

This is the submission of a former ex-detainee who wishes to retain his anonymity. His submission is in the third person as this is a means by which to distance himself from the mental anguish of remembering an extremely traumatic time.

Samphire's Ex-Detainee Project facilitated this evidence and it has been approved by the former detainee for submission.

Your experience of living in immigration detention, including the context and duration of your stay;

1. He was in detention for six months in Harmondsworth. He made an application for asylum at the Home Office. He went there three times to make his application for asylum to try to do everything properly, according to the rules. The third time he presented himself there, he was detained.

The conditions in immigration detention, including your ability to access services such as legal advice, healthcare and pastoral support;

2. During his detention the problem that he came across, not only with him but also with many other detainees, was the healthcare. One example was that cases of flu virus were not taken seriously. If a detainee was suffering with that virus, he was put on a waiting list that took about 2 to 3 days before receiving any treatment. This caused the virus to spread between all detainees who are in close contact, and for them to become ill.

Whether there were appropriate mechanisms to deal with any mental, physical or emotional issues you may have experienced prior to or during your time in detention;

3. During the time he spent in detention, he went into a depression, since none of his relatives in the United Kingdom knew where he was. He felt that informing him of his detention would cause more problems – that is, upset and shock – for them. He could not sleep at night because of how traumatic this was for him.

Any longer term impacts of detention on you, your family and/or your wider community;

4. The impact on his life was mixed – both positive and negative. It helped him to be strong during a difficult time. The negative impact is that he is always traumatised when the memories of the time spent in detention come into his mind.