Three departments of Patient Support & Administration**
  - Patient Support
  - Patient Billing
  - Reporting and Registering
  
- **Medical doctors health care teams**
  
- **Public Social Welfare Centers**
  
- **Auxiliary Sickness & Invalidity Insurance Fund**

## Resources

- ⇒ **Supported and approved by the board of directors**
- ⇒ **Education of social workers, administration, and other health care workers within the hospital**



## Implementation of the practice

- **Where: Team Reporting and Registering**
  - Unit Social- financial collection and administration (Cel Sofia): Administration and Social Work
  
- **When: In case of new undocumented migrant patient without payment coverage**
  
- **What: Patient receives ‘single consultation voucher’**
  - Cel Sofia has 15 days to sent the application Urgent Medical Aid to the Public Social Welfare Centre
  - Social worker provides advise and support to the patient and the health care team

## Implementation of the practice

### single consultation voucher

Assessment of (extreme) emergency in Medical Care

Doctor's signature and stamp:

- Care type 1\*** Provision of **emergency medical assistance**  
**Start of emergency treatment only for admissions via Accident & Emergency**
- Care type 2\*** **Scheduled urgent medical aid with follow-up treatment:** (in accordance with R.D. 12.12.'96). **Continued specialist treatment is required.** Clarify the treatment plan on the certificate of urgent medical aid in the 'PROVISION' section, together with the date of essential follow-up treatment.  
Pass these documents to Cel Sofia ASAP.
- Care type 3\*** **Scheduled urgent medical aid** (in accordance with R.D. 12.12.'96).  
**Single consultation without a requirement for additional examinations or follow-up treatment.**

## Implementation of the practice

single consultation voucher  
Assessment of (extreme) emergency in Medical Care

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Pass these documents to Cel Sofia AS.
- Care type 3\*** **Scheduled urgent medical aid** (in accordance with R.D. 12.12.'96).  
**Single consultation without a requirement for additional examinations or follow-up treatment.**

**Care type 1, 2 or 3: Administrative and psychosocial follow-up by Cel Sofia**

## Results achieved

- **Guarantee of qualitative, affordable and accessible health care for all patients**
  - Voucher supports this 'body of thought' within the hospital
  - Strength: interdisciplinary approach of social workers and administration
  - 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year of implementation: 98 & 130 vouchers delivered
    - 31 & 48 agreements for payment coverage Urgent Medical Aid
    - 47 & 42 refusals for payment coverage Urgent Medical Aid
    - 9 & 10 payment coverage by other institution
    - 11 & 13 no decision yet
    - - 17 Belgian health insurance (family reunion/completed)

## Difficulties of implementation

- **Application for Urgent Medical Aid ≠ guarantee for payment coverage**
- **Voucher not only delivered to undocumented migrant patients (cfr. numbers of refusal)**
- **Ethical balancing: how to identify undocumented migrants / uninsured patients**
  - Signal \*\*\* developed within electronic patient file to identify patients (Belgian or foreign) without Belgian health insurance

## Replicability

- **Depends strongly on national policy and laws & Policy of health care organization**
  
- **Moreover: in case of reform of Urgent Medical Aid – as proposed by the Belgian Health Care Knowledge Centre – the need for the single consultation voucher for undocumented disappears, i.e.\*:**
  - Rationalizing the utilization of health care
  - Simplifying the financing

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## Monitoring and evaluation

- **Registration of the number of delivered vouchers**
- **Registration of agreements and refusals of the applications of Urgent Medical Aid**
- **Close multidisciplinary cooperation and communication**
- **Most important evaluation on Urgent Medical Aid:**
  - Variation in entitlement to health care (cfr. KCE report, 2015), **only the medical doctor should evaluate and test the urgency of the medical aid**

# Thank you for your attention!

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